the news of the embargo arrived there; that they had been led to believe from their writers and speakers that a discontinuance of their intercourse with this country would be productive of most injurious consequences; but that they were now convinced that all their writers and statesmen were mistaken, and that she can suffer a discontinuance of intercourse without being convulsed or suffering at all. To believe this requires a considerable portion of credulity, especially when the most intelligent men affirm to the contrary. In the last of March or the first of April last, we find on an examination of merchants at the bar of the British House of Commons, that the most positive injury must result from a continuance of non-intercourse. It is not possible that our merchants on this side of the water, however intelligent they may be, can be as well acquainted with the interests of Great Britain as her most intelligent merchants. This alarm however the gentleman has told us continued through the spring and dissipated in the summer. It is very easy to discover the cause of the dissipation of this alarm. It was not because the loss of intercourse was not calculated to produce an effect, but it proceeded from an adventitious cause which could not have been anticipated—the revolution in Spain; and there is no intelligent man who will not acknowledge its injurious effects on our concerns. No sooner did the British ministers see a probability that the struggle between the Spanish patriots and France would be maintained, than they conceived hopes that they might find other supplies; and then they thought they might give to the people an impulse by interesting the nation in the affairs of Spain which would render lighter the effects of our embargo. This is the cause of the change in Mr. Canning's language; for every gentleman in the House knows that a very material change took place in it in the latter part of the summer. If then the embargo has not produced the effects calculated from it, we have every reason to believe that its failure to produce these effects has been connected with causes wholly adventitious, and which may give way if the nation adheres to the measure. If however there be any probability that these causes will be continued for a long time, we ought to abandon it. I am not in favor of continuing any measure of this kind, except there be a probability of its producing some effect on those who make it necessary for us to exercise this act of self-denial. When I first saw the account of the revolution in Spain, my fears were excited lest it should produce the effect which it has done. As soon as I saw the stand made by the Spanish patriots, I was apprehensive that it might buoy up the British nation under the sufferings arising from the effects of their iniquitous orders, which, compared with the sufferings which we ourselves have borne, have been as an hundred to one. If there be evidence that the effects of this measure will yet be counteracted by recent events in Spain, I will abandon it, but its substitute should be WAR, and no ordinary war—I say this notwithstanding the petitions in the other branch of the legislature, and the resolutions of a state legislature which have lately been published. When I read the resolutions called emphatically the Essex resolutions, I blush for the disgrace they reflect on my country. We are told there that this nation has no just cause of complaint against Great Britain; and that all our complaints are a mere pretext for war. I blush that any man belonging to the great American Family should be so debased, so degraded, so lost to every generous and national feeling, as to make a declaration of this kind. It is debasing to the national character.

We are told by the gentleman from Connecticut, not, to be sure, in language equally strong with that of the Essex resolutions, that the repeal of the embargo will not involve us in war, unless indeed Bonaparte makes war on us; that we are not driven to that alternative; that we have yet an honorable and lucrative trade left open to us. The same gentleman has said that he will not consent to go to war for rights not well established, but that he will never abandon a neutral right which is clearly established. From this it would appear that the gentleman thinks that the British orders in council are no infringement on the rights of neutral nations. [Mr. Hillhouse said he did not say so.] I did not say that the gentleman said so; but I draw the inference from the gentleman's position. [Mr. Hillhouse observed that he had said that he was doubtful whether the nation should go to war for doubtful rights; but for rights clearly indisputable he would permit the arming of our merchant vessels.] The gentleman's explanations Mr. Crawford said, did not change the inference he had before stated. He admits that he said that a repeal of the embargo would not involve the nation in war; and that in support of rights not clearly established, he is not prepared to say whether he would go to war or not. I here understood the gentleman to allude to that portion of trade carried on by exporting the produce of enemies colonies to foreign countries. I had thought that the right of an independent nation to trade with the whole world except in ports absolutely blockaded, or in articles contraband of war, was a right which could not be denied, a right in which no nation had heretofore attempted to control another. The gentleman from Connecticut says he will not go to war for doubtful rights; and, that he will not go to war against the orders in council. I can draw no other inference from these observations, than that the gentleman conceives that the orders in council do not infringe our neutral rights; or, that all our rights are doubtful.

How are these orders and decrees to be opposed but by war, except we keep without their reach? If the embargo produces a repeal of these edicts, we effect it without going to war. Whenever we repeal the embargo, we are at war, or we abandon our neutral rights. It is impossible to take the middle ground, and say that we do not abandon them by trading with G. Britain alone. You must submit or oppose force to force. Can arming our merchant vessels by resisting the whole navy of G. Britain oppose force to force? It is impossible. The idea is absurd.

