

pressure certainly contributes to the tone of the national character and exertions.

But the speculations of statesmen and historians, the wisdom and experience of ages, the opinions of antiquity, the prejudices that were planted in our imagination, have all been swept away by the torrent of revolution and war that has lately rushed over the nations of Europe. The "temperate and undecisive contests,"* which, it was foretold, would long preserve the many balanced sovereignties of that continent, have been superseded by a warfare more furious and overwhelming than had been supposed possible. New and bolder ideas of government and of tactics will prevail hereafter; and the American republic must endeavour to keep pace with the genius of the age, or sink under its expansion. It must not be forgotten, that as business is transacted for the attainment of pleasure, so occasional wars are necessary to the security and permanency of peace. As long as a people refrain from offensive hostilities, a military genius is an attribute deserving encouragement; and it is especially the interest of the United States to cultivate so much of a warlike spirit, as may not be incompatible with their republican institutions. They are not in a situation to desire conquests. Their territories rather need concentration than acquisitions. The seat of government is so remote from the scene where armies would be required, that the republic has little to fear from the ambition of commanders. And despotism is less to be dreaded from the regular maintenance of a suitable establishment, than from its sudden creation, in case of emergency; when dic-

* Gibbon's Rom. Emp. vol. 6. p. 415.