

additional men to put upon gun boats then completed or in process of construction. The country, however, was agitated by an approaching election for President and Vice-President, and for a time the vexed questions of search, impressment, Orders in Council, and Decrees were in the shade and had temporarily become of secondary importance. Meanwhile, events were transpiring on both sides of the Atlantic pointing to the abandonment of the policy of Orders, Decrees and Embargo acts. The able enquiry of Mr. Baring, in London, concerning the Orders in Council made a powerful impression upon the mercantile classes in England. The President of the United States had already taken some steps in the direction of repeal. As early as the close of April, 1808, he had sent instructions to Mr. Pinkney, in London, and Mr. Armstrong, in Paris, authorizing them to offer a repeal of the Embargo act on certain conditions; but the Government of Great Britain was not disposed to listen to any proposals while the proclamation concerning the interdiction of British ships of war in American waters remained in force; and the Emperor made no response to Armstrong's proposition, but maintained an ominous silence. In America the Embargo act continued to meet with violent opposition in various forms, especially by the leaders of the Federalists in the Eastern States, who characterized the act as a Southern measure, a subserviency to French dictation. Eminent lawyers in Massachusetts maintained that it was unconstitutional, the exasperation in New England was so great that action among the people and State Legislatures assumed the aspect of incipient rebellion.* Finally, external pressure upon the administration became too great for resistance, and on the 1st March, 1809, the act was repealed. As a pacific countervailing measure to induce European belligerents to respect the rights of neutrals, a non-inter-

* Lossing—Field book of the war of 1812.