

to the conduct of a statesman, than whom our country has produced not one more firm, more wise, or more upright, was, by his candor ability and decision, brought to a happy conclusion, in fewer *months* than some more modern negotiations have occupied *years*, without being brought to any conclusion ; unless their utter *failure* may be called a *conclusion*.

In 1795, the United States were agitated to their centre, by the opposition to the British treaty. Artful and aspiring demagogues seized upon the known prejudices of the people in regard to the two great contending nations ; and exerting all their faculties to keep up the popular delusion, hoped that, by the loud and extended clamor, the president would be deterred from ratifying the treaty which Mr. Jay had so happily concluded. Here again were displayed the firmness and patriotism of Washington. Always determined to pursue the true interests of the people, although at the hazard of his popularity, he ratified the treaty. Here, it was presumed, all opposition would cease. But it again appeared, and with a more formidable aspect, in the national legislature. But I will not dwell upon it. The treaty was finally carried into execution. It had, however, one more enemy to encounter.

Revolutionary France, wishing to involve us in a war with Great Britain, which this treaty (merely of amity and commerce) had prevented, *pretended* that it was equivalent to a treaty of *alliance* with Great Britain. And seizing on this pretence, at once to vent her resentment, and gratify the rapacity of her rulers with the plunder of our citizens, she let loose her cruizers upon our commerce.

We urged the obligations of treaties, violated by these captures. She answered, *that she found only a real disadvantage in those obligations* ! and continued her depredations. Repeated missions of respectable ministers to Paris endeavored to propitiate her rulers, and prevail on them to put a stop to such enormities. But they were deaf to the voice of justice. Then it was that our government authorized an armed commerce, and equipped a small but gallant navy for its further protection ; and made other defensive preparations, such as have been stated by the gentleman from Connecticut.

If, sir, our country is now placed in a situation more "difficult, critical and dangerous," than at any of the periods to which I have adverted (though I am very far from adopting that opinion,) where shall we look for the cause ? If in 1794, when England had powerful associates in her war with France, and the latter had been comparatively, but little extended beyond her natural limits ; the United States, with perhaps two-thirds of her present population, and less than half her present revenue, were able to induce England to accede to their just demands, and to close all differences by an advantageous treaty ; how has it happened that the present administration, with all the accession of power from an increased population, and a more than doubled revenue ; when, too, gigantic France wielded the force and the resources of continental Europe ; and England, single-handed, was left to meet a world in arms ; how