

they had no intention of performing. On the contrary, the embarrassments of Mr. Madison's administration, in consequence of the non-intercourse act which he inherited from his predecessor, were so vexatious at the time that Mr. Erskine entered on the negotiation, that the President was in the humour of making concessions; and if he did make very material concessions to Great Britain, during that negotiation, we must regard them as extorted by his difficulties, without considering that he had it in view afterwards to evade them. Messrs. Smith and Gallatin, with apparent frankness and great freedom, spoke to Mr. Erskine of the favourable views and intentions of their government; Mr. Madison with greater caution; but all with an air and manner of sincere friendship, of the genuineness of which Mr. Erskine appears to have been fully convinced; in which Mr. Canning, on the other hand, at that time British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, seems to have put little or no faith at all. Mr. Canning, we feel convinced, was not very far wrong in his low estimate of the alleged friendliness of Mr. Madison's administration generally; but in this particular instance we could have wished that the secretary's sagacious scepticism had yielded to the confidence so generously reposed by the young envoy in the protestations he received. In consequence of Mr. Erskine's representations of what he believed to be an improved temper and tone of feeling in the United States, Mr. Canning—though he stated that he could see no symptoms of the satisfactory change suggested by Mr. Erskine—sent him new instructions, in two separate dispatches of the same date, (Jan. 23); one relating to the affair of the Chesapeake, the other to the Orders in Council.

In the former of these two dispatches, ample reparation for the attack on the Chesapeake was offered, in a promise that the men taken from that vessel should be restored; whilst it was added, His Majesty would be willing, "as an act of spontaneous generosity," to make a provision for the widows and orphans of the men who had been killed in the action. The proffered reparation was accepted; but the official note, intimating the President's acceptance of it, closed with the rude and most un-

gracious clause,—inserted, as Mr. Smith afterwards alleged, against his remonstrances, and by Mr. Madison's express direction:—"I have it in express charge from the President to state, that while he forbears to insist on a further punishment of the offending officer, he is not the less sensible of the justice and utility of such an example, nor the less persuaded that it would best comport with what is due from His Britannic Majesty to his own honour." This impertinent lecture on the principles of honor, addressed by Mr. Madison to His Britannic Majesty, was so deeply resented by the British Cabinet, that the negotiation relative to the Chesapeake was immediately broken off in consequence, and Mr. Erskine was severely censured for transmitting a note, containing language so discourteous and unbecoming. Offensive as this breach of propriety was, the British Cabinet, it must be confessed, carried their resentment of it too far, when they made it a reason for withholding reparation for an acknowledged wrong.

In regard to the Orders in Council, which were the subject of Mr. Canning's other dispatch, the correspondence between Mr. Erskine and Mr. Smith ended in an assurance given by the former, that "His Majesty's Orders in Council of January and November 1807, will have been withdrawn, as respected the United States, on the 10th June next. "To which Mr. Smith rejoined, that the non-intercourse act would be withdrawn, in virtue of the powers conferred on the President by the act establishing it, from and after the 10th of June;" and a proclamation, to that effect, from him appeared the same day.

Rejoicing in the United States.

The utmost satisfaction was felt in the United States by the Federal party, and by the moderate men at this favourable change. On the 24th of April, five days after the issuing of the President's proclamation declaring the resumption of commercial intercourse with Great Britain, the auspicious event was celebrated in New York by salutes of guns, ringing of church-bells, splendid illuminations, and other demonstrations of public rejoicing. The sentiments of the Federal Press appeared in articles preceded by