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WASHINGTON CITY, Nov. 20.

Mr. PORTER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, made the following REPORT, which was referred to a committee of the whole:

The Committee to whom was referred that part of the President's Message, which relates to our Foreign Affairs, beg leave to

REPORT IN PART—

That they have endeavored to give to the subject submitted to them, that full and dispassionate consideration which is due to one so intimately connected with the interest, the peace, the safety and the honor of their country.

Your committee will not encumber your journals, and waste your patience with detailed history of all the various matters growing out of our foreign relations. The cold recital of wrongs, of injuries and aggressions known and felt by every member of this union, could have no other effect than to deaden the national sensibility, and render the public mind callous to injuries with which it is already too familiar.

Without recurring then to the multiplied wrongs of partial or temporary operation, of which we have so just cause of complaint against the two great belligerents, your committee will only call your attention, at this time, to the systematic aggression of those powers, authorized by their edicts against neutral commerce; a system which, as regarded its principles, was founded on pretensions that went to the subversion of our national independence; and which, although now abandoned by one power, is, in its broad and destructive operation, as still enforced by the other, sapping the foundation of our prosperity.

It is more than five years since England and France, in violation of those principles of justice and public law, held sacred by all civilized nations, commenced this unprecedented system, by seizing the property of the citizens of the United States, peaceably pursuing their lawful commerce on the high seas. To shield themselves from the odium which such outrage must incur, each of the belligerents sought a pretext in the conduct of the other—each attempting to justify his system of rapine as a retaliation for similar acts on the part of his enemy. As if the law of nations, founded on the eternal rules of justice, could sanction a principle, which if engrafted into our municipal code, would excuse the crime of one robber, upon the sole plea that the unfortunate object of his rapacity, was also a victim to the injustice of another. The fact of priority could be true as to one only of the parties, and whether true or false, could furnish no ground of justification.

The United States thus unexpectedly and violently assailed by the two greatest powers in Europe, withdrew their citizens and property from the ocean; and cherishing the blessing of peace, altho' the occasion would have fully justified war, sought redress in an appeal to the justice and magnanimity of the belligerents. When this appeal had failed of the success which was due to its moderation, other measures, founded on the same pacific policy, but applying to the interests, instead of the justice of the belligerents, were resorted to. Such was the character of the non-intercourse and non-importation laws, which invited the return of both powers to their former state of amicable relations, by offering commercial advantages to the one who should first revoke his hostile edicts, and imposing restrictions on the other.

France, at length, availing herself of the proffers made equally to her and her enemy, by the non-impor-

tion law of May, 1810, announced the repeal on the 1st of the following November, of the decrees of Berlin and Milan. And it affords a subject of sincere congratulation, to be informed, through the official organs of the government, that those decrees are, so far at least as our rights are concerned, really and practically at an end.

It was confidently expected that this act on the part of France, would have been immediately followed by a revocation on the part of Great-Britain of her orders in council. If our reliance on her justice had been impaired by the wrongs she had inflicted; yet when she had plighted her faith to the world that the sole motive of her aggression on neutral commerce was, to be found in the Berlin and Milan decrees, we looked forward to the extinction of these decrees, as the period when the freedom of the seas would be again restored.

In this reasonable expectation we have, however, been disappointed. A year has elapsed since the French decrees were rescinded, and yet Great-Britain, instead of retracting *pari passu* that course of unjustifiable attack on neutral rights, in which she professed to be only the reluctant follower of France, has advanced with bolder and continual increased strides. To the categorical demands lately made by our government for the repeal of her orders in council, she has affected to deny the practical extinction of the French decrees; and she has, moreover, advanced a new and unexpected demand, increasing in hostility the orders themselves. She has insisted, through her accredited minister at this place, that the repeal of the orders in council must be preceded, not only by the practical abandonment of the decrees of Berlin and Milan, so far as they infringe the neutral right of the United States, but by the renunciation on the part of France, of the whole of her system of commercial warfare against Great-Britain; of

which those decrees originally formed a part. This system is understood to consist in a course of measures adopted by France and the other powers on the continent subject to, or in alliance with her, calculated to prevent the introduction into their territories of the products and manufactures of Great-Britain and her colonies; and to annihilate her trade with them. However hostile these regulations may be, on the part of France towards Great-Britain; or however favorable the latter may feel their effects, they are nevertheless, to be regarded only as the expedients of one enemy against another, for which the United States, as a neutral power, can, in no respect, be responsible; they are, too, in exact conformity with those which Great-Britain has herself adopted and acted upon in time of peace as well as war. And it is not to be presumed that France would yield to the unauthorized demand of America, what she seems to have considered as one of the most powerful engines of the present war.

Such are the pretensions upon which Great-Britain founds the violation of the maritime rights of the United States—pretensions not theoretical merely, but followed up by a desolating war upon our unprotected commerce. The ships of the United States, laden with the products of our own soil and labor, navigated by our own citizens, and peaceably pursuing a lawful trade, are seized on our own coasts, at the very mouths of our harbors, condemned and confiscated.

Your committee, are not however, of that sect whose worship is at the shrine of a calculating avarice. And while we are laying before you the just complaints of our merchants against the plunder of their ships and cargoes, we cannot refrain from presenting to the justice and humanity of our country the unhappy case of our impressed seamen. Although the groans of these victims of barbarity for the loss of (what should be dearer to Americans than