lieved it we were to have war on the ocean, that we should do more mischief by individual enterprise, by seizing a straggler here and a straggler there, plundering a squadron here and a squadron there, than by any regular force of the U. S. With respect to invasions of our territory, he had understood that gun-boats co-operating with fortifications, were competent to the defence of our harbors. Now it seemed that they could not drive out a piccaroon. And would any one say that this immense appropriation for gun-boats would have been made but under an expectation that they would supercede the necessity of frigates? He said he should not himself have voted for the gun-boats if he had supposed that the House would have refused the other part of the system—the marine militia. He adverted to the refusal of the proposition to erect dry docks, and the subsequent proposition for a marine militia. He concluded by observing that he conceived that the terms of the amendment went to cast a censure on the President, to dishonor that sage whom gentlemen affected to revere.

(Sketch to be continued.)

DEBATE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS CONTINUED.

December 7.

Mr. Quincy.—Mr. Speaker, I offer myself to the view of this House with very sensible embarrassment, in attempting to follow the honorable member from Tennessee (Mr. Campbell) a gentleman, who holds so distinguished a station on this floor, through thy blessing, Mr. Speaker, on his talents and industry. I place myself, with much reluctance, in competition with this, our great political Æneas—an illustrious leader of antiquity, whom, in his present relations, and with his present projects, the gentleman from Tennessee not a little resembles. Since, in order to evade the ruin impending over our cities, taking my honorable colleague (Mr. Bacon) by one hand, and the honorable gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Montgomery) by the other, little Iulus and wife Creusa, he is posting away into the woods, with Father Anchises and all the household gods.

When I had the honor of addressing this House, a few days ago, I touched this famous report of our committee of foreign relations, perhaps, a little too carelessly; perhaps I handled it a little too roughly, considering its tender age and the manifest delicacy of its constitution. But, sir, I had no idea of affecting very exquisitely the sensibilities of any gentleman. I thought that this was a common report of one of our ordinary committees, which I had a right to canvass, or to slight, to applaud, or to censure, without raising any extraordinary concern, either here or elsewhere. But from the general excitement, which my inconsiderate treatment of this subject occasions, I fear that I have been mistaken. This can be no mortal fabric, Mr. Speaker. *This must be that image which fell down from Jupiter—present, or future.* Surely, nothing but a being of *celestial origin* would raise such tumult in minds, attempered like those, which lead the destinies of this House.

Sir, I thought that this report had been a common piece of wood—'*Inutile lignum.*' Sir, just such a piece of wood as any day laborer might have hewed out in an hour, had he health and a hatchet. But it seems that our honorable chairman of the committee of foreign relations, "*maluit esse Deum.*" Well, sir, I have no objections. If the workmen will, a God it shall be. I only wish, that when gentlemen bring their sacred things upon this floor, that they would "blow a trumpet before them, as the Heathens do," on such occasions, to the end, that all true believers may prepare themselves to adore and tremble, and that all unbelievers may turn aside, and not disturb their devotions.

I assure gentlemen, that I meant to commit no sacrilege. I had no intention, sir, of canvassing very strictly this report. I supposed that, when it had been published and circulated, it had answered all the purposes of its authors, and I felt no disposition to interfere with them. But the House is my witness, that I am compelled, by the clamour raised, on all sides, by the friends of administration, to descend to particulars, and to examine it somewhat minutely.

My honorable Colleague, (Mr. Bacon) was pleased the other day to assert:————Sir, in referring to his observations on a former occasion, I beg the House not to imagine, that I am about to follow him. No, sir. I will neither follow nor imitate him. I hang upon no man's skirts. I run barking at no man's heel. I canvass principles and measures, solely with a view to the great interests of my country. The idea of personal victory is lost, in the total absorption of sense and mind, in the importance of impending consequences—I say, he was pleased to assert, that I had dealt in general allegations, against this report, without pointing at any particular objection. And the honorable chairman (Mr. Campbell) has reiterated the charge. Both have treated this alleged omission with no little asperity. Yet, sir, it is very remarkable, that so far from dealing in general allegations, I explicitly stated my objections. The alternatives presented by the report—war or suspension of our rights, and the recommendation of the latter, rather than take the risque of the former, I expressly censured. I went farther—I compared these alternatives with an extract from an address made by the first continental Congress to the inhabitants of Great Britain, and attempted to shew, by way of contrast, what I thought, the disgraceful spirit of the report. Yet these gentlemen complain that I dealt in general allegations. Before I close, sir, they will have, I hope, no reason to repeat such objections. I trust, I shall be particular to their content.

Before entering upon an examination of this report, it may be useful to recollect, how it originated.

