could see, or hear, that they might be prejudiced by its advocates, (under pretence of protecting our commerce) in favor of this ridiculous and preposterous project—I rose, sir, for one to plead guilty—to declare in the face of day that I will not go to war for this carrying trade. I will agree to pass for an idiot if this is not the public sentiment, and you will find it to your cost, begin the war when you will.

Gentlemen talk of 1793. They might as well go back to the Trojan war. What was your situation then? Then every heart beat high with sympathy for France; for *Republican France!* I am not prepared to say, with my friend from Pennsylvania that we were all ready to draw our swords in her cause, but I affirm that we were prepared to have gone great lengths. I am not ashamed to pay this compliment to the hearts of the American people, even if at the expence of their understandings. It was a noble and generous sentiment which nations like individuals are never the worse for having felt. They were, I repeat it, ready to make great sacrifices for France And why ready? Because she was fighting the battles of the human race against the combined enemies of their liberty—because she was performing the part which Great Britain now, in fact, sustains—forming the only bulwark against universal dominion. Knock away her navy, and where are you? Under the naval despotism of France, unchecked and unqualified by any antogonizing military power, at best but a change of masters. The tyrant of the occean, and the tyrant of the land is one and the same, lord of all, and who shall say to him nay, or wherefore doest thou this thing? Give to the tyger the properties of the shark, and there is no longer safety for the beasts of the forest or the fishes of the sea. Where was this high anti-Britannic spirit of the gentlemen from Pennsylvania? when his vote would have put an end to the British treaty, that pestilent source of evil to this country? and at a time, too, when it was not less the interest than the sentiment of this people to pull down Great Britain and exalt France. Then, when the gentleman might have acted with effect, he could not screw his courage to the sticking place. Then England was combined in what has proved a feeble, inefficient coalition, but which gave just cause of alarm to every friend of freedom—Now the liberties of the human race are threatened by a single power, more formidable than the coalosced world, to whose utmost ambition, vast as it is, the naval force of Great Britain forms the only obstacle.

I am perfectly sensible and ashamed of the trespass I am making on the patience of the committee—but as I know not whether it will be in my power to trouble them again on this subject, I must beg leave to continue my crude and desultory observations. I am not ashamed to confess that they are so.

At the commencement of this session we received a printed message from the President of the U. S. breathing a great deal of national honor and indignation at the outrages we had endured, particularly from Spain. She was specially named and pointed at. She had pirated upon your commerce, imprisoned your citizens, violated your actual territory: invaded the very limits solemnly established between the two nations, by the treaty of San Lorenzo. Some of the state legislatures, (among others the very state on which the gentleman from Pennsylvania relies for support) sent forward resolutions pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, in support of any measures you might take in vindication of your injured rights. Well, sir, what have you done? You have had resolutions laid upon your table—gone to some expence of printing and stationary—mere pen, ink and paper, and that's all. Like true political quacks, you deal only in handbills and nostrums. Sir, I blush to see the record of our proceedings, they resemble nothing but the advertisements of patent medicine. Here you have "the Worm Destroying Lozenges," there, "Church's Cough Drops."—and to crown the whole, "Sloan's vegetable Specific," an infallible remedy for all nervous disorders and vertigoes of brain-sick politicians:—each man earnestly adjuring you to give his medicine only a fair trial. If indeed these wonder-working nostrums could perform but one half of what they promise, there is little danger of our dying a political death, at this time at least. But, sir, in politics as in physics, the Doctor is oft times the most dangerous disease—and this I take to be our case at present.

