

More all, it appeared to the undersigned, from signs not to be mistaken, that if we entered upon this war, we did it as a divided people; not only from sense of the inadequacy of our means to success, but from moral and political objections of great weight, and very general influence.

It appears to the undersigned, that the wrongs of which the United States have to complain, although in some aspects very grievous to our interests, and, in many, humiliating to our pride, were yet of a nature, which, in the present state of the world, either would not justify war, or which war would not remedy. Thus, for instance, the hovering of British vessels upon our coasts, and the occasional insults to our ports, imperiously demanded such a systematick application of harbour and sea-coast defence, as would repel such aggressions; but, in no light, can they be considered as making a resort to war, at the present time, on the part of the United States, either necessary, or expedient. So also, with respect to the Indian war, of the origin of which but very imperfect information has as yet been given to the publick. Without any express act of Congress, an expedition was last year set on foot and prosecuted into the Indian territory, which had been relinquished by treaty on the part of the United States. And now we are told about the agency of British traders, as to Indian hostilities. It deserves consideration, whether there has been such provident attention, as would have been proper to remove any cause of complaint, either real or imaginary, which the Indians might allege, and to secure their friendship. With all the sympathy and anxiety excited by the state of that frontier, important as it may be to apply adequate means of protection against the Indians, how is its safety ensured by a declaration of war, which adds the British to the number of enemies?

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 search, else where, 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 impressment, the undersigned sympathize with our unfortunate seamen, the victims 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 aware how stubborn is the will, and how blind the vision of powerful nations, 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 mod-