

feeling ; that for them to adjust it, on any terms, would be like stripping the combatant of his armour before the battle was finished. No ; so long as the reclamation of an English deserter, or the taking of an Irishman with or without a protection, can arouse the passions of the multitude ; so long as the mistake, or wanton aggression of a single officer, in the impressment of an American citizen, can, without inquiry, or appeal to the proper authority, excite a spirit of resentment or revenge, against the British nation, so long will this subject be kept in reserve by the present administration.

2. The orders in council.

Great Britain justifies these orders on the ground of retaliation, and has pledged her word to repeal them, whenever the *fact* of the repeal of the French decrees shall occur. The administration at first contended that though a belligerent had a right to retaliate the injuries of its enemy ; yet neither could lawfully exercise this right to the injury of an unoffending neutral. The United States, as a neutral nation, had a right to prosecute a lawful commerce with either or both of the parties, so long as it preserved its neutral character ; and in order to satisfy Great Britain that this character had not been violated, by submitting to the Berlin decree, Mr. Madison, then secretary of state, urged that it was merely a municipal regulation, not intended to operate upon the citizens of this country, and as such afforded no justification of the orders. The principle was admitted, though the case it was contended had not occurred which would justify its application. But in this instance the administration were egregiously mistaken in their facts. They gratuitously assumed a falsehood, for the purpose of palliating the unexam-