By way of ridiculing the embargo, the gentleman from Connecticut in his familiar way, has attempted to expose this measure. He elucidated it by one of those familiar examples by which he generally exemplifies his precepts. He says your neighbor tells you that you shall not trade with another neighbor, and you say you will not trade at all: Now this, he says, is very magnanimous, but it is a kind of magnanimity with which he is not acquainted. Now let us see the magnanimity of that gentleman and see if it savors more of true magnanimity than our course. G. Britain and France each say that we shall not trade with the other. We say we will not trade with either of them, because we believe our trade to be important to both of them. The gentleman says it is a poor way of defending the national rights. Suppose we pursue his course. G. Britain says we shall not trade to France; we say we will not, but will obey her. We will trade upon such terms as she may impose. "This will be magnanimity indeed; this will be defending commerce with a witness." It will be bowing the neck to the yoke. The opposition to taxation against our consent at the commencement of the revolution, was not more meritorious than the opposition to tribute and imposition at the present day. I cannot for my soul see the difference between paying tribute and a tacit acquiescence in the British orders in council. True, every gentleman revolts at paying tribute. But where is the difference between that and suffering yourself to be controlled by the arbitrary act of another nation? If you raise the embargo, you *must* carry your produce to G. Britain and pay an arbitrary sum before you can carry it elsewhere. If it remain there, the markets will be glutted, and *it will produce nothing*. For it appears from the very evidence to which I have before alluded, that at least four-fifths of our whole exports of tobacco must go to England, and pay a tax before we could look for a market elsewhere; and that out of 75,000 hogsheads raised in this country not more than 15,000 are consumed in G. Britain. Where does the remainder usually go? Why, to the ports of the continent. I ask then, if the whole consumption of G. Britain be but 15,000 hogsheads, if an annual addition of 60,000 hogsheads be thrown into that market, would it sell for the costs of freight? Certainly not. The same would be the situation of our other produce.

But the gentleman says that he is not prepared to go to war for doubtful rights? What are these doubtful rights? Has the law of nations ever interdicted the trade with enemies colonies, against the interruption of which the American merchants lately remonstrated with so much force and perspicuity? For the information of the Senate I will read a part of the memorial presented by the merchants of Boston. For my own part I have never considered it a matter of much importance whether we have suffered more from France or G. Britain. I have long been convinced that both nations intended to do us all the evil they could; and where there is a difference in the quantum, it only results from an inability in the least mischievous to do more. But it is attempted to be shewn by the gentleman from Massachusetts that there is a great difference between the injuries received from one power, and those which we have received from another.

"While your memorialists have witnessed with mingled feelings of indignation towards the perpetrators, and of commiseration for their unfortunate countrymen, the insults and barbarities which the commerce of these states has sustained from the cruizers of France and Spain, it is their object in the present memorial, to confine their animadversions to the more alarming, because more numerous and extensive detentions and condemnations of American vessels by G. Britain; and to advert to the principles recently avowed and adopted by her courts, relative to neutral trade in articles of colonial produce. Principles which if admitted, or practised upon in all the latitude which may fairly be inferred to be intended, would be destructive of the navigation and radically impair the most lucrative commerce of our country."

After going into a train of reasoning to shew that the pretensions of G. Britain are a manifest violation of the neutral rights of this nation, they conclude by saying, "but whatever may have been the motives for the proceedings on the part of G. Britain, the effect is notorious. From her recent conduct great losses have been sustained, our commerce has been checked and embarrassed, and large quantities of produce are now remaining locked up in this country which were purchased for foreign markets, because our merchants cannot send it abroad, without taking risks on themselves which prudence would not justify, or without paying such rates for insurance as the trade of the country cannot afford."

This memorial is in support of the very trade which the gentleman from Connecticut says he would not go to war for. *Now* a different language is held by the signers of this petition, under the increased injuries we have sustained; and I am only sorry for the character of the U. S. that this difference of language has taken place.