But, sir, why do I talk of Spain? There are no longer Pyrenees. There exists no such nation—no such being as a Spanish king, or ministers. It is a mere juggle played off for the benefit of those who put the mechanism into motion. You know, sir, that you have no differences with Spain—that she is the passive tool of a superior power, to whom at this moment you are crouching. Are your differences indeed with Spain? And where are you going to send your political panacea, resolutions and handbills exceptis your sole arcanum of government—your king cure-all?—To Madrid? No—You are not such quacks as not to know where the shoe pinches—*to Paris.* You know at least where the disease lies, and there you apply your remedy. When the nation anxiously demands the result of your deliberations you hang your head and blush to tell. *You are afraid to tell.*—Your mouth is hermetically sealled.—Your honor has received a wound which must not take air. Gentlemen dare not come forward and avow their work, much less defend it in the presence of the nation. Give them all they ask, that Spain exists, and what then? After shrinking from the Spainish jack-all do you presume to bully the British lion. But here the secret comes out. Britain is your rival in trade, and governed as you are by compting-house politians, you would sacrifice the paramount interests of the country, to wound that rival. For Spain and France you are carriers—and from good customers every indignity is to be endured. And what is the nature of this trade? Is it that carrying trade which sends abroad the flour, tobacco, cotton, beef, pork, fish and lumber of this country, and brings back in return foreign articles necessary for our existence, or comfort? No, sir, 'tis a trade carried on, the Lord knows where, or by whom;—now doubling cape Horn, now the cape of Good Hope. I do not say that there is no profit in it—for it would not then be pursued—but 'tis a trade that tends to assimilate our manners and government to those of the most corrupt countries of Europe. Yes, sir, and when a question of great national magnitude presents itself to you, causes those who now prate about national honor and spirit to pocket any insult,—to consider it as a mere matter of debit and credit, a business of profit and loss—and nothing else.

The first thing that struck my mind when this resolution was laid on the table was *unde derivatur?* a question always put to us at school—whence comes it? Is this only the putative father of the bantling he is taxed to maintain, or indeed the actual parent, the real parent, the real progenitor of the child? or is it the production of the canbinet—But I knew you had *no* cabinet—no system. I had seen dispatches relating to vital measures laid before you the day after your final decision on those measures—four weeks after they were received—not only their contents, but their very existence, all that time unsuspected and unknown to men whom the people fondly believe assist with their wisdom and experience at every important deliberation. Do you believe that this system, or rather this *no system* will do. I am free to answer it [illegible] am not so afraid of the fair, open, constitutional, responsible influence of government—but I shrink intuitively from this left-handed, invisible, irresponsible influence, which defies the touch, but pervades and decides every thing. Let the Executive come forward to the legislature—let us see whilst we feel it. If we cannot rely on its wisdom, is it any disparagement to the gentleman from Pennsylvania to say that I cannot rely upon him? No sir, he has mistaken his talent. He is not the Palinurus on whose skill the nation at this trying moment can repose their confidence. I will have nothing to do with his paper—much less will I endorse it, and make myself responsible for its goodness. I will not put my name to it.—I assert that there is no cabinet, no system, no plan—That which I believe in one place, I shall never hesitate to say in another. This is no time, no place for mincing our steps. The people have a right to know, they shall know the state of their affairs, at least as far as I am at liberty to communicate them. I speak from personal knowledge—Ten days ago there had been no consultation—there existed no opinion in your executive department—at least none that was avowed—on the contrary there was an express disavowal of any opinion whatsoever, on the great subject before you;—and I have good reason for saying that none has been formed since. Some time ago a book was laid on our tables, which like some other bantlings did not bear the name of its father. Here I was taught to expect a solution of all doubts, an end to all our difficulties. If, sir, I were the foe, as I trust I am the friend to this nation, I would exclaim—"Oh! that mine enemy would write a book." At the very outset, in the very first page, I believe, there is a complete abandonment of the principle in dispute. Has any gentleman got the work? (It was handed by one of the members.) The first position taken is the broad principle of the unlimited freedom of trade between nations at peace, which the writer endeavors to extend to the trade between a neutral and a belligerent power;—accompanied however by this "acknowledgement. "But inasmuch "as a trade of a neutral with a belligerent "nation, might, in certain special cases, "*affect the safety of its antogonist, usage,* "*founded on the principle of* NECESSITY, "has admitted a few exceptions to the "general rule." Whence comes the doctrine of contraband, blockade, and enemy's property? Now, sir, for what does that celebrated pamphlet, "War in Disguise," which is said to have been written under the eye of the British prime minister, contend, but this "principle of necessity." And this is abandoned by this pamphleteer at the very threshold of the discussion. But as if this were not enough, he goes on to assign as a reason for not referring to the authority of the an-"cients, that "the great *change* which "has taken place in the state of man-"ners, in the maxims of war *and in the* "*course of commerce*, make it *pretty* cer-"tain"—(what degree of certainty is this?)—"that either nothing will be "found relating to the question, or *no-*"*thing sufficiently applicable to deserve at-*"*tention in declining it.*" Here, sir, is an apology of the writer for not disclosing the whole extent of his learning, (which might have overwhelmed the reader) is the admission that a change of circumstances—("in the course of commerce")—has made (and, therefore, will now justify) a total change of the law of nations. What more could the most inveterate advocate of English usurpation demand? What else can they require to establish all, and even more than they contend for. Sir, there is a class of men—we know them very well—who, if you only permit them to lay the foundation, will build you up, step by step, and brick by brick, very neat and shewy, if not tenable arguments. To detect them 'tis only necessary to watch their premises, where you will often find the point at issue totally surrendered as in this case it is. Again—is the *more liberum* any where asserted in this book? That free ships make free goods?——No, sir, the right of search is acknowledged, that enemy's property is lawful prize is sealed and delivered.—And after abandoning these principles, what becomes of the doctrine that a mere shifting of the goods from one ship to another, the touching at another port, changes the property.—Sir, give up this principle, and there is an end of the question.—You lie at the mercy of the conscience of a court of admiralty. Is Spanish sugar, or French coffee, made American property, by the mere change of the cargo, or even by the landing and payment of the duties?—Does this operation effect a change of property?—And when those duties are drawn back, and the sugars and coffee re-exported, are they not (as enemies property) liable to seizure, upon the principles of the "Examination of the British Doctrine, &c." And is there not the best reason to believe, that this operation is performed in many if not in most cases, to give a neutral aspect and color to the merchandize?

