HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

NOVEMBER 30.

DEBATE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS. CONTINUED.

Mr. MOSELY confessed that he saw nothing so very alarming in this proposition as some gentlemen seemed to think. To vote for or against it would break no man's leg nor pick any man's pocket. For himself, he believed that an abandonment of the ocean was submission to the edicts of the belligerents. He did not believe that gentlemen who passed the embargo law, had voted for it in that view; but perhaps the gentlemen, seeing this idea becoming daily more prevalent, had thought proper to come forward with a declaration to this effect. He really feared that foreign nations began to think that they had nothing to fear from us but proclamations and abstract legislation.

Mr. GARDENIER said that he should probably on the present question be in a very small minority; and this being the case, he felt an unwillingness to vote without at the same time asserting the principle on which he opposed it. He was opposed to it for two reasons: first, because it was legislating on an abstract proposition, resolving a certain thing which could not be disputed; and secondly, because no definite consequence was to result from the adoption of it. One gentleman (said he) asserts that the adoption of this resolution, if followed by any consequence, will be followed by a repeal of the embargo. Another gentleman considers the adoption of the resolution as pledging the House and the nation to the approbation and continuance of this same embargo law. Then it is legislating on words without signification, entering into a resolution which subjects us to no specific course after it is passed, binds us to nothing; for one gentleman can vote for this resolution, because in consequence of it he considers the House bound to repeal the embargo. Let the members of this House look for one moment to the ridiculous consequence of voting upon an abstract proposition which is followed by no consequence, which decides no question, which ties us down to no course of proceeding. No individual commits himself on any point in controversy by voting on this resolution. Therefore Mr. G. said it was an idle and useless proposition. It appeared to him to be below the dignity of the House to vote for or against it; and if he knew any way in which the question could consistently be avoided, he should pursue that course in preference to the vote which he felt himself obliged to give. In the view in which he considered this resolution, he could not see how men legislating for the good of the nation, could bring themselves seriously to vote for such a proposition. It is not only idle (said he) but in my mind it is not assetting the dignity of this House and of the nation to pass a resolution expressed in the terms in which this is expressed. "*Resolved*, That the United States cannot, without a sacrifice of their rights, honor and independence, *submit*." The United States cannot submit to any thing, sir; the moment we submit, that moment we have no more rights, honor and independence. I had thought, as an American citizen, that to submit in any case was to relinquish those peculiar privileges which distinguish the citizens of the United States from all others; I should therefore as soon think of bringing forward a resolution for the adoption of this House that it is a relinquishment of our rights and independence to submit at all, as that it is such a sacrifice to submit to the edicts mentioned in the resolution. The proposition then amounts to this: that for the United States to submit is to sacrifice their independence. And who disputes it? No one. In this view of the subject therefore the adoption of this resolution would seem to imply a doubt whether this nation has shewn a disposition to resist the aggression of foreign powers. If the fact were really so, if we had been in the habit of submitting to insults and aggression, at any rate I would not wound the feelings of this injured people so much as to pass a resolution which should imply that it had been the case—for if any possible practical utility can result from the adoption of this resolution, it would be this and this only: that inasmuch as our conduct hitherto had been calculated to impress foreign nations with an opinion that we would submit, it has become necessary to declare that we would not submit. Now is this country placed in such a situation either by the conduct of the administration or its opponents that a new declaration of independence has become necessary? Has the spirit of '76 travelled back so far as that it is now necessary to declare that we are independent? If this were seriously a matter of doubt, in such a case I might be inclined to adopt such a resolution as this. But I do not think so. The spirit of independence is as broad awake as ever it was; it is as warm and glowing as it was at the battle of Bunker's Hill; and therefore, certain as I am of this, I am not prepared to give my assent to such a proposition; because I think its adoption calculated to carry with it an expression of doubt as to the matter which it resolves to be true. When the declaration of independence was made in '76, we were not immediately antecedent to that period independent. That the character of this nation might be justly estimated, it became necessary that a declaration of independence should be made. That was made; and ever since that time it has been unnecessary to declare that it did still exist. I see nothing in the temper of the people at this time which is calculated to make me fear that they mean to relinquish their independence. I will say that in neither of the great parties in the country is there any disposition to relinquish it. In the party which I oppose I do not believe that there exists any design to surrender our independence, although I believe their measures destructive to the interests of the nation; and in the party to which I belong (and the being attached to it is a circumstance in which I feel more pride than in any other) I am certain that no such disposition exists. There is no necessity therefore for passing this resolution. I would not hold out to foreign nations the idea that any circumstance had occurred which rendered it necessary to declare that we are an independent nation; for that is the pith of the proposition.