The gentleman from Delaware, (Mr. White) has said that by repealing the embargo we can now carry on a safe and secure trade to the extent of nearly four fifths of the amount of our domestic productions. There is nothing more delusive and better calculated to impose on those who do not investigate subjects than these calculations in gross. If the gentleman will take the trouble to make the necessary enquiries, he will find that instead of Great Britain taking to the amount he supposes of domestic productions, she takes nothing like it. It is true that a large proportion of our domestic exports is shipped ostensibly for G. Britain; but it is equally true that a very large proportion of these very exports find their way into the continental ports. For the British merchants in their examination before the House of Commons, already alluded to, say that three fourths of their receipts for exportation to the U. States have been usually drawn from the continent; and that even if the embargo was removed and the orders in council were continued, they must stop their exportations, because the continental ports would be closed against American vessels; because, their coasts swarm with English cruizers, the French must know that the American vessels attempting to enter have come from an English port. That they had facilities of conveyance to the continent prior to the orders in council the merchants acknowledged; and when requested to explain the mode of conveyance, they begged to be excused. No doubt every gentleman has seen these depositions, or might have seen them, for they had been published in almost every paper on the continent. They have opened to me & my constituents a scene perfectly new. They tell you that the Berlin decree was nothing. Notwithstanding that decree, they had a facility of conveying produce into the continental ports; but the orders of council completely shut the ports of the continent against the entrance of American vessels. On this point there was no contrariety of opinion; and several of these merchants declared that they had sent vessels to the continent a very few days before the date of the orders of council. This clearly shews that any conclusion to be drawn from the gross amount of exports must be fallacious, and that probably three fourths ought to be deducted from the gross amount. This statement of the gentleman from Delaware, which holds out to the public the prospect of a lucrative trade in four fifths of their exports, will certainly have a tendency to render them uneasy under the privations which they are called upon to suffer by the iniquitous measures of foreign nations. Although the statement was extremely delusive, I do not say that the gentleman meant to delude by it. This however being the effect of the gentleman's assertion, I am certainly warranted in saying that the evidence of the British merchants who carry on this trade, is better authority than the gentleman's statements.

But admit, for the sake of argument, and on no other ground would I admit it, that these gross statements are correct, and that, at the time the embargo was adopted, these orders in council notwithstanding, the trade of the U. States could have been carried on to this extent. What security have we, if the embargo had not been laid, after submitting and compromitting the national dignity and independence, that the British aggressions and orders in council would have stopped at the point at which we find them? Have we not conclusive evidence to the contrary? Are we not officially notified that the French leeward islands are declared by proclamation in a state of blockade? And do we not know that this is but carrying into effect a report of the committee of the British House of Commons on the West India islands, in which this measure is recommended, and in which it is stated that his Britannic majesty's West India subjects ought to receive further aid by placing these islands in a state of blockade? I can see in this measure nothing but a continuation of the system recommended last winter in this report, and published—for the information of the U. States, I suppose.

If the embargo should be repealed, and our vessels suffered to go out in the face of the present orders in council and blockading decrees and proclamations, Mr. Crawford said they would but expose us to new insults and aggressions. It was in vain to talk about the magnanimity of nations. It was not that magnanimity which induced nations as well as men to act honestly; and that was the best kind of magnanimity. The very magnanimity which had induced them to distress our commerce would equally induce them to cut off the pitiful portion they had left to us. In a general point of view there was now no lawful commerce. No vessel could sail from the U. States without being liable to condemnation in Britain or France. If they sailed to France, Mr. C. said they were carried into Britain; if they sailed to Britain they were carried into France. Now, he asked, whether men who had any regard to national honor, would consent to navigate the ocean on terms so disgraceful? We must be cool calculators indeed if we could submit to disgrace like this!

The last reason offered by the supporters of the present resolution, Mr. C. said, may properly be said to be an argument *in terrorem*. The gentleman from Massachusetts says by way of abstract proposition, that a perseverance in a measure opposed to the feelings and interests of the people may lead to opposition and insurrection, but the gentleman from Connecticut uses the same expressions as applicable to the embargo. It may be a forcible argument with some gentlemen, and most likely may have had its effect on those who intended by it to produce an effect on others. But I trust that this House and this nation are not to be addressed in this way. Our understandings may be convinced by reason, but an address to our fears ought to be treated with contempt. If I were capable of being actuated by motives of fear, I should be unworthy the seat which I hold on this floor. If the nation be satisfied that any course is proper, it would be base and degrading to be driven from it by the discordant murmurs of a minority. We are cautioned to beware how we execute a measure with which the feelings of the people are at war. I should be the last to persist in a measure which injuriously affected the interest of the U. States; but no man feels more imperiously the duty of persevering in a course which is right, notwithstanding the contrary opinion of a few; and though I may regret and respect the feelings of these few, I will persist in the course which I believe to be right, at the expence even of the government itself.

(Debate to be continued.)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

NOVEMBER 29.

DEBATE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS.

[CONTINUED.]

Mr. W. ALSTON said if gentleman had confined themselves to the resolution immediately before them, it would not be necessary further to discuss it, as no gentleman had objected to its adoption; but as the subject of our foreign relations generally, as reported by the select committee, was fairly within the rules and orders of the House, and proper for investigation, he should offer a few remarks in support of that report, and in doing so, he assured the House that he should not very long ask their attention.

