

the operations of the war, they had obtained the military possession of an important part of the state of Massachusetts, which, it was known, could never be the subject of a cession, consistently with the honor and faith of the American government.* Thus it is obvious, that Great Britain, neither regarding "the principles of a perfect reciprocity," nor the rule of her own practice and professions, has indulged pretensions, which could only be heard, in order to be rejected. The alternative, either vindictively to protract the war, or honorably to end it, has been fairly given to her option; but she wants the magnanimity to decide, while her apprehensions are awakened, for the result of the congress at Vienna, and her hopes are flattered, by the schemes of conquest in America.

There are periods in the transactions of every country, as well as in the life of every individual, when self-examination becomes a duty of the highest moral obligation; when the government of a free people, driven from the path of peace, and baffled in every effort to regain it, may resort, for consolation, to the conscious rectitude of its measures, and when an appeal to mankind founded upon truth and justice, cannot fail to engage those sympathies, by which even nations are led to participate in the fame and fortunes of each other.—The United States, under these impressions, are neither insensible to the advantages, nor to the duties of their peculiar situation. They have but recently, as it were, established their independence; and the volume of their national history lies open, at a glance, to every eye.

*See the note of the British commissioners, dated the 21st of October, 1814; the note of the American commissioners, dated the 24th of October, 1814; and the note of the British commissioners, dated the 31st of October, 1814.