

great value, as we think, he was recalled, on the apparent settlement produced by the Erskine arrangement. In 1811 he visited England, and applied at the Foreign Office for a reward for his services; but was referred back to Sir James Craig's successor in the government, "as better able to appreciate the ability and success with which his mission had been executed. Henry did not like this; and so, instead of returning to Canada, proceeded to the United States, where, in the genuine temper of an unfaithful hireling, he presented himself before Mr. Madison; told the tale of his mission; and offered to sell his papers. Mr. Madison closed with the proffered bargain, and paid him out of the secret service fund the large sum of \$50,000 for the papers; apparently having only a general notion of their contents, and not imagining—as we must argue from the handsome price he paid for them—how little they contained. He expected, no doubt, when he made the liberal offer of \$50,000, that the correspondence thus purchased would furnish disclosures highly serviceable to the Administration, both by blackening the character of the British government and by bringing suspicion and odium generally on the opposition in Congress,—perhaps by fixing a charge of treason on some. His disappointment, then, must have been extreme, on discovering that the British agent had received no authority or commission to offer bribes in any shape; that neither his letters nor the replies sketched out any plan of insurrection; and that the correspondence did not implicate, or even name a single citizen of the United States. Still, having got the papers into his hands, and paid dearly for his bargain, the President determined to make all the use of them that he could. He accordingly transmitted them to Congress, accompanied by a message, putting upon the whole affair the bitterest interpretation he could devise,—representing it as an effort, on the part of the British Government 'to foment disaffection in the United States, and to bring about the separation of the Eastern States from the Union. His end, however, was not answered. A momentary excitement, it is true, was produced: but, as he was unable to hold up to public indignation any of the "traitors"

whom he may have hoped to detect in Congress, nothing material was effected in favour of the Administration. The opposition were not silenced; for not one of their number was caught in the trap. Had the result been different; had there been grounds for suspicion against them, it would assuredly have gone hard with them—as to their influence at all events; for the minds of the multitude were in that heated state which renders the appeal of an unpopular minority to the bar of public opinion a perfectly hopeless affair. During the debate in Congress on the correspondence, a Mr. Johnson delivered himself of the sensible and elegant sentiment, that "he considered Canada as rogues' harbour, and saw in the correspondence additional reasons for attacking it." A vehement onset was made on the British Ministry in the House of Commons on this head; but, whilst they stated that Henry's mission was Sir James Craig's own act, unknown to them until all was over, they defended it on the ground that its object was nothing more than legitimate information, very desirable at so critical a time; though they admitted that the transaction was not in all its circumstances managed with perfect discretion. Poor Sir James was then in his grave; but, although his own voice was not raised in self-defence, we may venture to assert that his memory, which is that of a straightforward, honest, and fearless man, has not suffered even from the baseness of the agent whom it was his misfortune to employ. Alison's brief allusion to this transaction involves a slight error as to date, representing it as following the ninety days' embargo, of which we are about to speak. He uses, too, the words,—"certain documents found on a Captain Henry," from which the general inference would be, that Henry was detected, whereas he sold himself, as we have shown above, to Mr. Madison.

Ninety days' embargo,  
4th April.

War having been determined upon by the Administration, the President sent a confidential message to Congress, recommending, "under existing circumstances and prospects," an embargo for sixty days. A bill to that effect passed the