By the 3d section of the 2d article of the constitution, it is declared, that the President of the U. S. "shall, from time to time, give to Congress information of the state of the union, and *recommend to their consideration such measures* as he shall judge necessary and expedient." It is, then, the duty of the President to recommend such measures as in his judgment Congress ought to adopt. A great crisis is impending over our country. It is a time of alarm and peril and distress. How has the President performed this constitutional duty? Why, after recapitulating, in a formal message, our dangers and his trials, he expresses his confidence that we shall "with an unerring regard to the essential rights and interests of the nation, weigh and compare the *painful alternatives,* out of which a choice is to be made," and that "*the alternative chosen* will be maintained with fortitude and patriotism." In this way our chief magistrate performs his duty. A storm is approaching—the captain calls his choice hands upon deck, leaves the rudder swinging, and sets the crew to scuffle about *alternatives.* This message, pregnant with non-descript alternatives, is received by this House. And what do we? Why, constitute a great committee of foreign relations, and lest they should not have their attention completely occupied by the pressing exigencies of those with France and Great Britain, they are endowed with the whole mass; British, Spanish and French; Barbary powers and Indian neighbors. And what does this committee? Why, after seven days solemn conclave, they present to this House an illustrious report, loaded with *alternatives—nothing but alternatives.*—The cold meat of the palace is hashed and served up to us, piping hot, from our committee room.

In considering this report, I shall pay no attention to either its beginning or its conclusion. The former consists of shavings from old documents, and the latter of bird lime for new converts. The twelfth page is the heart of this report. That I mean to canvass. And I do assert, that there is not one of all the principal positions, contained in it, which is true in the sense and to the extent assumed by the committee. Let us examine each separately.

"Your committee can perceive no other alternative, but abject and degrading submission—war with both nations—or a continuance and enforcement of the present suspension of our commerce." Here is a tri-forked alternative. Let us consider each branch and see if either be true in the sense assumed by the committee. The 1st, "abject and degrading submission," takes two things for granted; that trading, pending the edicts of France and G. Britain, is submission; and next, that it is submission, in its nature, abject and degrading. Neither is true. It is not submission to trade, pending those edicts, because they do not command you to trade. They command you not to trade. When you refuse to trade you submit, not when you carry on that trade, as far as you can, which they prohibit. Again, it is not true that such trading is abject and disgraceful, and that too upon the principles avowed by the advocates of this report. Trading, while these edicts are suspended over our commerce is submission, say they, because we have not physical force to resist the power of these belligerents; of course, if we trade, we must submit to these restrictions; not having power to evade, or break through them. Now admit for the sake of argument, what however in fact I deny, that the belligerents have the power to carry into effect their decrees so perfectly, that by reason of the orders of Great Britain we are physically disabled from going to France, and that by the edicts of France we are in like manner disabled from going to G. Britain. If such be our case, in relation to these powers, the question is, whether submitting to exercise all the trade, which remains to us, notwithstanding these edicts is "*abject and degrading.*"

In the first place, I observe, that submission is not to beings constituted as we are, always "*abject and degrading.*" We submit to the decrees of Providence—to the laws of our nature—absolute weakness submits to absolute power—and there is nothing in such submission, shameful or degrading. It is no dishonor for finite not to contend with infinite. There is no loss of reputation, if creatures, such as men, perform not impossibilities. If then, it be true, in the sense asserted by some of the advocates of this report, that it is physically impossible for us to trade with France and G. Britain, and their dependencies, by reason of these edicts, still there is nothing "*abject or degrading*" in carrying on such trade as these edicts leave open to us, let it be never so small or so trifling; which however it might be easily shewn, as it has been, that it is neither the one nor the other. Sir, in this point of view, it is no more disgraceful for us to trade to Sweden, to China, to the North West coast, or to Spain and her dependencies, not one of which countries is now included in those edicts, than it is disgraceful for us to walk, because we are unable to fly; no more than it is shameful for man to use and enjoy the surface of this globe, because he has not, at his command, the whole circle of nature, and cannot range at will, over all the glorious spheres, which constitute the universe.

The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Campbell) called upon us just now, to tell him what was disgraceful submission, if carrying on commerce, under these restrictions, was not such submission I will tell that gentleman, that submission is "*abject and disgraceful,*" which yields to the decrees of frail and feeble power, as though they were irresistible—which takes council of fear, and weighs not our comparative force—which abandons the whole, at a summons to deliver up a part—which makes the will of others the measure of rights, which God and nature not only have constituted eternal and unalienable, but have also endued us with ample means to maintain.

