

At subsequent periods she has committed other wrongs: and if reparation had been demanded in the same spirit of candour and firmness which were manifested in 1794, that distinguished precedent authorizes the opinion, that a like equitable adjustment and reparation might have been obtained. But after a four years negotiation, in which volumes of essays and letters have been written, it has, like the seven years negotiation with Spain, been brought (in the language of the president "to an issue of some sort:" that is, every subject of dispute remains as far, probably farther from adjustment, than when the negotiations were begun.

It is this disastrous issue which now enters into our deliberations. According to the statements of the administration, we are brought into a situation from which we cannot advance without war, nor retreat without dishonor. Their negotiations with France have also terminated in mortification and defeat.

On the two questions of the impressment of seamen on board our merchant vessels, and a trade with the enemies of Great Britain prohibited in time of peace, the gentleman from Maryland, [Mr. Smith] was pleased to read some parts of a letter written by me last winter to the governor of Massachusetts, to be laid before the legislature: and on the latter (neutral trade) he also read the journal of the senate, which exhibited a unanimous vote declaratory of our right to that trade; and then the names of the senators (mine being one, who voted to request the president to demand and insist on reparation for the injuries done us in violation of that right; *and for this purpose to enter into amicable arrangements with the British government.*

On these two questions, I should add nothing to the observations made yesterday by the gentleman from Connecticut, but for the apparent intention of the gentleman from Maryland, to exhibit an inconsistency between my votes in the senate and the observations of my letter on the same subject.

It is sufficient for me to remark, that in the passages recited by the gentleman from my letter, my object was to shew, by exhibiting in a few words, to the view of my immediate constituents, and through them to the people of Massachusetts, some of the reasons which might have influenced Great Britain not to relinquish her ancient usage of impressing *her own seamen*; nor to consent that neutral vessels should carry on (as we and other neutrals were carrying on) the whole trade between the countries of her enemies in Europe and their colonies; to show, I say, that as much was to be said on both sides, those rights, as claimed by the United States, were not to be considered so clear and indisputable *as to justify a war with Great Britain*; into which the proceedings of the executive, in a variety of ways, seemed calculated to plunge us.

Before I quit this subject, I will make one more observation. It appears to be generally supposed that the rule respecting the colonial trade adopted by Great Britain, and usually called the rule of