As "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind" has not induced the two houses of Congress to concur in declaring the reasons, or motives, for their enacting a declaration of war, the undersigned and the public are left to hearth, elsewhere, for causes either real, or ostensible. If we are to consider the President of the United States, and the committee of the house of Representatives, on foreign relations, as speaking on this solemn occasion, for Congress, the United States have three principal topics of complaint against Great-Britain. Impressments

blockades ; and orders in council,

Concerning the subject of impressments, the undersigned sympathize with our unfortusate seamen, the rictims of this abuse of power, and participate in the national sensibility, on their account. They do not conceal from themselves, both its importance and its difficulty; and they are well sware how stubborn is the will and how blind the vision of powerful hatlons, when great interests grow into controversy.

But, before a resort to war for such interests, a moral nation will consider what is just, and a wise nation what is expedient. If the exercise of any right to the full extent of its abstract nature, be inconsistent with the safety of another nation, morality seems to require that, in practice, its exercise should in this respect, be modified. If it be proposed to vindicate any right by war, wisdom demands that it should be of a nature, by war to be obtained. The interests connected with the subjects of impressments are unquestionably great to both nations. And in the full extent of abstract right as asserted by each, perhaps irreconcilable.

The government of the United States easerts that the broad principle that the flag of their merchant vessels shall protect the mariners. This privilege is claimed, although every person on board, except the Cap-

tain, may be an alien.

The British government asserts that the allegiance of their subjects is inclienable, in time of war, and that their seamen, found on the sea, the common highway of nations, shall not be protected, by the flag of

private merchant vessels.

The undersigned deem it unnecessary here to discuss the question of the American claim, for the immunity of their flag. But they cannot refrain from viewing it as a principle, of a nature very broad and comprehensive; to the abuse of which, the temptations are strong and numerous. And they do maintain that, before the calamities of war, in vindication of such a principle be incurred, all the means of negociation should be exhausted, and that also every practicable attempt should be made to regulate the exercise of the right; so that the acknowledged injury, resulting to other nations, should be checked if not prevented. They are clearly of opinion that the peace of this happy and rising community should not be abandoned, for the sake of affording facilities to cover French property; or to employ British seamen.

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