My argument on this clause of the report of the committee, may be presented in this form: either the United States have, or they have not, physical ability to carry on commerce, in defiance of the edicts of both, or of either of these nations. If we have not physical ability to carry on the trade, which they prohibit, then it is no disgrace to exercise that commerce, which these irresistible decrees permit. If we have such physical ability, then, to the degree, in which we abandon that commerce, which we have power to carry on, is our submission "*abject and disgraceful.*" It is yielding without struggle; It is sacrificing our rights, not because we have not force, but because we have not spirit to maintain them. It is in this point of view that I am disgusted with this report. It abjures what it recommends; it declaims, in heroics, against submission, and proposes, in creeping prose, a tame and servile subserviency.

It cannot be concealed, let gentlemen try as much as they will, that we can trade, not only with one, but with both these belligerents, notwithstanding these restrictive decrees. The risque to Great Britain against French capture, scarcely amounts to two per cent. That to France against Great Britain is, unquestionably much greater. But what is that to us? It is not our fault, if the power of Britain on the ocean is superior to that of Bonaparte. It is equal and exact justice between both nations, for us to trade with both, as far as it is in our power. Great as the power of Britain is on the ocean, the enterprize and intrepidity of our merchants are more than a match for it. They will get your products to the continent in spite of her navy. But suppose they do not? Suppose they fail, and are captured in the attempt? What is that to us? After we have given them full notice of all their dangers and perfect warning, either of our inability, or of our determination not to protect them if they take the risque, it is at their peril; and upon whom does the loss fall? As it does now, through the operation of your embargo on the planter, on the farmer, on the mechanic, on the day laborer? No, sir. On the insurer, on the capitalist, on those who in the full exercise of their intelligence, apprised of all circumstances, are willing to take the hazard for the sake of the profit.

I will illustrate my general idea by a supposition. There are two avenues to the ocean, from the harbor of New York, by the Narrows and thro' Long Island Sound. Suppose the fleets both of France and Great Britain should block up the Narrows, so that to pass them would be physically impossible, in the relative state of our naval force. Will gentlemen seriously contend that there would be any thing "*abject or disgraceful,*" if the people of New York should submit to carry on their trade through the Sound? Would the remedy, for this interference with our rights be abandoning the ocean altogether? Again—suppose that instead of both nations blockading the same, each should station its force at a different one. France at the mouth of the Sound, Britain at the Narrows. In such case, would staying at home and refusing any more to go upon the sea be exercise of independence in the citizens of New York? Great philosophers may call it "*dignified retirement,*" if they will. I call it, and I am mistaken, if the people would not also call it, "*base and abject submission.*" Sir, what in such case would be true honor. Why, to consider well, which adversary is the weakest, and cut our way to our rights, through the path which he obstructs. Having removed the smaller impediment, we should return with courage, strengthened by trial and animatdd by success, to the relief of our rights, from the pressure of the strongest assailant. But all this is war; and war is never to be incurred. If this be the national principle—avow it; tell your merchants you will not protect them; but for Heaven's sake do not deny them the power of relieving their own and the nation's burdens, by the exercise of their own ingenuity. Sir, impassable as the barriers, offered by these edicts, are in the estimation of members on this floor, the merchants abroad do not estimate them so insurmountable. Their anxiety to risque their property, in defiance of them, is full evidence of this. The great danger to mercantile ingenuity is internal envy, the corrosion of weakness or prejudice. Its external hazard is ever infinitely smaller. That practical intelligence, which this class of men possesses, beyond any other in the community, excited by self interest, the strongest of human passions, is too elastic to be confined by the limits of exterior human powers, however great or uncommon. Build a Chinese wall, the wit of your merchants, if permitted freely to operate, will break through it, or overleap it, or under-creep it.

.... mille adde catenas
Effugiet tamen, hæc sceleratus vincula
Proteus.

(Speech to be continued.)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13.

Mr. Lewis reported a bill to incorporate the trustees of the Presbyterian church of Alexandria. Twice read and referred.

A bill from the Senate amendatory of the act for the establishment of an uniform militia (by establishing a marine militia) was referred to the committee on our military and naval establishments.

Mr. G. W. Campbell presented two memorials on the subject of the batture at New-Orleans, which were referred.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES.

Mr. G. W. Campbell from the committee of Ways and Means reported a bill for imposing additional duties on all goods, wares and merchandize imported into the U. S from any foreign port or place; which was twice read and referred to a committee of the whole. [The bill is blank as to the amount of duty.]

Mr. Burwell, from the committee appointed to enquire into the propriety of providing for a supply of salt, reported, in part, a bill authorising the President of the U. S. to permit vessels to depart from the ports and harbors of the U. S. for the purpose of bringing in salt. Twice read and committed. The following letter from the Secretary of the Treasury was also laid before the House:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT.
January 7th, 1809.

Sir—I had the honor to receive your letter of the 27th ult. requesting such information as I may possess respecting the means of obtaining immediate and permanent supplies of salt from the establishments of the U. S.