[Mr. Gardenier here moved the previous question, the result of which motion we have before stated.]

(Debate to be continued.)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17.

A quorum not appearing at the hour to which the House had adjourned, two motions were successively made and negatived by Yeas and Nays to adjourn.

A motion was made by *Mr. Van Cortlandt*, that the absent members be compelled to attend, but a quorum appeared before the motion was decided.

POTOMAC BRIDGE.

Mr. Lewis reported a bill to amend the bill authorising the erection of a bridge over the river Potomac. Twice read and referred to a committee of the whole.

NATURALIZATION LAWS.

Mr. Burwell reported a bill to establish an uniform rule of naturalization throughout the U. S. He observed that it would be recollected that he had suggested a modification in this bill, but the committee had not been able to concur in opinion on the subject, and he reported the bill in the same form as it was proposed last session, intending to propose his modification in committee of the whole.

The bill was twice read, and referred to a committee of the whole, and made the order of the day for Monday three weeks.

IMPORTATION OF SALT.

Mr. Livermore said, that from information received from various parts of the U. S. it appeared that the article of salt, so essential for public support, was very scarce, and had risen in his country 100 per cent. that is, to two dollars per bushel. He was therefore induced to offer the following resolution:—

Resolved, That the committee of Commerce and Manufactures be instructed to enquire into the expediency of permitting certain vessels to depart from the ports and harbors of the U. S. for the purpose of importing SALT, and that they have leave to report by bill or otherwise.

The House agreed to consider the resolution, 58 to 25.

Mr. Cutts said, that he observed by a paper containing the price current, that the price was but 6s. 6d. per bushel.

Mr. Bacon, as this was a subject on which an instantaneous decision should not be made, moved that it lie on the table.

Mr. Livermore said, that the price of this article was rapidly rising; and it was extremely desirous that vessels should be permitted to go to Turk's island for the purpose of bringing in salt.

The motion that it lie on the table was carried, Ayes 51.

FOREIGN RELATIONS.

The unfinished business of yesterday was taken up; the question being on the following resolution:

Resolved, That it is expedient to prohibit, by law, the admission into the ports of the United States of all public or private, armed or unarmed ships or vessels belonging to Great Britain—or France—or to any other of the belligerent powers, having in force orders or decrees violating the lawful commerce and neutral rights of the United States—and also the importation of any goods wares or merchandize, *the growth, produce or manufacture of the dominions of any of the said powers, or imported from any place in the possession of either.*

Mr. Rhea (T.) supported the resolution in a speech of near two hours.

Mr. Taggart opposed the resolution in a speech of two hours.

Mr. Randolph moved to adjourn, alledging as a reason for the motion the situation in which the House found itself, many members being absent.

The question on adjournment was taken by Yeas and Nays, and negatived—Ayes 42—Nays 68.

A division of the question was called for, taking the sense of the House on each member of the resolution separately.

Mr. Van Horne moved to amend the last clause of the resolution, by striking out the words in Italic; and adding the following:

"*And that the act laying an embargo on all ships and vessels within the ports and harbors of the U. States and the several supplementary acts thereto, shall be repealed*, so far as to allow the ships and vessels belonging to and wholly navigated by citizens of the U. States, to depart with their cargoes for places not in the possession of any of the said belligerent powers, and that the citizens of the U. States be authorised to arm and equip their merchant vessels, and repel by force any assault or hostility which shall be made or committed by any vessel belonging to any of the said powers and may subdue and capture the same and may recapture any vessel owned as aforesaid which may have been captured by any vessel belonging to any of the said powers."

Mr. Durell moved to adjourn, as this amendment involved wholly a new principle, and required consideration—Ayes 33—Nays 54.

Mr. D. R. Williams called for a division of Mr. Van Horne's amendment, taking the question first on striking out the words in the original resolution.

And the motion to strike out was negatived—Ayes 24.

Mr. Van Horne moved to adjourn—Ayes 39—Nays 57.

Mr. Mumford called for the Yeas and Nays on the amendment.

Mr. Upham moved to adjourn, and called for the Yeas and Nays on the motion—Yeas 45—Nays 69.

Mr. Quincy called for a division of the amendment, so as to take the question first on the words in Italic.

Mr. Van Horne said, this was one way of making a man vote against his own motion; for he certainly must vote against the first clause if taken separately.

