

might be of engaging us in their mad contest, it could only be through insidious arts, by which the inexperienced are entrapped, or by repeated provocations. For twenty-five years, these designs were resisted with unshaken firmness. The advice of Washington, to keep aloof from the dangerous contest, was strictly observed. The nation was repeatedly exasperated beyond endurance, but the government opposed itself to the imprudent effects of wounded feeling. It appeared to be a contest between France and England which could injure us most, and on our part how long we could forbear. But there is a point at which this forbearance must become not only imprudent, but unjust. The pains we had taken to keep aloof from the European wars, at last came to be taken for pusillanimity, or at least for a want of energy in the structure of the government. It became fashionable to represent us as a mean and sordid race, incapable of any generous feeling, and exclusively devoted to self-interest, whom no insult no injury, could provoke to strike.

The practices at first resorted to for the purpose of engaging us to share their battles, were now converted into ordinary means of supplying