I am prepared, sir, to be represented as willing to surrender important rights of this nation to a foreign government I have been told that this sentiment is already whispered in the dark, by time-[illegible] ts. But if your clerk dared to print them I would appeal to your journals. I would call for the reading of them, but that I know they are not for profane eyes to look upon I confess that I am more ready to surrender to a naval power a square league of ocean, than to a territorial one a square inch of land within our limits—and I am ready to meet the frient of the resolution on this ground at any time. Let them take off the injunction of secrecy. They dare not. They are ashamed and afraid to do it. They may give winks and nods, and pretend to be wise, but they dare not come out and tell the nation what they have done. Gentlemen may take notes if they please——but I will never, from any motive short of self-defence, enter upon war. I will never be instrumental to the ambitious schemes of Bonaparte—nor put into his hands what will enable him to wield the world:——and on the very principle that I wished success to the French arms in 1793. And wherefore? Because the case is changed. Great Britain can never again be the year 1760 Her continental influence is gone for ever. Let who will be uppermost on the continent of Europe, she must find more than a counterpoise for her strength. Her race is run. She can only be formidable as a maritime power—and, even as such perhaps not long. Are you going to justify the acts of the last administration, for which they have been deprived of the government at our instance? Are you going back to the sound of 1798—9? I ask any man who now advocates a rupture with England to assign a single reason for his opinion that would not have justified a French war in 1798. If injury and insult had, would have justified it, we had both in abundance then. But what did republicans say, at that day? That under the cover of a war with France, the executive would be armed with a patronage and power which might enable it master our liberties.—They deprecated foreign war and navies, and standing arms and loans and taxes. The delirium passed away,—the good sense of the people triumphed;—and our differences were accommodated without a war. And it is there in the situation of England that invites to war with her. 'Tis true does not deal so largely in perfectly, but she supplies you with a much more useful commodity, with coarse linens. With less profession indeed she occupies the place of France in 17 She is the sole bulwark of the human against universal dominion—No to her for it. In protecting her existence, she secures theirs. I not who stands in this situation, which England or Bonaparte—I practise the doctrines now that I professed in 1798. Gentlemen may hunt up the journals if they please—I voted against all so projects under the administration of John Adams and I will continue to do such under that of Thomas Jefferson. Are you not contented with being free and happy at home? Or will you surrender these blessings that your merchants may tread on Turkish and Persian carpets, and burn the prefumes of the east in their vaulted rooms. Gentlemen say 'tis but an annual million lost, and even if it were five times that amount, what is it compared with your neutral rights?——Sir, let me tell them a hundred millions will be but a drop in the bucket, if once they launch without rudder or compass into this ocean of foreign warfare. Whom do they want to attack——England. They hope it is a popular thing——and talk about Bunker's Hill, and the gallant feats of our revolution. But is Bunker's Hill to be the theatre of war? No, sir, you have selected the ocean: and the object of attack is that very navy which prevented the combined fleets of France and Spain from levying contributions upon you in your own seas——that very navy which, in the famous war of 1798, stood between you and danger. Whilst the fleets of the enemy were pent up in Toulon, or pinioned in Brest, we performed wonders, to be sure: but, sir, if England had drawn off, France would have told you quite a different tale; you would have struck no medals. This is not the sort of conflict that you are to count upon, if you go to war with Great Britain. *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.* And are you mad enough to take up the cudgels that have been struck from the nerveless hands of the three great maritime powers of Europe? Shall the planter mortgage his little crop and jeopardize the constitution in support of commercial monopoly? In the vain hope of satisfying the insatiable greediness of trade? Administer the constitution upon its own principles, for the general welfare, and not for the benefit of any particular class of men. Do you medidate war for the possession of Baton-Rouge, or Mobille, places which your laws declare to be within your limits? Is it even for the fair trade that exchanges your surplus products for such foreign articles as you require? No, sir, 'tis for a circuitous traffic—an ignis fatuus. And against whom? A nation from whom you have any thing to fear? I speak as to our liberties. No, sir, with a nation from you have nothing, or next to nothing, to fear: to the aggrandizement of one against which you have every thing to dread. [illegible] dignity and interest——not to their disposition. When you rely on that the case is desperate. Is it to be inferred from all this that I would yield to Great Britain? No, I would act towards her *now*, as I was disposed to do towards France in 1798-9; treat with her: and for the same reason, on the same principles. Do I say I would treat with her? At this moment you have a negotiation pending with her government. With her you have not tried negotiation and failed, totally failed, as you have done with Spain, or rather France. And wherefore under such circumstances this hostile spirit to the one, and this——(I won't say what)——to the other.

