

## CHAPTER I.

### THE NAVY AND THE NATION'S COMMERCE.

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The truth of these principles was forcibly illustrated by the artificial embargo of December, 1807, at a time when our production barely exceeded home requirements. Relations with England had become strained over questions relating to our freedom of the seas. President Jefferson hoped to reduce the probability of war and to "starve Great Britain into a change of policy" by forbidding foreign commerce altogether. Our seaports were accordingly closed to overseas traffic. American exports fell from \$49,000,000 in 1807 to \$9,000,000 in 1808. Widespread "hard times" resulted almost immediately, especially among farmers, whose complaints were among the principal influences that brought about a modification of the embargo.

The same principles were never so clearly demonstrated as within the last few years. Unparalleled prosperity was caused by the

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