

wards publicly and stoutly denied, they were believed ; and no gentleman here will now be inclined to doubt the fact. These reports, and the mystery which surrounded the recommended embargo, naturally excited suspicions and alarms.

Of the French papers supposed to be brought by the *Revenge*, none were communicated to Congress, save a letter dated September 24, 1807, from General Armstrong to M. Champagny, and his answer of the 7th of October, relative to the Berlin decree, and a letter from Regnier, minister of justice, to Champagny, giving the emperor's interpretation of that decree. These three papers, with a newspaper copy of a proclamation of the king of Great Britain, issued in the same October, were all the papers communicated by the president to congress, as the grounds on which he recommended the embargo. *These papers*, he said "shewed the *great and increasing* dangers with which our vessels, our seamen and merchandise were threatened on the high seas and elsewhere, from the belligerent powers of Europe."

As to the proclamation of the king of Great Britain, requiring the return of his subjects, and particularly the seamen, from foreign countries, it was no more than every government has a right to issue, and commonly does issue, in time of war. This proclamation contained no evidence of *increasing* danger to "our seamen;" on the contrary, if I mistake not (for I have not the proclamation by me) there was a solemn, public injunction to his naval officers to conduct impressments with increased caution and care. So that impressments would probably rather be diminished than increased.

Let us now examine the three other papers, all of which, as I have noticed, and as gentlemen remember, related to the decree of November 21, 1806. This decree was issued at Berlin, by the French emperor, at the moment when, inflated with more than ordinary arrogance and pride, he was sitting in that capital of the Prussian monarchy, just then subverted by his arms.

The first article declared all the British Isles in a state of blockade. This, according to its terms, subjected to capture and condemnation all neutral vessels bound to and from British ports: but it seems to have been held in a state of suspense. But another article, declaring "all merchandise belonging to England, or coming from its manufactories and colonies (although belonging to neutrals) to be lawful prize," was to be carried into execution. Such was the decision of the emperor, as stated by his minister of justice on the 18th of September, 1807, in his letter to Champagny. This decision coming to the knowledge of general Armstrong, he, on the 24th of September, wrote to Mr. Champagny, and asked "whether it was the emperor's intention to infract the obligations of the treaty subsisting between the United States and the French empire." Mr. Champagny in his answer of the 7th of October, inclosing the letter of the minister of justice, with wonderful assurance, tells general Armstrong, that it was easy to reconcile the execution of the decree with the observance of treaties! although nothing was more obvious, (as Mr. Madison on the 8th of February