The gentleman from Massachusetts, (said Mr. A.) who favored us yesterday with a long harangue upon this question, made so many extraordinary assertions, so contradictory in themselves, that I think there is no man under Heaven that could well understand him, and much more difficult would it be to reconcile his very contradictory arguments to each other; for however plausible he might be in some of his observations, before he concluded he was certain to destroy any impression they were calculated to make upon the minds of his hearers.

Mr. A. said he would begin his observations in reply at the very point where the gentleman had ended; the gentleman had stated that the course the government ought to pursue was as clear as the milky way, that no man could or ought to mistake it, but as he was an humble minority man, it was not his business to lay any plan before the House. Resistance, defend your rights upon the sea, was his language! Strange language this. If the path was so clear, how happened it that the whole wisdom of the government, and the nation, should find such difficulty in pursuing of it; for he believed, turn which ever way they would innumerable difficulties presented themselves to all, except a few in the state of Massachusetts, and he hoped they were very few, who he believed wanted to join one party and go to war with the other; who were willing to submit to the orders of Great Britain and plunge this nation into a war with France at the hazard of our liberty as an independent nation. If this was the gentleman's resistance, and from his observations and remarks, he thought no man could well draw any other inference, he hoped they should not adopt his course. He however rather concluded from every thing the gentleman had said that resistance to the laws of his own government fairly enacted and declared by the judiciary of his country to be constitutional, would suit his palate a little better than any other resistance, unless indeed a coalition with Great Britain to resist France might suit him better. The gentleman had exclaimed loudly against paying tribute, and urged at the same time that no tribute would be paid, for if our vessels were permitted to go to England, that the edicts of France would prevent them going elsewhere. This was not Mr. Alston's opinion; for were our vessels permitted to leave our ports & by paying a duty in England could find a better market upon the continent the merchants, tribute or no tribute, would persue that course which their interest directed. The gentleman talked of resistance and resistance on sea. Did any one believe that he seriously meant meeting the powerful navy of Great Britain on the sea, of that Britain who had been emphatically stiled the mistress of the ocean, and who was fighting for the liberties of the world and of mankind? No sir, said Mr. A. nothing of the kind is meant; submission to her orders would be the inevitable consequence of the gentleman's resistance, and finally a loss of every thing dear to the American character, a loss of our liberty and independence as a free people.

The gentleman from Massachusetts talks about the spirit of '76, and cautions my colleage too, who mentioned that spirit a few days since, not to invoke it. Wherefore does the gentleman do this? Is it because he does not wish the American people of the present day to know that the spirit of our ancestors was opposition to British aggression?

The gentleman says the embargo must be repealed; that there is a voice in this nation louder than the voice of Congress; that the air will continue to circulate and the waters to descend, any law to the contrary notwithstanding. Good God, Mr. Chairman! has the American nation come to this, that the laws of our country are to be violated, that trade and commerce shall be carried on whether sanctioned by the government or not? The gentleman says the whole nation calls aloud for its repeal; that there is but one sentiment on the occasion; that every part of this great community feel its effects, I readily admit; but that they wish its immediate repeal at the expence of our liberty as an independant nation, I positively deny. I must confess my astonishment, when I heard the gentleman reiterate those sentiments—when I cast my eyes into the newspapers of the day, and saw that town meetings had been held in the neighborhood of the town in which the gentleman comes from—(Boston) where I find the subject was discussed and a large majority against the repeal of the embargo laws; yet, sir, it may not be true, and the sentiment may be universal. It appears, from the same papers, that Mr. Gray, of Salem, one of the most intelligent and distinguished federal merchants upon the continent, was present at a meeting in his town, and clearly pointed out to the satisfaction of a large majority present, that if the embargo laws were repealed whilst the present restrictions remained in force against our commerce, that any trade would be so hazardous and uncertain, that no honest merchant could or would attempt it. Notwithstanding all these facts staring of us in the face, what the gentleman asserts may be true, and these things not have taken place. If the subject of repealing the embargo was now before us, I would readily go into an investigation of the subject, and offer some remarks why it should not now be repealed. It will undoubtedly be discussed before the session ends, and I am certain I shall be found as willing as any member on this floor to take it off as soon as the interest, safety and honor of this nation will permit it.

From the great commercial talents of the gentleman, I had expected that he would have taken a commercial view of the subject, and have shewn us that intercourse might be opened to advantage some where. Had it been shewn, I am certain that I should be among the last to hold on upon restrictions injurious to the community. Had it been in the power of the gentleman, no doubt he would have done it. I therefore take it for granted, that under existing circumstances, no benefit would result to the honest and upright trader. Provided the gentleman could obtain his object, nothing but hazard, difficulty and danger would