

Great-Britain and the United States, were those of peace and amity.—This is proved by the declarations of the President to Congress, and the communications of our Ministers at the Court of Great-Britain, which were laid before that honourable body.* It is farther proved by the language of the British Ministers in and out of Parliament, and by the circumstance of our Ministers extraordinary having signed a Treaty of Amity, which settled all our differences, except the single one, of the right of search of merchant ships for British seamen, and on which point, it is said from good authority, Great-Britain was ready and offered to yield the right of search except as it respected the *narrow seas*, or that portion of the sea which immediately surrounds Great-Britain, and where the danger of the loss of their seamen, who are their only defence, was peculiarly imminent.

It cannot be doubted, therefore, that peace, so much to be desired by this country, would not have been interrupted, and that our profitable neutrality would have been continued, had it not been for the affair of the Chesapeake, which cannot be too much deplored. The question, therefore, is limited to the examination of the causes of that unfortunate act, and of the consequences which ought to result from it.

As a great portion of the irritation which has been produced, excited, and encouraged, has proceeded from an ignorance of the facts which preceded and accompanied that affair, it will be useful, before we enter into an investigation of the Law of Nations upon this subject, to settle, as far as possible, these *facts*.

In the summer of 1806, a French Squadron of line of battle ships and frigates having met with a gale upon our coasts, a part of them took refuge in the Chesapeake, to shelter themselves from their enemies. This rendered it necessary for Great-Britain to detach a Squadron to watch the motion of their enemies, and they accordingly, as they lawfully might, took their station in Hampton Roads. By the Law of Nations, and the principles of an impartial neutrality, we owed to both these Squadrons, equal protection. While we permitted the French to repair and refit their ships, re-

* See the President's Communications to Congress, on this subject.