

such neutral nations, the French Republic has forbore to exercise this right, the forbearance has been perfectly gratuitous. The U. States, by virtue of their treaty of commerce with France, stand on different ground.

In the year 1778, France voluntarily entered into a commercial treaty with us, on principles of perfect reciprocity; and expressly stipulating, that *free ships should make free goods*—That is, if France should be at war with any nation with whom the United States should be at peace, the goods (except contraband) and the persons of her enemies (soldiers in actual service excepted) found on board the vessels of the United States, were to be free from capture. That, on the other hand, if the United States should engage in war with any nation, while France remained at peace, then the goods (except contraband) and the persons of our enemies (soldiers in actual service excepted) found on board French vessels, were also to be free from capture. This is plainly expressed in the 23d article of that treaty, and demonstrates, that the reciprocity thereby stipulated, was to operate at *different periods*—That is, at one time in favour of one of the contracting parties, and of the other at another time. At the present time the United States being at peace, they possess, by the treaty, the right of carrying the goods of the enemies of France, without subjecting them to capture. But what do the spirit of the decree of the Executive Directory, and the current of your observations require? That the United States should now gratuitously renounce this right. And what reason is assigned for denying to us the enjoyment of this right? Your own words furnish the answer. "France bound by treaty to the United States, could find only a real disadvantage in the articles of that treaty, which caused to be specified as American property, English property found on board American vessels." This requisition, and the reason assigned to support it, alike excite surprise. The American government, sir, conscious of the purity of its intentions, of its impartial observance of the laws of neutrality, of its inviolable regard to treaties, cannot for a moment admit that it has forfeited the right to claim a reciprocal observance of stipulations on the part of the French republic, whose friendship, moreover, it has ever cultivated with perfect sincerity. This right, formerly infringed by a decree of the National Convention, was recognized anew by the repeal of that decree. Why it should be again questioned, we are at a loss to determine. We are ignorant of any new restraints on our commerce by the British government: on the contrary, we possess recent official information, that no new orders have been issued. The captures made by the British, of American vessels having French property on board, are warranted by the law of nations. The force and operation of this law, was contemplated by France and the United States, when they formed their treaty of commerce; and their special stipulation on this point, was meant as an exception to an universal rule. Neither our weakness nor our strength have any choice, when the question concerns the observance of a known rule of the law of nations.

You are pleased to remark, that the conduct of Great Britain, in capturing American vessels, bound to and from French ports, had been the subject of a note, which, on the 29th of September, 1795, you addressed to the Secretary of State, but which remained without an answer. Very sufficient reasons may be assigned for the omission. The subject, in all its aspects, had been already officially and publicly discussed; and the principles and ultimate measures of the United States, founded on their indisputable rights, were as publicly fixed. But if the subject had not, by the previous discussions, been already exhausted, can it be a matter of surprise, that there should be a repugnance to answer a letter containing such insinuations as these?—

It must then be clear to every man who will discard prejudices, love, hatred, and in a word all the passions which lead the judgment astray, that the French Republic would have a right to complain, if the American government suffered the English

"to interrupt the commercial relations which exist between her and the United States; if by a perfidious condescension, it permitted the English to violate a right, which it ought, for its own honour and interest, to defend; if under the cloak of neutrality, it presented to England a poignard, to cut the throat of its faithful ally: if, in fine, partaking in the tyrannical and homicidal rage of Great-Britain, it concurred to plunge the people of France into the horrors of famine." For the sake of preserving harmony, silence was preferred to comment upon these insinuations.

You are also pleased to refer to your letters of March and April last, relative to impresses of American seamen by British ships; and complain, that the government of the United States had not made known to you the steps they had taken to obtain satisfaction. This, sir, was a matter which concerned only that government. As an independent nation, we were not bound to render an account to any other, of the measures we deemed proper for the protection of our own citizens, so long as there was not the slightest ground to suspect that the government ever acquiesced in any aggression.

But permit me to recur to the subject of the decree of the Executive Directory.