On the suggestion of *Mr. G. W. Campbell* that the gentleman would get at his object better by a distinct proposition at another time—

Mr. Van Horne withdrew his motion for the present.

Mr. Lewis moved to adjourn and called for the Yeas and Nays on the motion—Yeas 48—Nays 69.

Mr. Lewis moved to amend the original resolution by adding at the end of it the following:—"and also, that the act laying an embargo on all ships and vessels in the ports and harbors of the U. States, and the several acts supplementary thereto, be repealed."

The *Speaker* decided that the amendment was out of order, as it involved a subject already specially before a committee of the whole.

Mr. Stanford, though totally unfriendly to the gentleman's motion in the present state of our affairs, was friendly to the right of a member to make such a motion, and appealed from the decision of the Speaker on the point of order.

Mr. Livermore moved to adjourn—Ayes 52—Noes 62.

The Speaker's decision on the point of order was confirmed by the House—Yeas 86—Nays 32.

Mr. Lewis renewed the motion, varied only by an addition to the end of it, of the words, "on the first day of January next."

This the *Speaker* also declared out of order.

Mr. Lewis appealed from the decision; which was again confirmed by the House—Yeas 84—Nays 31.

Mr. Milnor moved to adjourn.—Ayes 51—Noes 58.

The question on the first clause of the resolution recurring—

Mr. Gardenier called for a division of it so as to take the question separately on the exclusion of English and French ships.

Mr. Alexander moved to adjourn—Ayes 47.

Mr. Gardenier spoke half an hour in explanation of his reasons for taking the question separately as to G. Britain and France.

The question was then taken on the following member of the resolution:

"*Resolved*, That it is expedient to prohibit, by law, the admission into the ports of the U. States of all public or private, armed or unarmed ships or vessels belonging to Great Britain—" And decided by Yeas and Nays, as follow:

YEAS—Messrs. L. J. Alston, W. Alston, Bacon, Bard, Barker, Bassett, Bibb, Blackledge, Blake, Blount, Boyd, Boyle, Brown, Burwell, Butler, Calhoun, G. W. Campbell, Clay, Clopton, Cook, Cutts, Dawson, Desha, Durell, Eppes, Fisk, Franklin, Gholdson, Goodwyn, Green, Heister, Helms, Holland, Holmes, Howard, Humphreys, Isley, J. G. Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Kenan, Kirkpatrick, Lambert, Love, Macon, Marion, M'Creery, D. Montgomery, J. Montgomery, N. R. Moore, T. Moore, Jer. Morrow, John Morrow, Mumford, Nelson, Newbold, Newton, Nicholas, Pitkin, Porter, Randolph, Rea of P. Rhea of T. J. Richards, M. Richards, Say, Seaver, Shaw, Sloan, Smelt, Smilie, J. K. Smith, J. Smith, S. Smith, Southard, Stanford, Storer, Swart, Taylor, Thompson, Trigg, Troup, Van Allen, Van Cortlandt, Van Horn, Verplanck, Wharton, Whitehill, Wilbour, D. R. Williams, A. Wilson, N. Wilson, Winn—92.

NAYS—Messrs. J. Campbell, Champion, Chittenden, Culpepper, Dana, Davenport, Elliot, Ely, Gardenier, Gray, Harris, R. S. Jackson, Jenkins, Key, Lewis, Livermore, Masters, Milnor, Moseley, Pitkin, Quincy, Russell, Stedman, Sturges, Taggart, Tallmadge, Upham, Van Rensselaer—28.

Mr. Elliot called for a further division of the remainder of the first clause, so as to take it separately on excluding the vessels of France, and of other powers having in force edicts affecting neutral commerce.

And the question was taken on the words, "or France," by Yeas and Nays as follow:

YEAS.—Messrs. L. J. Alston, W. Alston, Bacon, Bard, Barker, Bassett, Bibb, Blackledge, Blake, Blount, Boyd, Boyle, Brown, Burwell, Butler, Calhoun, G. W. Campbell, Clay, Clopton, Cook, Cutts, Dawson, Desha, Durell, Elliot, Eppes, Findley, Fisk, Franklin, Gardenier, Gholdson, Goodwyn, Gray, Green, Heister, Helms, Holland, Holmes, Howard, Humphreys, Isley, J. G. Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Kenan, Kirkpatrick, Lambert, Love, Macon, Marion, Masters, M'Creery, D. Montgomery, J. Montgomery, N. R. Moore, T. Moore, Jer. Morrow, John Morrow, Mumford, Nelson, Newbold, Newton, Nicholas, Porter, Randolph, Rea of P. Rhea of T. J. Richards, M. Richards, Say, Seaver, Shaw, Sloan, Smelt, Smilie, J. K. Smith, J. Smith, S. Smith, Southard, Stanford, Storer, Swart, Taylor, Thompson, Trigg, Troup, Van Allen, Van Cortlandt, Van Horn, Verplanck, Wharton, Whitehill, Wilbour, D. R. Williams, A. Wilson, N. Wilson, Winn—97.

