

first contemplated. We would ask, whether there is any portion of the union, with the exception of Long Island, more open and liable to the ravages of a maritime foe than the state of Maryland? And situated as it is, with the seat of the national government on its confines, so accessible to a hostile force, is there any part of the continent, which it could have been supposed would more obviously attract the active operations of an enemy, designing to harrass the physical strength of the country, and to distract and frustrate the views of its rulers in their avowed plan of foreign conquest. Is there in short, any section of the common league, which from various considerations of prudence and of duty, the general government was more peculiarly bound to guard by ample and vigilant preparations for defence.

We are next constrained to enquire what has there then been done or provided by the national government for the security of a state, so precariously circumstanced, against the visitations of a war, which that government had chosen its own time to declare, and which appears to have been familiar to its contemplation for a considerable series of years before it was actually declared.

If we do not say how little has been attempted for our protection, and in what way even that little has been rendered, it is because we wish not to publish our own humiliation to the world, and we would not betray the extent of our weakness to the enemy. It is because we are desirous of preserving a becoming measure of respect to the national authorities; while in the exercise of a constitutional privilege, we perform a requisite duty to our constituents, the freemen of Maryland, by making a frank representation of their complaints and dissatisfaction. The mere shew of resistance heretofore exhibited, having in fact rather tended to provoke than repel attack; the people on the exposed points of our shores, despairing after what has passed, of obtaining a sufficient defence from the government, are becoming in some parts of the country, inclined almost to regard with fear, the approach of those semblances of military aid, which are occasionally sent among them; because they have perceived that this casual parade, instead of giving them assistance in the hour of danger, rather invites destruction from an exasperated and unresisted foe, whose fury it is possible they might sometimes escape unnoticed. And yet the history of the revolution will attest that in the most trying times of the republic, the spirit of Maryland has never been surpassed in valor, fortitude and fidelity.

If the war is to be continued, the miseries we have already endured may be tender mercies in comparison with those which are to be apprehended. A character of ferocity unknown to the civilized usages of modern warfare, seems about to be given to this contest. The government of the United States has distinctly announced its purpose of protecting the subjects of the enemy, taken in arms, while in the act of invading the territories of the power under whose dominions they were born, and to whom their allegiance was naturally due; and this protection to British traitors, is to be accomplished by a system of sanguinary retaliation, which in its consequences may occasion the sacrifice of every American officer and soldier—the ignominious death of all our unfortunate countrymen, who are now held as prisoners and hostages of the enemy. In addition to this cause of apprehension, the example of useless barbarity displayed under the command of the general of the forces that lately abandoned Fort George, in Upper Canada, in committing to the flames the whole town of New Ark, of which our army had been in the undisputed possession, may, in the course of a few months, bring upon our coasts the most direful vengeance which a powerful and enraged enemy can inflict, and may subject our towns, and villages, and farms, and habitations, bordering on the water, to all the horrors of the most ferocious and extensive desolation.

We therefore earnestly entreat the national authorities to take these circumstances into immediate and serious consideration, to provide the means and munitions of defence, and to furnish a real efficient regular force to be stationed in the state, so as to save its property and its citizens, from the worst evils and ravages of unrelenting hostility. The efforts of the state itself, for its own protection, have been already exerted in a manner necessarily burdensome and vexatious to its people; and the state has been compelled, in the course of the last year, to seek resources in its own credit, for defraying the expences of defensive measures, which it might well have been hoped, would have been seasonably and adequately prepared under the superintending care and providence of the government of the union. The aggregate amount of expences thus incurred is not now ascertained, as the accounts are not yet all liquidated, and there are vouchers still to be procured. But we trust that provision will be made by congress for reimbursing these expences, and others of a similar nature, which may be unavoidably incurred, and that as soon as a proper estimate can be exhibited, the heavy advances of money which the state may have been obliged to make, for purposes specially enjoined on the general government by the terms of the federal constitution, will be promptly and fully remunerated.

Having briefly urged these considerations, there remains an indispensable obligation, on this house, in compliance with the known wishes and sentiments of their constituents, to submit an earnest petition to the president and congress of the United States, for a speedy restoration of the blessings of peace, and an essential change in that mistaken policy, whose effects are now so unhappily to be seen in the privations and afflictions of the land. It might be deemed intrusive, and it would be altogether irksome, to enter now into a minute examination of the causes of the present war. It is believed to be at this time sufficiently ascertained, that the flagrant deception of the French government, practised in relation to the pretended repeal of its predatory edicts, was chiefly instrumental in producing a state of things in this country, which unfortunately led us into the existing hostilities with England. The documents before congress during the last and preceding sessions, it is presumed, have conclusively shewn, that the alleged repeal of the French edicts, by the letter of the 5th of August, 1810, was only a conditional proposition as its terms implied; and that there was no authentic form of a repeal of an earlier date than the decree of the 28th of April, 1811, which is expressly bottomed on the previous compliance of our government, with one of the con-