

To establish it upon such terms has always been the sincere object of this country, and, until a very late period, the avowed wish of Great Britain.

The twelve years which have elapsed have, with occasional intermission, been employed in endeavors to arrange those terms by negotiation, or to secure them through the agency of separate legislative enactments; and although the two Governments have more than once concurred in each other's views as to the conditions to which they would assent, their respective acts have resulted in the almost entire suppression of the trade. Since the 1st December, 1826, there has been a total non-intercourse between the United States and the British American colonies in British vessels, and the same in regard to American vessels, (with the exception of the permission allowed to the latter, to carry on a direct trade with the British North American possessions, the Bahama islands, and the island of Anguilla, upon terms prescribed by Great Britain alone.) The acts of the two Governments which have led to this result are so intimately connected with the positions which they respectively occupy, and of a nature calculated to have so much influence on the measures of conciliation and redress which may be adopted, as to render it important that they should be fully known and accurately understood. Your participation in the public councils has given you a general view of their principal outlines; but it is thought advisable to furnish you with a more particular exposition than the opportunities you have enjoyed would allow you to obtain. A very brief sketch of such as are most prominent is, with this view, submitted to you.

The direct trade between the United States and Great Britain was found to be so interwoven with, and dependent upon, that between the United States and the colonies, as, in a great measure, to deprive the former of the advantages intended to be secured to them by the treaty of 1815, so long as the intercourse with the colonies was monopolised by British navigators. Several efforts were consequently made, between the years 1815 and 1818, to induce the British Government to adjust this collision of interests by amicable negotiation. They were unsuccessful. In 1817, a proposition was submitted to our Minister at London by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Castlereagh, which was said to contain all that could then be assented to by Great Britain towards admitting the United States to a participation in the trade between them and the colonies. By this it was proposed to extend to the United States the provisions of their free port acts, which authorized a limited trade with portions of her colonies to the colonial inhabitants of foreign European possessions, in vessels of one deck, with some additional provisions in relation to the trade with Bermuda, Turks island, and the British territories in North America.

The terms contained in this proposition were decided by the Government of the United States to be inadmissible, and countervailing measures were resorted to.

The act of Congress of the 18th of April, 1818, concerning navigation, was passed. Its object was to counteract acts of a like character long before existing on the part of Great Britain, restrictive of the trade with her colonies in vessels of the United States. By that act, the ports of the United States were closed against British vessels coming from any British colony, which was, *by the ordinary laws of navigation and trade*, closed against vessels of the United States; and British vessels sailing with cargoes from ports of the United States were laid under bonds to land their cargoes in some port or place other than a colony closed against vessels of the United States.