NAYS.—Mes. Alexander, J. Campbell, Champion, Chittenden, Culpepper, Dana, Davenport, Ely, Harris, R. S. Jackson, Jenkins, Key, Lewis, Milnor, Moseley, Pitken, Quincy, Russell, Stedman, Sturges, Taggart, Tallmadge, Upham, Van Rensselaer—24.

The question was then taken on the remainder of the first clause, viz. on the words "or to any other of the belligerent powers, having in force orders or decrees violating the lawful commerce and neutral rights of the United States—" and carried as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. L. J. Alston, Willis Alston, Bacon, Bard, Barker, Bassett, W. Bibb, Blackledge, Blake, Blount, Boyd, Boyle, Brown, Burwell, Butler, Calhoun, George W. Campbell, Clay, Clopton, Cook, Cutts, Dawson, Desha, Durell, Eppes, Findley, Fisk, Franklin, Gardner, Gholson, Goodwyn, Gray, Green, Heister, Helms, Holmes, Holland, Howard, Humphreys, Isley, J. G. Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Kenan, Kirkpatrick, Lambert, Love, Macon, Marion, Masters, M'Creery, D. Montgomery, J. Montgomery, Nicholas R. Moore, Thomas Moore, Jeremiah Morrow, John Morrow, Mumford, Nelson, Newbold, Newton, Nicholas, Porter, Randolph, John Rhea, (Pennsylvania) John Rea, (Tennessee) Jacob Richards, Matthias Richards, Say, Seaver, Shaw, Sloan, Smelt, Smilie, Jedediah K. Smith, John Smith, Samuel Smith, Southard, Stanford, Storer, Swart, Taylor, Thompson, Trigg, Troup, Van Allen, Van Cortlandt, Van Horne, Verplanck, Wharton, Whitehill, Wilbour, Williams, Alexander Wilson, Nathan Wilson, Winn—96.

NAYS—Messrs. Alexander, John Campbell, Champion, Chittenden, Culpepper, Dana, Davenport, Elliot, Ely, Gardenier, Harris, Richard Jackson, Jenkins, Key, Lewis, Milnor, Moseley, Pitkin, Quincy, Russell, Stedman, Sturges, Taggart, Tallmadge, Upham, Van Rensselaer—26.

The question then being on the second member of the resolution, as follows:

"And also the importation of any goods, wares, or merchandize, the growth, produce or manufacture of the dominions of any of the said powers, or imported from any place in the possession of either."

Mr. Randolph moved to adjourn—Ayes 46.

Mr. Randolph spoke for about two hours and a half against it.

Mr. Van Cortlandt moved to adjourn, as it was a late hour and he felt a want of sleep—Ayes 42—Nays 72.

The question was then taken on the second clause, by Yeas and Nays, as follow:

YEAS—Messrs. L. J. Alston, W. Alston, Bacon, Bard, Barker, Bassett, Bibb, Blackledge, Blake, Blount, Boyd, Boyle, Brown, Burwell, Butler, Calhoun, G. W. Campbell, Clay, Clopton, Cutts, Dawson, Desha, Durell, Eppes, Findley, Fisk, Franklin, Gardner, Gholson, Goodwyn, Gray, Green, Heister, Helms, Holland, Holmes, Howard, Humphreys, Isley, J. G. Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Kenan, Kirkpatrick, Lambert, Love, Macon, Marion, M'Creery, J. Montgomery, N. R. Moore, T. Moore, Jer. Morrow, John Morrow, Nelson, Newbold, Newton, Nicholas, Porter, Rea, (Pn.) Rhea, (Ten.) J. Richards, M. Richards, Say, Seaver, Shaw, Smelt, Smilie, J. K. Smith, J. Smith, Southard, Stanford, Storer, Taylor, Troup, Van Allen, Wharton, Whitehill, Wilbour, D. R. Williams, A. Wilson, Winn—82.

