

of the questions which arose from time to time between the two nations, and which finally resulted in the war of 1812. The United States throughout the long war between Great Britain and France stood in the unfortunate position of a neutral whose commerce was certain to suffer from the several Orders in Council and Decrees which the belligerents launched against each other. The accession of Bonaparte to supreme power, although it brought the war between France and the United States to a close, instead of improving their condition as neutrals, made it much worse. In May, 1806, the British Government declared the whole coast of Europe from the Elbe to Brest, the territory occupied by the French armies, to be in a state of blockade. In November of the same year Bonaparte issued the famous Berlin Decree proclaiming the British Islands to be in a state of blockade, forbidding all correspondence or trade with England, and declaring all articles of English produce or manufacture contraband, and the property of all British subjects to be lawful prize of war. As the French fleets had been wholly destroyed, and the French Government had scarcely a vessel at sea, this was simply a paper blockade. The same term has been applied by American writers to the British blockade of the eight hundred miles of coast from Brest to the Elbe, on the alleged ground that Great Britain had not sufficient ships to enforce it. Yet in 1806 the British Navy numbered more than eight hundred vessels, manned by one hundred and forty thousand men. Some of the objectors to this so called "paper blockade" lived to see President Lincoln proclaim three thousand miles of the coast of the Southern States to be blockaded, although the Federal Navy of that period numbered