

under the false and extravagant pretext, that the monstrous principles therein contained were to be found in the treaty of Utrecht, and were therefore binding upon all States. From the penalties of this Code no nation was to be exempt, which did not accept it, not only as the rule of its own conduct, but as a law, the observance of which, it was also required to enforce upon Great Britain.

In a Manifesto, accompanying their Declaration of Hostilities, in addition to the former complaints against the Orders in Council, a long list of grievances was brought forward; some trivial in themselves, others which had been mutually adjusted, but none of them such, as were ever before alleged by the American Government to be grounds for war.

As if to throw additional obstacles in the way of peace, the American Congress at the same time passed a law, prohibiting all intercourse with Great Britain, of such a tenor, as deprived the Executive Government, according to the President's own construction of that Act, of all power of restoring the relations of friendly intercourse between the two States, so far at least as concerned their commercial Interchange, until Congress should re-assemble.

The President of the United States has, it is true, since proposed to Great Britain an Armistice; not, however, on the admission, that the cause of war hitherto relied on was removed; but on condition, that Great Britain, as a preliminary step, should do away a cause of war, now brought forward as such for the first time; namely, that she should abandon the exercise of her undoubted right of search, to take from American merchant vessels British seamen, the natural-born subjects of His Majesty; and this concession was required upon a mere assurance that laws would be enacted by the Legislature of the United States, to prevent such seamen from entering into their service; but independent of the objection to an exclusive reliance on a Foreign State, for the conservation of so vital an interest, no explanation was, or could be afforded by the Agent who was charged with this Overture, either as to the main principles, upon which such laws were to be founded, or as to the provisions which it was proposed they should contain.

This proposition having been objected to, a second proposal was made, again offering an Armistice, provided the British Government would secretly stipulate to renounce the exercise of this right in a Treaty of Peace. An immediate and

formal abandonment of its exercise, as preliminary to a cessation of hostilities, was not demanded; but His Royal Highness the Prince Regent was required, in the name and on the behalf of His Majesty, secretly to abandon, what the former overture had proposed to him publicly to concede.

This most offensive proposition was also rejected, being accompanied as the former had been by other demands of the most exceptionable nature, and especially of indemnity for all American vessels detained and condemned under the Orders in Council, or under what were termed illegal blockades—a compliance with which demands, exclusive of all other objections, would have amounted to an absolute surrender of the rights, on which those Orders and Blockades were founded.

Had the American Government been sincere in representing the Orders in Council, as the only subject of difference between Great Britain and the United States, calculated to lead to hostilities; it might have been expected, so soon as the revocation of those Orders had been officially made known to them, that they would have spontaneously recalled their "letters of marque," and manifested a disposition immediately to restore the relations of peace and amity between the Two Powers.

But the conduct of the Government of the United States by no means corresponded with such reasonable expectations.

The Order in Council of the 23d of June being officially communicated in America, the Government of the United States, saw nothing in the Repeal of the Orders in Council, which should of itself restore Peace, unless Great Britain were prepared, in the first instance, substantially to relinquish the right of impressing her own seamen, when found on board American Merchant Ships.

The proposal of an Armistice, and of a simultaneous Repeal of the restrictive measures on both sides, subsequently made by the commanding officer of His Majesty's naval forces on the American coast, were received in the same hostile spirit by the Government of the United States. The suspension of the practice of impressment was insisted upon, in the correspondence which passed on that occasion, as a necessary preliminary to a cessation of hostilities: Negotiation, it was stated, might take place without any suspension of the exercise of this Right, and also without any Armistice being concluded; but Great Britain was required previously