

and collisions which were constantly endangering the peace of the two nations. The question, therefore, whether a treaty should be accepted in that form, could have admitted but of one decision, even had no declaration of the other party impaired our confidence in it. Still anxious not to close the door against friendly adjustment, new modifications were framed, and further concessions authorised, than could before have been supposed necessary, and our ministers were instructed to resume their negotiations on these grounds.

On this new reference to amicable discussion, we were reposing in confidence, when on the 22d day of June last, by a formal order from a British admiral, the frigate Chesapeake, leaving her port for a distant service, was attacked by one of those vessels which had been lying in our harbours under the indulgences of hospitality, was disabled from proceeding, had several of her crew killed, and four taken away. On this outrage no commentaries are necessary. Its character has been pronounced by the indignant voice of our citizens with an emphasis and unanimity never exceeded. I immediately by proclamation, interdicted our harbours and waters to all British armed vessels, forbade intercourse with them, and uncertain how far hostilities were intended, and the town of Norfolk indeed being threatened with immediate attack, a sufficient force was ordered for the protection of that place, and such other preparations commenced and pursued as the prospect rendered proper. An armed vessel of the United States was dispatched with instructions to our ministers at London, to call on that government for the satisfaction and security required by the outrage. A very short interval ought now to bring the answer, which shall be communicated to you as soon as received: then also, or as soon after as the public interests shall be found to admit, the unratified treaty and proceedings relative to it, shall be made known to you.

The aggression thus begun, has been continued on the part of the British commanders, by remaining within our waters, in defiance of the authority of the country, by habitual violations of