But a great deal is said about the laws of nations. What is national law, but *national power guided by national interest?* You yourselves acknowledge and practice upon this principle where you can, or where you dare; with the Indian tribes for instance. I might give another and more forcible illustration. Will the learned lumber of your libraries add a ship to your fleet, or a shilling to your revenue? Will it pay or maintain a single soldier? and will you preach and prate of violations of your neutral rights when you tamely and meanly submit to the violation of your territory? Will you collar the stealer of your sheep & let him escape that has invaded the repose of your fire side; has insulted your wife and children under your own roof? This is the heroism of truck and traffic, the public spirit of solid avarice. Great Britain violates your flag on the high seas. What is her situation? contending, not for the dismantling of Dunkirk—for Quebeck, or Pondicherry, but for London and Westminster, for life—Her enemy violating, at will, the territories of other nations—acquiring thereby a colossal power that threatens the very existence of her rival. But she has one vulnerable point to the arms of her adversary, which covers with the ensigns of neutrality. She draws the neutral flag over the heel of Achilles. And can you ask that adversary to respect it, at the expence of her existence? and in favor of whom? an enemy that respects no neutral territory of Europe, and not even your own. I repeat that the insults of Spain towards this nation have been at the instigation of France; that there is no longer any Spain. Well, sir, because the French government do not put this into the Moniteur, you choose to shut your eyes to it. None so blind as those who will not see. You shut your own eyes, and to blind those of other people, you go into conclave—and fling out again and say—"a great affair of state!" *C'est une grande affaire d'Etat!* It seems that your sensibility is entirely confined to the extremities. You may be pulled by the nose and ears, and never feel it; but let your strong box be attacked, and you are all nerve. "Let us go to war!" Sir, if they called on me for my little *peculium*, to carry it on, perhaps I might give it; but my rights and liberties are involved in the grant, and I will never surrender them while I have life. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Crowninshield) is for spunging the debt. I can never consent to it—I will never bring the ways and means of fraudulent bankruptcy into your committee of supply. Confiscation and swindling shall never be found among my estimates to meet the current expenditure of peace or war. No sir, I have said with the doors closed, and I say so when they are open, "pay the public debt." Get rid of that dead weight upon your government, that cramp upon all your measures, and then you may put the world at defiance. So long as it hangs upon you, you must have revenue, and to have revenue we must have commerce—commerce, peace. And shall these nefarious schemes be advised for lightening the public burthens—will you resort to these low and pitiful shifts—dare even to mention these dishonest artifices to eke out your expences, when the public treasure is lavished on Turks and infidels, on singing boys and dancing girls, to furnish the means of beastiality to an African barbarian?