The annexed statement A shews the annual consumption of imported salt for each of the calender years 1802—1807, after deducting the quantities used for the cod-fishery, and also for pickled fish and salted provisions exported from the U. S.

The anual average is almost three millions of bushels, weighing each 56lbs. equal to 75,000 tons, and requiring in fact 125,000 tons of shipping for its importation. It must also be observed that the deductions above mentioned being calculated by the allowances on fishery and drawbacks; and the allowance being in fact greater than the amount of duty on salt employed in the cod-fishery, the quantity of imported salt actually consumed in the U. S. is greater than appears by the statement.

The statement B is intended to shew the gross amount of salt annually imported for the years 1802—1807, and the countries from which imported. The manner in which the accounts are kept at the treasury has rendered it more convenient to give the amount in this instance for the years ending the 30th Sept. than for calender years

It will be perceived by the statement A that the domestic establishments have not increased, even in the same ratio as the population of the U. States, for the average of their consumption of imported salt is greater for the last than for the first years of the statement. Considering also the regularity of the importations and the well known fact that the article has been principally imported as ballast from England, there is reason to believe that the quantity now in the country is very inadequate to the supply of the present year and I am confident that there can be no reasonable expectation of the deficiency being supplied for that year from internal resources.

I am therefore clearly of opinion, that every encouragement should be given to immediate importations, and that measures should at the same time be adopted for the purpose of insuring for the succeding years a supply from domestic establishments.

The only means of promoting immediate importations, appear to be, 1st either to except salt from the operation of the non-intercouse act, or to put off the general operation of that act till the first of July next; which last alternative appears in every respect the most eligible: 2ndly, to authorise the President to permit American vessels to proceed, during the continuance of the embargo, to such foreign ports as may be designated by law, for the sole purpose of bringing in cargoes of salt.

The internal resources must be drawn from either the salt springs in various parts of the Western states, from the Onondago springs in the state of N. York, or from the Atlantic shores.

The high price of salt in the Western states does not arise from the actual expence incurred in manufacturing the article; for it does not cost more than 75 cents per bushel at the Indiana or Wabash Saline; and yet its market price has not been less than two dollars. It follows, that the price is kept up by reason of the quantity made being much less than the actual demand, and therefore that no considerable addition can be expected from that quarter; none certainly beyond the wants of that part of the country.

The quantity of salt made at the Onondago springs may certainly be considerably increased. I have been informed that about 300,000 bushels are now annually made; and that the amount might, perhaps, be increased to 600,000. On that subject, however, I cannot form a positive opinion; but am satisfied that the most sanguine calculations fall very short of the annual consumption of the U. S. and that the principal resource to be relied on is the increase of establishments on the sea shore. These may be multiplied in numerous places from Massachusetts to Georgia; and although the repeal of the law laying a duty on importation has checked their progress, experience has proven that capital may be advantageously employed in that manufacture. I think that nothing more is necessary to induce at present, the application of a capital sufficient in a short time to produce an adequate supply that the certainty of not being ruined by the competition of large importations at reduced prices. But it is doubtful whether it would be most eligible to effect that object by a bounty on the domestic manufacture, or by a renewal of the duty on the importation, to take place after the first of January 1810, and to continue for years. A combination of both would perhaps be best calculated to ensure success, and also most equitable. But a duty on importation alone is the easiest to execute, and is not liable to any constitutional objections.

The encouragement thus given to domestic establishments may indeed, during the number of years to which the duty or bounty would be limited, encrease the price of salt. But that temporary inconvenience should be cheerfully submitted to, if an adequate supply of that necessary article may thereby be ever after insured on reasonable terms, and from internal resourses not liable to be affected by war or by any other interruption of commerce.

I have the honor to be, &c.
ALBERT GALLATIN.
Honorable William A. Burwell,
Chairman, &c.

NAVAL ESTABLISHMENT.

The House resolved itself into a committee of the whole—Mr. Macon in the chair—on the amendments of the Senate to the bill for employing seamen and marines.

Mr. J. Montgomery moved to strike out the first amendment of the Senate (requiring the President to cause to be manned and employed all the armed vessels and gun-boats of the U. States) and insert a provision, leaving it discretionary with the President to employ them whenever in his opinion the public service may require it.

A division of the question was called for, so as to take it first on striking out the words in the amendment of the Senate.

On this motion a desultory debate of three or four hours took place, in which Messrs. J. G. Jackson, G. W. Campbell, Sloan, Smilie, Southard, Bacon, Gardner, Gholson, Dawson, Newton, Lloyd, Mosely, Love, Lyon and Van Dyke partook.

The motion to *strike out* was carried 51 to 43; and the motion to *insert* negatived, 55 to 47.

It was understood that this vote destroyed the first amendment in committee of the whole; but that the