

was under the obligation of honor, and an oath of secrecy, which he might be led to violate." But on a representation from the committee, by their chairman, Dr. Brown declared he was possessed of the said paper for about one month.

Your committee therefore recommend, that the report be amended accordingly. The report being amended, the question was put to agree to the same. It was resolved in the affirmative.

For the GAZETTE of the UNITED STATES.

MR. FENNO,

Among the many astonishing concomitants of the French Revolution, it is certainly not the least, that though all enlightened persons unite in pronouncing it, the sublimest effort of human wisdom and virtue, yet we do not find, among the characters which have been engaged in it, any one, to whom we can attach a lasting esteem. Numbers it is true, have had their day, and each in his turn, has been the fugitive theme of newspaper panegyric; but his fall has never been marked with any symptoms of regret or commiseration. Thus Fayette, Mirabeau, Luckner, Dumourier, Petion, Montequieu, Kellerman, Brissot, Condorcet, Egalite, Pelletier, Marat, Santerre, Byron, Culline & Honchard, have successively figured as Patriots and Heroes; and yet, we consign them to their fate, (whether merited or not) with as little remorse, as, in the phrase of Falstaff, "we drown blind puppies fifteen o' the litter."

This singular phenomenon, however it may be misconstrued by the short sighted, is appreciated by the discerning, as the strongest possible proof of the purity of the prevailing principles, since the judgment is in no danger of being dazzled by the virtues and imposing qualities of illustrious characters; and it also evinces the propriety of the new idea, of toasting sentiments instead of men, in our civic entertainments. It exhibits also one striking difference between the American & French Revolution. For as, in the one, the names of Washington, Montgomery, and others, threw a lustre upon a cause, which at that comparatively dark period, was generally called a Rebellion, so in the universally acknowledged goodness of the latter cause, we find an ample resource for any deficiencies that may be found in the actors, and detect the fallacy of that old, worm-eaten maxim, of there being "no public without private virtue."

In other countries without doubt, some patriotism may be found in the breasts of individuals, but the patriotism of France, appears to be a pure, ethereal, subtle principle, too volatile to be susceptible of long appropriation, and so little attached to persons, as to be in no danger of dying with them. Like joint tenancy, ("acrescitur superfluis") it accretes to the survivor; and exterminate as many patriots as you please, the principle only revives with additional vigor in the successor.—And hence O dulce Nomen Libertatis! Thy reigning advocates are always right, and though the King himself was once a patriot, and Fayette, and Petion and Roland and Brissot and Condorcet, &c. &c. yet Robespierre is now the best patriot of them all, and whether he shall continue to be the best in France, seems really to depend more upon the operations of the Guillotine, than upon any other principle, moral or physical, that is yet discoverable.

## CONGRESS.

House of Representatives.

January 25.

In committee of the whole on Mr. Madison's resolutions.

Mr. HILLHOUSE'S speech concluded.

The Indian war is also charged upon Great-Britain, and that is urged as a reason for adopting these resolutions—has any member produced any evidence, are we possessed of any proof to support this charge? It is an important principle of a free government, that no man shall be condemned unheard; if we admit this principle in regard to an individual, why not allow it to a nation? Have we ever charged Great-Britain as being the instigator of those injuries we have experienced from the depredations committed on the inhabitants of our Western frontiers by the savages? It has been supposed by some, that a part at least was chargeable upon our own inhabitants on the frontiers; shall we without having remonstrated, wage

war with Great-Britain? surely we ought to demand satisfaction, before we attempt to retaliate, or make reprisals.

