

ment has ever been brought, but which continues to be denied by hardy, though unsupported assertion, both in Parliament and through the medium of the press.

While this Edition was preparing, a circumstance has occurred, which must bring the contest between the United States and France to an immediate issue, and which fully evinces the propriety of the precautions that Mr. HARPER has pointed out to his countrymen. A decree has been passed in France, declaring that any neutral vessel, having on board any articles, either the production or manufacture of the British dominions, *though the property of neutral subjects*, should be condemned, together with its whole cargo, as lawful prize, if captured by any French cruisers. This truly piratical act, unexampled in the history of the civilized world, attacks the commerce of every neutral power, but it strikes at the very existence of that of the United States; since it is scarcely possible, according to the present course of its trade, to freight a vessel of that country for any commercial voyage, whether, in the first instance, homeward or outward bound, the cargoes of which shall not in part comprehend some article of the production or manufacture of the British dominions in the four quarters of the world. The necessary consequence, therefore, must be, either that the United States must totally abandon their commerce and navigation, or must have recourse to the same means of preserving their rank and station, and even their existence, as an independent country, to which Great Britain has been driven, by similar measures and for the same object.

*London, January 24, 1798.*