

decide the utility of such compacts. If this can be gained, the exercise of doubtful or disputed rights may be suspended for future discussion and arrangement ; informal agreements may be substituted for permanent stipulations, and points of minor importance absolutely yielded. An enlarged view of national interests must exist in the government, or no treaty could ever be made ; for if a nation were to exact the full measure of its preconceived rights or interests, no other nation could treat with it on a footing of equality.

Great Britain claims a right to the services of its own subjects. We cannot deny the justice of this, for we claim and exercise as a sovereign state the same right ; so does France ; and so did every civilized nation of Europe. It has long been recognized as a principle of public law ; and the decisions of the proper tribunals, touching particular cases, have always been governed by it. It is as much the law in the United States, and the Supreme Court have so decided, as it is in England, that a man cannot divest himself of his allegiance. It is not then so much the abstract right, as it is the abuses connected with its exercise, which furnishes the ground of complaint. On this point, Great Britain has more than once discovered a willingness to provide against future abuses, by such concessions and informal stipulations, as would have given us all the security which the nature of the case admits. The British government proposed first to Mr. King, and afterwards to his successors, to limit the exercise of this right to the narrow seas, over which the right of dominion has been claimed for centuries. And can it be expected that Great Britain, under any circumstances, will ever formally abandon the mere right to reclaim her own subjects, while her navy continues to