

conciliable with the permanent, as the present interest of the United States. The encouragement of foreign seamen is the discouragement of the native American.

The duty of government towards this valuable class of men is not only to protect, but to patronize them. And this cannot be done more effectually than by securing, to American citizens the privileges of American navigation.

The question of impressment, like every other question relative to commerce has been treated, in such a manner, that what was possessed, is lost without obtaining what was sought. Pretensions, right in theory, and important in interest, urged, without due consideration of our relative power, have eventuated in a practical abandonment, both of what we hoped and what we enjoyed. In attempting to spread our flag over foreigners, its distinctive character has been lost to our own citizens.

The American seaman, whose interest it is, to have no competitors, in his employment, is sacrificed that British seamen may have equal privileges with himself.

Ever since the United States have been a nation, this subject has been a matter of complaint and negotiation; and every former administration have treated it, according to its obvious nature, as a subject rather for arrangement than for war. It existed in the time of Washington, yet this father of his country recommended no such resort. It existed in the time of Adams, yet, notwithstanding the zeal, in support of our maritime rights, which distinguished his administration, war was never suggested by him, as the remedy. During the eight years Mr. Jefferson stood at the helm of affairs, it still continued a subject of controversy and negotiation: but it was never made a cause for war. It was reserved for the present administration to press this topic to the extreme and most dreadful resort of nations; although England has officially disavowed the right of impressment, as it respects native citizens, and an arrangement might well be made, consistent with the fair pretensions of such as are naturalized.

That the real state of this question may be understood, the undersigned recur to the following facts as supported by official documents. Mr. King, when minister in England, obtained a disavowal of the British government of the right to impress "American seamen," naturalized as well as native, on the high seas. An arrangement had advanced, nearly to a conclusion, upon this basis, and was broken off only, because Great-Britain insisted to retain the right on "the narrow seas." What, however, was the opinion of the American minister, on the probability of an arrangement, appears from the public documents, communicated to congress, in the session of 1808; as stated by Mr. Madison, in these words, "at the moment the articles were expected to be signed, an exception of 'the narrow seas' was urged and insisted on by Lord St. Vincents, and being utterly inadmissible on our part, the negotiation was abandoned."

Mr. King seems to be of opinion, however, "that, with more time than was left him for the experiment, the objection might have been overcome." What time was left Mr. King for the experiment, or whether any was ever made has not been disclosed to the public. Mr. King, soon after returned to America: It is manifest from Mr. King's expression that he was limited in point of time, and it is equally clear that his opinion was that an adjustment could take place. That Mr.

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