

and the colonies of France, Spain and other enemies of Great Britain. A commerce just in itself ; sanctioned by the example of Great Britain in regard to the trade with her own colonies ; sanctioned by a solemn act between the two governments in the last war ; and sanctioned by the practice of the British government in the present war : more than two years having then elapsed, without any interference with it.

The injustice of this attack could only be equalled by the absurdity of the pretext alleged for it. It was pretended by the British government, that in case of war, her enemy had no right to modify its colonial regulations, so as to mitigate the calamities of war to the inhabitants of its colonies. This pretension, peculiar to G. Britain, is utterly incompatible with the rights of sovereignty in every independent state. If we recur to the well established, and universally admitted law of nations, we shall find no sanction to it in that venerable code. The sovereignty of every state is co-extensive with its dominions, and cannot be abrogated, or curtailed in its rights, as to any part, except by conquest. Neutral nations have a right to trade to every port of either belligerent, which is not legally blockaded ; and in all articles which are not contraband of war. Such is the absurdity of this pretension, that your committee are aware, especially after the able manner in which it has been heretofore refuted and exposed, that they would offer an insult to the understanding of the house, if they enlarged on it ; and if any thing could add to the high sense of the injustice of the British government in this transaction, it would be the contrast which her conduct exhibits in regard to this trade, and in regard to a similar trade by neutrals, with her own colonies. It is known to the world that Great Britain regulates her own trade, in war and in peace, at home and in her colonies, as she finds for her interest : that in war she relaxes the restraints of her colonial system in favor of the colonies, and that it never was suggested that she had not