

impulse of passion, are the only motives that would actuate a captain to commence a conflict with one of their vessels. Under present circumstances, neither his owner or himself could find an interest in such a rencontre. The voyage would be delayed, the vessel, cargo and crew endangered, and in the event of victory, he could not capture or hold the vessel of his adversary. Nor can great danger be rationally apprehended from the passions of an officer. Most owners will be solicitous to select discreet and steady men to take charge of their vessels, which to bear the expence of arming, will commonly be of considerable burthen and richly laden. The captain too will find an advantage in obtaining the approbation of his employer; he has usually a property in some part of the cargo, and consequently an interest in making his voyage safe & expeditious. If he attacks, even with a superior force, it is possible that he may be defeated, or at least meet with hard blows, and heavy damage; and he must be a singular commander who prefers fighting, for the love of it merely, to a tight hull, sound spars, whole rigging and quick passage; and still more rare must be those characters, who by beginning an engagement would expose themselves to the risque of being treated as pirates, if taken either by their adversaries or by other vessels of the same nation. These considerations would have a powerful operation upon the minds of most men, and if a few mad and inconsiderate persons should prove to be beyond their influence, the nation could not be justly responsible for their conduct. A nation is not bound to respond for the crimes of its citizens, unless committed under its sanction or authority. This remark is also an answer to the suggestion that persons who have been naturalized in this country may fit out vessels to gratify national antipathies and resentments. It is perhaps a better answer, that such cases are not to be supposed. Merchants, wherever they reside, do not undertake voyages for the sake of fighting a public enemy. The natives of Great Britain, especially know that the admirals and officers of that nation, manage that business better than they can hope to manage it.

Those causes of war may be termed unjust, which are assumed as pretences to commit hostilities, with views to gratify the lust of ambition or conquest. Whenever the rulers of a nation are inclined to levy war, and are in a condition to prosecute it with a prospect of success, so fertile is invention that pretences are easily found in spite of all the caution and of all the concessions, which can be used to avert this fatal calamity. A libel, a caricature, a pretended affront to a minister or a mistress, causes the most trivial and contemptible, have given birth to cruel and destructive wars. While prudence and policy forbid the United States to furnish to any nation a just cause of war; there is no reason to hope that the most timid caution and circumspection will avail to restrain the French republic from proceeding to the last extremities against this country, whenever she shall be at leisure for this purpose, and shall be confirmed in the belief that our internal divisions, and blind insatiation in her favour will enable her if not to conquer, at least to divide the Union. She will make no other war upon us but a maritime war, which, God knows, is bad enough at present; until she feels assured of that result. War is not the most effectual instrument nor the first which France employs in the manufacture of the Rights of Man; spies, emissaries *exclusive patriots* and the honest but deluded mass of the people, are the tools with which in other countries she carves revolutions out of the rough material. The generals and soldiers are reserved to give the finishing stroke, the last polish, but the main job is accomplished before these are taken in hand. If our American hearts of oak can be shivered and splintered by instruments of the first description, war will not be wanting to assimilate it to models already before our eyes; but if it should prove too tough and tenacious for those, the French will not attempt to hew the block with a sword, or pierce it with a bayonet. The object, Sir, of the present directory is to divide the people from the government, and subdivide the people from each other. You are assured of this by our envoys who have been sent to that country, and whose patriotism and services entitle them to full credit. You are assured of it by their envoy's uniform and repeated appeals to the people. You have been assured of it by the capture and plunder of American property continued and increasing for four years; and by their decrees which expose our citizens to the penalties of piracy, when pressed into foreign service. But above all you are assured of it by the fearful fate of other countries, by the bloodstained revolution of Geneva, the incorporation of Belgium, the subjugation of Holland, the divisions of Italy, the sale of Venice, the commotions of Switzerland, and their known design upon Louisiana and the Floridas. Can you, Sir, seriously doubt of their hopes and expectations that Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia will pass under their yoke? That they have an eye upon a Cis-Appalachian, as well as upon a Trans-Appalachian republic? Or that when their projects are matured they will not wait for us to arm our vessels, to justify open hostilities?