NAYS—Messrs. Alexander, J. Campbell, Champion, Chittenden, Culpepper, Dana, Davenport, Elliot, Ely, Gardenier, Harris, R. S. Jackson, Jenkins, Kelly, Key, Lewis, Lyon, Masters, Milnor, Moseley, Mumford, Pitkin, Quincy, Russell, Sloan, Sturges, Swart, Taggart, Tallmadge, Thompson, Trigg, Upham, Van Cortlandt, Van Horne, Van Rensselaer, N. Wilson—36.

The question was then taken on the whole resolution by Yeas and Nays, as follow:

YEAS—Messrs. Lemuel J. Alston, W. Alston, junr. Ezekiel Bacon, David Bard, Joseph Barker, Burwell Bassett, William W. Bibb, William Blackledge, John Blake, junr. Thos. Blount, Adam Boyd, John Boyle, Robert Brown, W. A. Burwell, William Butler, Joseph Calhoun, George W. Campbell, Matthew Clay, John Clopton, Richard Cutts, John Dawson, Joseph Desha, Daniel M. Durell, John W. Eppes, William Findley, James Fisk, Meshack Franklin, Francis Gardner, Thomas Gholson, junr. Peterson Goodwyn, Edwin Gray, Isaiah L. Green, John Heister, William Helms, James Holland, D. Holmes, Benjamin Howard, Reuben Humphreys, Daniel Ilsley, John G. Jackson, Richard M. Johnson, Walter Jones, Thomas Kenan, William Kirkpatrick, John Lambert, John Love, Nathaniel Macon, Robert Marion, William M'Creery, John Montgomery, Nicholas R. Moore, Thomas Moore, Jeremiah Morrow, John Morrow, Roger Nelson, Thomas Newbold, Thomas Newton, Wilson C. Nicholas, J. Porter, J. Rea, (P.) John Rhea, (Tenn.) Jacob Richards, Matthias Richards, Benjamin Say, Ebenezer Seaver, Samuel Shaw, Dennis Smelt, John Smilie, Jedediah K. Smith, John Smith, Henry Southard, Richard Stanford, Clement Storer, John Taylor, George M. Troup, James I. Van Allen, Archibald Van Horne, Daniel C. Verplanck, Jesse Wharton, Robert Whitehill, Isaac Wilbour, David R. Williams, Alexander Wilson, Richard Winn—84.

NAYS—Messrs Evan Alexander, John Campbell, Epaphroditus Champion, Martin Chittenden, John Culpepper, Samuel W. Dana, John Davenport, junr. James Elliot, William Ely, Barent Gardenier, John Harris, Richard Jackson, Robert Jenkins, James Kelly, Philip B. Key, Joseph Lewis, junr. Matthew Lyon, Josiah Masters, William Milnor, Jonathan O. Mosely, Timothy Pitkin, junr. Josiah Quincy, John Russell, James Sloan, Lewis B. Sturges, Samuel Taggart, Benjamin Tallmadge, Jabez Upham, Philip Van Cortlandt, Killian K. Van Rensselaer—30.

Mr. Durell moved to adjourn—Negatived—Ayes 28.

The question then being on the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That measures ought to be immediately taken for placing the country in a more complete state of defence."

Mr. Dana observed that as this would probably be a nearly unanimous vote, he wished the full sense of the House to be expressed on it, and therefore called for the Yeas and Nays, which the House agreed to take.

But upon the suggestion of several members the taking them was dispensed with by common consent.

And the question being put on the resolution, the House replied "Aye" with an undivided voice. And when it was required that any one who objected should answer "No"—No reply was made.

The non-intercourse resolution was referred to the committee who reported it, with instructions to bring in a bill or bills in pursuance of it.

The last resolution was referred to the committee on our military and naval establishments.

And then the House adjourned.

Much desultory debate took place on the points of order, &c. in this day's business; which not being material to the main question, is not noticed.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19.

A bill from the Senate authorizing the President of the U. States to arm, man, and fit out for service, all the public ships of war, vessels and gun boats of the U. S. was twice read and referred to the committee of the whole, to whom was referred the report of the committee on our military and naval establishments.

On motion of *Mr. Lewis*, a memorial of the city council of Washington, presented at the last session, was referred to the committee on the district of Columbia.

Mr. Dana presented a letter from the Society of United Brethren for propagating the gospel, accompanying a donation of their works, which was read.

On motion of *Mr. Marion*, the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. TRIGG in the chair, on the bill from the Senate further to amend the judicial system of the U. S. After some discussion the committee rose and was refused leave to sit again; and, on motion of *Mr.*