The Algerine war he said, was another ground of complaint against Great-Britain, it is said to have been brought about by her allies; he was aware he said, it would be unpopular to divert the resentment that had been excited on this account; but his situation made it his duty to examine the subject, which he had done, and could discover nothing in the conduct of Great-Britain in this business, which was inconsistent with the law of nations—and altho' the United States may feel a present smart, yet we ought not to let our momentary feelings lead us to a decision which may be attended with serious consequences? Great-Britain is, and for a long time has been in close alliance and friendship with Portugal and Holland; they are in some measure dependant on her, they are now combined in one common cause against France—Great-Britain therefore in making a truce with the Algerines, for Portugal and Holland, has done no more than to set her allies free from the depredations of pirates, in order that the whole force of those nations might be in a better situation to be called into action, if necessary against their common enemy—were either of these nations under any obligation to block up the Algerines for us; it is true, we suffer by it, but have we any right to complain? there is no evidence that Great-Britain was influenced by motives hostile to us; other reasons can be assigned for her conduct—and shall we without pretty strong evidence, adopt measures by way of retaliation? and that too, before we have called on Great-Britain for an explanation of her conduct.—When the representatives of the people of the United States, are called upon to decide a question of such importance to the peace and happiness of this country, they ought to divest themselves of all resentful feelings; and even supposing Great-Britain has violated the treaty, and done us all the injuries complained of, ought we not to exercise moderation, and begin by remonstrating?—then if she would not do us justice, and redress our wrongs, he would be as ready as any member to vindicate the honor of his country, but was not for precipitating measures in such a manner, as would be condemned by the impartial world.

Another complaint has been stated, respecting the depredations committed on our commerce by British privateers: It is doubtless true, that those excesses had been carried to great lengths; it was also in evidence, that some of the British courts of law, had offered redress, and given ample damages: perhaps other instances may be attended with like success.—But on this head, as well as the former items of complaint, there had been no proper demand made by the Executive of the United States, and there had not yet been time for us reasonably to expect either an answer or satisfaction.—Privateering he said, was a sort of piracy, and he wished it was abolished in all wars, among civilized nations; but as long as it is permitted, neutral powers must expect to suffer more or less inconvenience and injury—there have been depredations committed by the subjects of every nation, on particular occasions, that could not be justified, and which it was not in their power to restrain—France, as well as Great-Britain, may be charged with like injuries; and the United States would not be exempted from such a charge—our privateers frequently did the same thing, when we were in a state of war—indeed we have found it difficult in all instances, to restrain even our frontier inhabitants from committing depredations upon the Indians; and yet we have not been disposed to have those excesses charged upon the United States.

Our flour trade to France is also interrupted, this he said he believed to be in violation of the law of nations—but what can we do when so many of the powers of Europe are combined in this measure—if we should judge it prudent to seek redress, ought we not to follow the example set us more than a century ago by Denmark and Sweden, quoted for our imitation by the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Giles) which was, as will be found in the first article of their convention, to send a spirited remonstrance, and if that did not answer the purpose, then it would be time enough to take other measures to do ourselves justice—he expressed it as his decided opinion, that better measures might be adopted for obtaining redress than were contained in the resolutions on the table.

We will now consider what is to be the operation of these proposed measures, and if there is not a great degree of probability, and indeed almost a certainty that they will produce the effect that is intended, they ought not to be adopted—it is supposed they will operate in three ways upon Great Britain—first by lessening our imports from Great Britain, and by that means throwing her manufacturers out of employ—secondly, by withholding our exports, and thereby starving her into a compliance, and thirdly, by injuring her navigation.

As to the first, this above all others, was the most improper time for attempting a thing of the kind. Properly timing public measures, was of great importance towards ensuring success. It was not from the manufacturers but the merchants that we received our supplies in the first instance—it was a thing of no importance to the manufacturer whether the manufactures were imported into this country, or whether they were buried in the ocean, or whether they were sent to other nations.

As to our obtaining supplies from France, there was no probability of that, they have prohibited the exportation of their woolen cloths to enable them to supply their domestic wants during the present war. All we could expect from them is silks, ribbons, &c. which are by no means necessary to the United States. It is therefore altogether likely the British manufactures would still find their way into this country, by a circuitous rout; but should this not be the case, would not the British merchants be able to find other markets at this time, equal to our consumption?

The present convulsed state of France, and war in Europe, has taken off a multitude of hands from every occupation, and has destroyed many flourishing manufactories, which will for the present open a door for the manufactures of Great Britain. And even France, will not hesitate to use such as they want, if they cannot otherwise get a supply—as the people of the United States did during their revolution, who went so far in some instances as to smuggle them in, in violation of the law—and there were some instances, in which they were obtained for the use of the army from within the British lines at New-York, under the sanction of the government.

Germany, Spain, Holland, and other powers at war, will also afford a market for British goods, so that they will not be at a loss for a market nor will their manufacturers be either starved or materially injured—and would have no other effect than to turn their trade into another channel. If the resolutions are to have their intended effect in this way, they must much lessen if not wholly prevent the importation of British manufactures; it would therefore be much preferable at once to adopt a non-importation agreement.—Here he asked if it was in the power of the government to carry such measures into execution?