As before observed, we are officially informed, the British government have issued no new orders for capturing the vessels of the United States. We are also officially informed, that on the appearance of the notification of that decree, the minister of United States at Paris, applied for information, "whether orders were issued for the seizure of neutral vessels, and was informed, that no such order was issued: and further, that none such would be issued, in case the British did not seize our vessels."—This communication from the minister of the U. States at Paris, to their minister in London, was dated the 28th of August. But the decree of the Directory bears date the 14th Messidor, answering to the 2d of July. These circumstances, together with some observations in your note, leave the American government in a state of uncertainty of the real intentions of the government of France. Allow me, then to ask, whether in the actual state of things, our commerce is considered as liable to suffer any new restrictions on the part of the French republic? Whether the restraints now exercised by the British government are considered as of a nature to justify a denial of those rights which are pledged to us by our treaty with your nation? Whether orders have been actually given to the ships of war and privateers of the French republic to capture the vessels of the United States? And what, if they exist, are the precise terms of these orders?

These questions, sir, you will see are highly interesting the United States. It is with extreme concern that the government finds itself reduced to the necessity of asking an explanation of this nature: and if it shall be informed that a new line of conduct is to be adopted towards this country, on the ground of the decree referred to, its surprize will equal its regret, that principles should now be questioned, which, after repeated discussions, both here and in France, have been demonstrated to be founded, as we conceive, in the obligations of impartial neutrality, of stipulations by treaty, and of the law of nations. I hope, sir, you will find it convenient, by an early answer, to remove the suspense in which the government of the United States is now held on the questions above stated.

I shall close this letter by one remark on the singularity of your causing the publication of your note. As it concerned the United States, it was properly addressed to its government, to which alone pertained the right of communicating it in such time and manner as it should think fit, to the citizens of the U. States. I am, Sir, with great respect,
Your most obedient servant,
TIMOTHY PICKERING.

NEW BERN, NOVEMBER 19.
Extract of a letter from Norfolk, dated November 12.
On Wednesday arrived from Leogane,

Capt. Dunn, of the sloop Polly of this port, which was captured and carried in there some considerable time since, and from whence he escaped on the 15th October last, after fruitless exertions for the recovery of his vessel.

Capt. Benj. Parker of the schooner Three Friends of Charleston, and Capt. Brown of the schooner Hibernia of New-York, still remained there, endeavouring to obtain the release of their vessels.

THIS DAY IS PUBLISHED,
And for Sale at the Printing-Office,

THE
NORTH-CAROLINA
ALMANACK,
For the Year of our Lord, 1797.
And of AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, XXI, XXII,
Being the 1st after LEAP YEAR.
Calculated for the Meridian of RALEIGH, 35
Deg. 54 Min. North Lat. 3 Deg. 36
Min. Longitude, West from PHILADEL-
PHIA.

CONTENTS.

Chronological Cycles,
Solar and Lunar eclipses,
Calendar,
Remarkable days and aspect of the weather,
Rising and setting of the sun,
Phases, rising, louching, setting, age and
place of the moon,
Setting of courts,
Causes of a country's growing rich,
Receipt for preserving turnips from insects,
To preserve butter sweet the whole
year,
For bitters, to prevent the fever and
ague,
Cure for froit bites,
A method for preserving meet fresh for whole
years together,
Female heroism,
Anecdotes,
Poetry,
Character of St. Tammany,
The way to grow thin,
The way to grow rich,
Coins of the United States, as established by
law,
A table shewing the value of Foreign gold
coin, in federal and state currency,
A table shewing the value of cents, in state
currency,
A table of interest, at 6 per cent.
Price ONE SHILLING.
Stores will be supplied at the rate of six-
shillings per dozen, thirty-two shillings and
six-pence, per half-grofs, and three pounds
per grofs.
Orders from the country (by post or other-
wise) will be attended to.

RUN-away from the subscriber, in the
month of September, two negro men,
LENO AND WILL,

LENO is a stout made negro, of a yellow
complexion, with a large scar on one of his
cheeks. WILL, is a tall stout made ne-
gro, and very black, the small of one of his
legs is larger than the other, they are both
armed, and by the best information I can
gather, are gone to Newbern, or Clubfoot's
creek but a few days past. Any person that
will apprehend and secure said negroes, so
that I get them, shall be entitled to, and re-
ceive a reward of ten pounds, or five pounds
for either of them, and all reasonable expen-
ces paid.

JOSIAH HOWARD.

New-River, Onslow county, October 4.

FOR SALE,

SIX hundred and forty acres of land lying
in the state of Tennessee, and in the
county of Davidson, on the Cumberland ri-
ver. An undoubted right will be made the
purchaser: for terms apply to

THOMAS CURTIS.

November 19.

THE business respecting the copartner-
ship of HARGET & DOWNS; is amica-
bly settled to the satisfaction of the subscriber.
FRED. HARGET.

November 8.