

The evident object of our Secretary, as well in this letter as in the late report of the committee, probably furnished by him, is to place the injuries of France and Great Britain on an *equal* footing ; or, even to give a darker shade to those of the latter. He had just been speaking of the principle of retaliation urged by Great Britain in justification of her orders of Nov. 11, 1807, and then adds, that the "French decree might on the *same* ground be pronounced a retaliation on the preceding conduct of Great Britain." That is to say, that the French decrees might with *equal justice* not simply be *pretended* to be, but *pronounced*, a retaliation on the British conduct. In still simpler language, France can as justly defend her Berlin decree on the ground of retaliation as Great Britain can justify hers of Nov. 11th, on the same ground.

As it is always best to simplify propositions as far as possible, before we proceed to prove the total falsity of this position, we shall remark, that even if it had been true that the two decrees stood in this respect in *pari delicto*, (in equal fault) still the circumstances under which they were respectively issued, ought to have excited ten times the indignation against France as against Great Britain, instead of drawing forth labored apologies in favour of the former.

*First.* With France we had a COMMERCIAL TREATY, purchased at an immense price, the sacrifice of the claims of our citizens to the amount of at least TWENTY MILLIONS of dollars.—This treaty *expressly FORBIDS* this precise form of injury which Bonaparte has adopted. This was the *first* instance in which we had ever had any occasion to resort to the stipulations in our favour ; and in this first instance are they shamelessly and without apology violated :—Nor does France pretend a violation on our part to justify the outrage. Let the government shew any formal complaint on the part of France, prior to the Berlin decree ; and without such complaint no such measure could legally have been resorted to, even if in other respects justifiable.

With Great Britain we were not only united by no treaty, but we had rejected under the most extraordinary circumstances, a convention which had been agreed to by our own ministers, and which would have placed our commerce and prosperity on the most secure footing. We had moreover done every thing to force that government into a declaration of war, and our existing state at the moment of issuing her orders was at least on our side, that of an enemy, or one disposed to be an enemy. We had interdicted the entry of her public ships, while we admitted those of her enemy ; and we had gone as far as it was thought our people would bear in the system of coercion, by *non importation* of her manufactures. So far then, we had no right to expect friendship from that Cabinet ; and of course, much less reason to be irritated at any measures she might adopt of an unfriendly nature.

*Secondly.* France not only gave us no notice prior to the operation of her Decrees, but by a policy truly Gallican, she allured us into her ports,