What reason can be alleged to make it probable that we may rely upon an exemption from this general deluge, or that our ark will float upon the surface until the peaceful dove returns with the Olive Branch? Surely their conduct towards us does not encourage these hopes—by their decrees that they made pretences for condemning our property in the front of a

plain treaty, and faster than we could conform to their capricious requisition, they have made new decrees and new pretences. Finding at length with what meekness we have sustained these outrages, they have objected pretences and made war upon our commerce, scarcely deigning to assign a tolerable reason. Do you not believe, Sir, that these decrees which directly or indirectly affect the greater portion of our commerce, will be backed by others that will sweep off all that is left? Sir, be not deceived, they have already commenced the only war which they can prosecute against us with success during the present posture of affairs in Europe. The only war which they will ever attempt, if we remain united. But they exult in the persuasion that we cannot continue so.—They flatter themselves that their agents by fostering our local animosities have completed the most arduous part of the business. Already their geographers with the scale and dividers mark out on the map of America her future circles, departments and municipalities. Already their *Buzarristes* and *Bernadottes* are planning future triumphs! Here with the army of the Mississippi and Ohio! There with the army of the Chatapeak and Delaware.—Remember, Sir, things much less probable have come to pass.

It is for these reasons, believing that the navigation and commerce of this country, have a claim to protection, and that a permission for a private armament is not perfectly adequate to afford such protection, is more efficacious than any other, and such as individuals have a natural right to estimate for themselves; Believing that this measure cannot accelerate a war by furnishing a just cause of complaint, and that nothing on our part will prevent a war, if the opinion becomes confirmed that we are a divided people—I am content to declare, that in my opinion this right should not be prohibited by law. I repeat that I am still ready to co-operate in such restrictions as may tend to remove the scruples and principal objections of its opposers. I should be content to limit it to vessels of a certain tonnage, to cargoes not contraband or consisting of the property of any powers at war, and to require bonds from the owners of vessels for their conformity to the laws of neutrality, and it is probable that the right of arming will be modified by certain restrictions of this nature.

To divert the public attention from the true question, it has been insinuated that a war with France will deprive us of our best customer. A comparative view of the exports of the United States to the French and British dominions has been mentioned as a proof of his assertion. There is no doubt that France may be a good customer upon two conditions, when she receives only what is lawfully carried or willingly sold to her, and when she pays for what she receives. But no just inference can be drawn from the comparison between our exports to those countries for the last year. Of eleven millions cleared out of the French dominions, not a third part consisted of our own manufactures or produce: and of that a large portion was destined for other markets.

The principal part of these exports consisted of foreign produce; the market for which varies from year to year. Our exports to the British dominions for the year preceding the last, amounted to 23 millions; to France in the same year, to 11 millions only. In a time of peace, by Mr. Jefferson's report, it appears that our annual average exports to Great-Britain were above 9 millions, and to France only half that amount. So that if this standard be assumed, the result for a series of years is not the most favourable to our trade with France, taking into view their seizures, embargoes, detentions and bankruptcies, it will be still less lucrative. This subject would lead to a very extensive enquiry into the state of our commercial relations, in which it would be easily demonstrated that our commerce would not suffer more in time of open war, than it will under the present predatory system. This enquiry would be superfluous, for no man of my acquaintance is desirous of resorting to an offensive war, and if this disastrous state be forced upon us we must prepare to meet it and its consequences.

While I pray to God to avert this formidable evil, I must declare my apprehensions, that the league of resentment with avarice, of ambition with violence, of power with fraud, which has overwhelmed the republics of Europe, and holds them in their fetters of despotism, threatens with the same fate, the liberties and independence of this country. It is time, Sir, for our fellow-citizens to rouse from the enchantment of mistaken gratitude, from the dream of delusive friendship, from the indolence of peace, and the apathy of riches. It is time for them to realize that the violence which depredates their commerce, will ravage their coasts and burn their towns. Their liberties were never in so much danger as at this moment. The pestilence of French politics, which walks in darknels, will be followed by the destruction that waiteth at noon day. For this pestilence, union is the only antidote. Against this destruction, union is the only safeguard.—It is efficacious and infallible. Our country will yet be happy in a spirit of union; such it was manifested by the inhabitants of Roxbury and Milton at the dawn of our revolution, should extend its sacred flame throughout America. You, Sir, whose zeal was so conspicuous at that eventful era; you fellow-townsmen, whose sacrifices and sufferings were so eminent will not readily surrender, without an effort, to one nation, the liberty and independence which you so hardly

wrested from another. Much, Sir, can be effected by your example; the spirit and discipline of the militia may be revived, the forts on the hills and islands in our neighbourhood may be repaired; and if any blind admiration of the French or of their measures, should yet lurk in the minds of any of the inhabitants of Roxbury, which I will not believe to be possible, no person is more capable than yourself of demonstrating its folly and its danger.