Gentlemen say that Great Britain will count upon our divisions. How! What does she know of them? Can they ever expect greater unanimity than prevailed at the last Presidential election. No, sir, 'tis the gentleman's own conscience that squeaks. But if she cannot calculate upon your divisions, at least she may reckon upon your pusillanimity. She may well despise the resentment that cannot be excited to honorable battle on its own ground, the mere effusion of mercantile cupidity. Gentlemen talk of repealing the British Treaty. The gentleman from Pennsylvania should have thought of that, before he voted to carry it into effect. And what is all this for? A point which G. Britain will not abandon to Russia, you expect her to yield to you. Russia indisputably the second power of continental Europe—with half a million of hardy troops—with sixty sail of the line; thirty millions of subjects; a territory more extensive than even our own; Russia, sir, the storehouse of the British navy; whom it is not more the policy and the interest, than the sentiment of that government, to soothe and to conciliate; her sole hope of a diversion on the continent; her only efficient ally. What this formidable power cannot obtain with fleets and armies, you will command by writ; with pot-hooks and hangers. I am for no such policy. True honor is always the same. Before you enter into a contest, public or private, be sure you have fortitude enough to go through with it. If you mean war, say so, and prepare for it: look on the other side; behold the respect in which France holds neutral rights on land; observed her conduct in regard to the Franconian estates of the king of Prussia: I say nothing of the petty powers; of the elector of Baden or of the Swiss; I speak of a first rate monarchy of Europe, and at a moment too when its neutrality was the object of of all others nearest to the heart of the French emperor. If you make him monarch of the ocean you may bid adieu to it forever. You may take your leave, sir, of navigation——even of the Mississippi. What is the situation of New-Orleans if attacked to-morrow? Filled with a discontented and repining people——whose language, manners, and religion all incline them to the invader——a dissatisfied people who despise the miserable governor you have set over them—whose honest prejudices and basest passions alike take part against you. I draw my information from no dubious source—from a native American, an enlightened member of that odious and imbecile government. You have official information that the town and its dependencies are utterly defenceless & untenable——a firm belief that (apprised of this) government would do something to put the place in a state of security, alone has kept the American portion of that community quiet. You have held that post, you now hold it by the tenure of the naval predominance of England, and yet you are for a British naval war.

There are now but two great commercial nations—Great Britain is one,—we are the other. When you consider the many points of contact between our interests, you may be surprised that there has been so little collision. Sir, to the other belligerent nations of Europe your navigation is a convenience, a necessary. If you do not carry for them they must starve at least for the luxuries of life, which custom has rendered almost indispensible. And if you cannot act with some degree of spirit towards those who are dependent upon you as carriers, do you reckon to brow-beat a jealous rival, who, the moment she lets slip the dogs of war, sweeps you, at a blow, from the

(Mr. R.'s speech concluded in the last page of this paper.)