

House of Representatives by 70 to 41; but the term was extended in the Senate to 90 days, with which extension it passed both branches of the Legislature. This was a committal of the Administration to war; for it was admitted by the Government party, that, as a peace-measure, the embargo could never have been entertained. Still the opposition—notwithstanding the serious alarm they felt—professing themselves unable to believe that the Government would commit so rash and so “treasonable” an action as that of plunging the nation, utterly unprepared, into war, suggested that the embargo was intended to serve the interests of Buonaparte, by stopping the export of provisions to Spain, where the British arms were beginning to be triumphant. The measure, however, was undoubtedly designed as preparatory to war, for the declaration of which, at the expiration of the ninety days, the Government had now made up their minds. Mr. Alison describes the object of the measure only in part, when he represents it as intended to “prevent intelligence of their preparations from reaching Great Britain, and to furnish them with the means, from their extensive commercial navy, of manning their vessels of war.” Its main object was to remove from the ocean as many of their merchant-ships as possible, and thus place them out of the reach of British ships of war, when the proclamation of hostilities should become known. The passing of the embargo was conducted under an injunction of secrecy; but the secret was divulged: and the commercial cities which gained intelligence of it improved the few days allowed them in lading and despatching ships with extraordinary ardour and celerity. The Democratic journals were infuriated. Flour, by hundreds of thousands of barrels, they said, had been exported selfishly and unpatriotically, to feed the British troops in Spain. It was nothing to them that those troops were fighting in the noblest cause which God has ever blessed with success; fighting side by side with the soldiers of an oppressed people,—groaning beneath the exactions, the massacres, and the odious rule of a French usurper. These embargoes exhibited, in a remarkable manner, the blind rage of an irritated democracy, bent

on inflicting vengeance on an enemy even at the certain risk of greater damage to themselves. “The direct national injury,” says a writer in the *American Review*, of April, 1812, “caused by an embargo of twelve months duration, would be—

Mercantile loss,	\$24,814,249
Deteriorated value of surplus produce and waste,	40,196,028
Loss sustained by the revenue,	9,000,000

Total direct national loss,.....\$74,010,277

Or, \$6,167,523 per month.

The same moment, therefore, that the nation is called upon to aid their government with a loan of 11,000,000 dollars, this government, without any single openly avowed or obviously beneficial purpose, at the bare suggestion of expediency on the part of the Executive, destroys, by an embargo of three months, national wealth to the amount of \$18,502,570, not to reckon the indirect and collateral mischief, of enormous magnitude, with which the same measure is pregnant.”

President's Message,
1st June.

War declared on the 18th, and persisted in, although intelligence subsequently arrives of the repeal of the Orders in Council.

On the 1st June, “the President sent a confidential Message to Congress, in which he recapitulated all the causes of complaint against Great Britain;” and on the 18th a bill, declaring war against Great Britain, passed the House of Representatives, by a vote of 79 to 49; and the Senate, by 19 to 14. Hostilities were therefore immediately ordered to be commenced. “Nor did the American Government,” writes Mr. Alison, “make any attempt to recede from these hostile acts, when intelligence arrived a few weeks after this resolution, and before war had commenced,* that, by an Order in Council,

* No blow had as yet been struck. “Mr. Madison,” as the *London Quarterly*, of January, 1814, humourously observed, “had forged his thunderbolts; but held them yet unlaunched in his red right hand.” The pleasure of hurling them, however, was not to be resisted; more especially as the British standard in Canada was to be utterly shivered and annihilated by them.