Such, Sir, are my sentiments; and though time and events can alone try their merits, my country holds the most substantial pledges for my sincerity and ardent affection. I am embarked with you and my fellow citizens in the same interest, I am bound to the same soil, my domestic ties are of the strongest nature, and the competency, on which I depend to educate my children in a moral detestation of all foreign influence, will be instantly and deeply affected by a war. The only favour, Sir, that I can solicit from you, or from the inhabitants of Roxbury, is a candid belief, that my endeavours to serve them are zealous and sincere, and ambitious as I am of their good opinion, the only mode in which I desire to secure it, is by obeying on all occasions, the dictates of my conscience.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,
H. G. OTIS.

KINGSTON, (Jam.) March 10.

Extracts of letters dated Port au Prince the 24th ult.

"We have been here under some apprehension, occasioned by the attacks made by the brigands on several posts, and the vessels that attended them at the posts of Nerd and La Coupe, (which nevertheless cost them very dear, about 400 men) and also the evacuation of the quarter of Grand Bois, for want of ammunition. On the other hand, Mirabalais, that is to say, the post of that name, is valiantly defended; and according to the last accounts from M. Monde, the commandant, 200 brigands have been slain in the environs of the fort. We have only 9 men killed and 6 wounded. I believe some troops will march instantly to his assistance. The greatest advantage we have obtained is at Boucassin, where they had also made an incursion.—About 3000 of their men were killed, the remainder were completely routed. If as we presume, they have raised the siege of Mirabalais, we shall again be left tranquil."

"The post of La Coupe, taken by the enemy, is a small fort at a considerable distance from Port-au-Prince, and newly erected."

"Six ships of war were laying in the harbour of Port-au Prince on the 24th February, which added considerably to the safety of the town, although the brigands did not venture near it."

The attack on Boucassin commenced on the 15th Feb. and lasted till the evening of 17th, when they were obliged to retire with great loss; We had four men killed and eight wounded. The enemy lost their Commandant Biret. They were in number from 3 to 4000, and were so confident of taking the post by assault, that they brought no cannon with them, and they even meant to attack L'Archeve with the cannon belonging to Boucassin. Several plantations were burned, and considerable damage done. Colonel La Pointe has behaved with the greatest bravery in defending that district."

March 17. I understand his majesty's ship Thorn, capt. Guiboigne, arrived from a cruise, last from Cape Nicholas Mole. She brings intelligence of the arrival of Admiral Sir Hyde Parker there, with several prizes taken on his cruise.

His majesty's ship Valliant, has taken and carried into the Mole, a French corvette, called the Little Magicienne, formerly the brig La Pandore. On board of this vessel were found five of the crew of the Hermoine frigate, and three deserters from his Majesty's frigate Aquillon.

A letter from Cape Nicholas Mole, dated the 4th inst. mentions that on the 28th ult. a man of war and some transports arrived there from Europe.

The prizes taken by admiral Parker's Squadron, are 4 brigs and a sch'r from Campeachy, of which the latter only is arrived at the Mole. A few days before the Squadron appeared off the Havannah, a fleet of nine sail of richly laden ships, under convoy of a frigate & corvette, had arrived there from La Vera Cruz,

LONDON, March 17.
ADMIRALTY OFFICE.

Copy of a letter from Sir John Borlase Warren, K. B. to Evan Nepean, Esq. Canada, off Isle Dieu, March 8.

SIR,
I take the liberty of acquainting you, that this morning a convoy of the enemy was discovered within Isle Dieu, to whom I immediately gave chase with his Majesty's ships under my orders; but the breeze dying away, I made the signal for the boats of my Squadron to chase, and I have the satisfaction to inform you, that the vessels mentioned in the inclosed list were captured by them: A schooner gun vessel and an armed lugger escaped into the Formentine Passage, near the Island of Normentier.

Two of the prizes are numbered, and laden with naval stores for the armament equipping at Breil, for the intended expedition against England; the rest have wine and brandy for their cargoes, and were bound from Rochefort to the above port.

I have the honor, &c. J. B. WARREN.