The experience of 1774 ought to prevent our hastily adopting measures that might for a time stagnate if not wholly interrupt our trade. When our grain could not be exported the consequence would be, it would bear a very low price, and the farmers would be left a prey to domestic speculation of those who might expect such measures could not last long, if we were to commence the conflict which the adoption of these Resolutions would most probably bring on—he was apprehensive we should fall in the conflict, and it would end to our disadvantage.

It is said our exports are the necessities of life, and our imports are the superfluities, and therefore we can dictate our own terms, and Great Britain will be forced into a compliance. One gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Moore) grounded his whole argument on this supposition, which he finds to be fallacious.—The opinion Mr. H. has of the candor of that gentleman, induced him to hope he would give a different vote. With regard to our exports being so necessary to the existence of Great Britain, he observed, that she exported flour, salted provisions, and almost every other article of food that we did; and it will not be pretended that tobacco was a necessary of life—he had never found it so—never having made any use of it, he viewed it a luxury.

Our timber and naval-stores, are carried to Great Britain under protecting duties:—These articles could be supplied

from Sweden and Russia. Our rice was used as a luxury—our pot and pearl-shes would also be had from other markets.—In short, there did not appear to be one article of our exports, that appeared to be so much of a necessary of life to them, as their manufactures, especially their coarser woollens, were to us in our cold climate—to the northward, they were absolutely a necessary of life. We were in as much danger of perishing with cold as with hunger, and we can do as well without food as without raiment. We manufactured all our wool, but that fell very short of affording a supply.

He would not admit that the West India possessions of Great Britain were wholly dependant on us for a supply of flour; if we withheld that article they will get a supply from some other quarter, they did get a supply during our war, and if our flour should become necessary for their existence, it would find its way there by a circuitous rout; we should be obliged to sell to some other nation, to whom they could go for it, and it would not be in our power to prevent it.

It is said we can injure the navigation of Great Britain—is it not more effectually in her power to injure ours? Suppose she was to do no more than we already have, that is to put a greater tonnage on our vessels entering her ports than she does upon her own, should we not be the sufferers; our exports being vastly more bulky than our imports: consequently much more shipping is necessary to carry them to market.

The fact is, we derive mutual advantages from the intercourse, and it would be impolitic to do any thing that should cut off, or suddenly make any great change in the course of trade between the two countries—great changes in our laws or commercial systems ought not to be adopted, but in cases of apparent and very urgent necessity.

The friendly disposition which the French nation have manifested towards the United States, and their offer to enter into a more intimate and close connection, and to put our trade upon a more beneficial footing has been urged as a reason why we should adopt resolutions that will favour the commerce and trade of France. On this account he felt himself impelled however painful might be the task, to take some notice of the political situation and proceedings of that nation—he had admired the fervor of the French nation, they had engaged in a glorious cause, the cause of Liberty, a cause to which he became an early votary; a cause in which he had risked his life, and would most cheerfully do it again if necessary; he most sincerely wished France might succeed in establishing a free and happy government, but he could not approve of some of the measures they were pursuing to obtain this end.

Justice, humanity, forbid that we should approve of their leading to the block in some instances, and in others disgracing some of their best men, who stood foremost in the most perilous times; not for taking up arms against their country, not for a breach of duty, or betraying the cause in which they had embarked, but merely for differing in opinion from others, as to the means of accomplishing the same object; an opinion which their duty to their country and constituents, required them to advance and support. Are we to justify that conduct, which has brought to an ignominious death those patriots who have drawn their swords in defence of Liberty, and have upon the high places of the field successfully fought her battles?—Surely not. Many other exceptional measures might be pointed out, but he would proceed no farther—he equally disapproved he said, of the combined powers interfering in the internal affairs of France.

Is it a proper time when things are in such an unnatural convulsed state, to think of sitting down and forming commercial treaties or regulations with this nation? he disapproved of the idea of forming a closer alliance, than already existed, with a people who had so far transgressed the bounds of humanity, and more especially with those who had the power, and took the lead in those measures—this of all others is not the time in which we ought to wish to alter either our commercial or political connexion with France, or indeed with any of the European nations—for this reason it was equally imprudent and impolitic to embark in a commercial conflict with Great Britain; our situation being detached from the European nations