

INTRODUCTION.

of the nation to whom they belong, and the just and humane of every country; and that an expectation was indulged, that orders would be given that the Americans so circumstanced, would be immediately liberated, and that the British officers should, in future, abstain from similar violences." In April 1797, Mr. King remonstrated against the growing evil. He said, that "the subject was of much greater importance than had been supposed; and that, instead of a few, and those in many instances equivocal cases, the American minister at the court of London had, in nine months (part of the years 1796, and 1797,) made application for the discharge of two hundred and seventy one seamen, who had in most cases exhibited such evidence as to satisfy him, [*Mr. King!*] that they were real Americans, forced into the British service, and persevering, generally, in refusing pay and bounty." In the autumn of 1796, the American Secretary of State, *Mr. Timothy Pickering* wrote to Mr. King instructing him to say that "if the British government had any regard to the rights of the U. S. any respect for the nation, and placed any value on their friendship, it would facilitate the means of relieving their oppressed citizens;" that "the British naval officers often impressed Swedes, Danes and other foreigners from the vessels of the United States; that they might, with as much reason, rob American vessels of the property or merchandise of Swedes, Danes and Portuguese, as seize and detain in their service, the subjects of those nations found on board American vessels; and that the President was extremely anxious to have this business of impressing placed on a reasonable footing." In September 1800, Mr. Marshall, then Secretary of State, wrote to Mr. King still at the court