

demutation of the Horizon, which had been by the *act of God* stranded on the French coast :—Even barbarians would have respected the claims of humanity ; and the French government, estranged as it is from any honorable and humane sentiment, had it seems, on a former occasion, restored even an *enemy's* property thrown into their power by the *act of God*—But the submissive and humble Americans are not even entitled to the clemency due to enemies. The old feudal principle is revived, and their right to reclaim their property is denied to a nation whose government has placed them in relation to France in the condition of *Cerfs*.

This letter, which is a private one to our minister in France, goes further, and *admits*, and forever binds us, by its publication, to the admission, that the Berlin decree, if not enforced on the high seas, was lawful as a municipal regulation, and furnished no cause of complaint. As this same dastardly, incorrect and impolitick concession has been made by the late committee of Congress, who make so many professions of patriotism, and regard to our honour, it deserves some little consideration. This single idea is the basis of all their defence of the government, for having tamely submitted without remonstrance, to the decree of Berlin.

Now suppose there had been no order or declaration of blockade, but simply a declaration, that all vessels entering the ports of France and her allies, having touched in England, or having on board merchandize of the growth and manufacture of England or her colonies, should be seized and confiscated :—Is not this a violation of the law of nations, and a direct breach of the convention between France and us ?

Does not the 12th article of our convention with France secure to us this privilege ?—or, if that may be doubted, which perhaps it may, could France, without *previous notice*, not only interdict the entry, but order the confiscation of property, *bona fide* American, which had entered her ports, or those of her vassal and even neutral states, in full confidence of protection under the law of nations, and of our existing treaty, solely on the ground that the property was originally of British growth or manufacture, though *bona fide* transferred to a neutral friend ? If she lawfully might so decree, and so enforce her decrees, then all the seizures at Leghorn, Naples, and in France, are at once legitimate acts. On this ground they are defended by one of our public guardians, Mr. Madison ; and this official letter, being thus imprudently published, will form a perpetual bar to any reclamations for their unprecedented injuries. If the decree had been confined to an interdiction of entry into the ports of France, some little color might have been afforded for Mr. Madison's humble apology ; though, even in that case, it would have been the ground of just representation and complaint, that the prohibiting the entry of ships laden with American produce, for the single cause of their having touched at a British port, was a violation of that freedom of trade, of which France has been, in late years, the professed champion, but the most outrageous violator.