

To these causes must we date that sudden change in the tide of events which led on to our fortune. Our proximity to the revolted Islands—the fleetness of our vessels, the enterprise of our merchants, the skill of our mechanics, all combined to throw the entire trade of supplying both France and them, into our possession. The shipwright, the blacksmith, the rope maker, the sail maker, and every other trade connected with the construction and fitting out of vessels, were put under immediate contribution, and the busy hum and bustle of active industry was to be seen and heard in every direction. Vessels of all sizes—houses of all descriptions, as with a magic wand, were created. Commerce, with its invigorating effects, was pouring in upon us from every quarter, and with it came an influx to our population, which put to blush all former calculations upon the ratios of increase. Thus enjoying these enviable advantages, our town rapidly advanced in wealth and population, in despite of the dreadful visitations from the yellow fever in 1794, 7, 9 and 1800, '19 and '20. During the revolution of France and the insurrection of her colonies, we received many valuable emigrants from each; for the peace-loving citizen of the one, as well as the exile of the other, sought an asylum here from the turmoil and blood, which rendered their remaining in either insecure.

But these halcyon days of commercial prosperity were not to be enjoyed without jeopardizing the future peace of the country. Collisions between us and England arose out of our commerce with France. She assumed pretensions, and asserted rights, not justified by the laws of nations, nor sanctioned by that spirit of liberty so cherished by our people. Those collisions led to the war of 1812, which, however, was not resorted to until the cup of forbearance was drained to the very dregs; and unfortunately for the country, not until the national coffers were empty. But freemen who know their rights, never calculate the cost when their national honor is insulted, and we entered into that conflict with little else than a good cause and brave hearts to carry us through. And Baltimore, whose uncompromising hostility to the enemy, whose gallant privateers had met and conquered British merchantmen in every sea, excited the hatred of the government to that degree that our city was marked as an object of vengeance. Our bay infested with a large and well appointed fleet, conveying a well disciplined army; our government is applied to for succor; but Baltimore is told there is no means in the possession of government, and thus she was thrown upon her own resources for defence. The occasion was full of danger and of peril—but our citizens proved themselves equal to it. The means were raised and the city successfully defended, and that enemy, who, bending beneath the laurels gained on European fields, was forced to retire before our works, defended almost exclusively by militia.

The war having been ended by the treaty of December, 1814, and the intercourse between the two countries resumed in February 1815, a too unguarded enterprise succeeded, and commercial speculation and daring was carried so far that in