

run into extravagance. That our government runs powerfully in this direction cannot be denied; and that the late war, by requiring many extraordinary exertions, accelerated this tendency, is equally evident; but, the exigencies requiring these efforts have ceased to exist, and the expenses incident thereto should also cease. I do not hesitate to say, that at the close of the late war it was right to fix the peace establishment upon the present organization. It was right on two considerations; first, because our situation with the Indians was extremely precarious; secondly, our relations with Spain were then unsettled. But, our Indian wars are now over, and we are at peace with every tribe; our relations with Spain are now settled, and we have Florida by the ratification of the treaty. The chief causes for fixing the army on its present basis being removed, I must think that it may with safety be reduced to six thousand men.

Sir, in the course of the debate, several gentlemen have made allusions to Mr. Jefferson's administration. I will briefly refer to the same period of our history. Let it here be remembered that the second President of the United States, together with his political friends, were ejected from power for certain obnoxious measures—and let it be further remembered that one of those measures was the keeping up a standing army in time of peace. The newspapers of the day were filled with essays against the army; the legislatures of the states remonstrated and instructed their members to urge its reduction. And, sir, how large was the army that created all this alarm? only 5000 men—only half as large as the present peace establishment, and yet the people of that day thought it too large; even Mr. Jefferson entertained the same opinion, for, in his message to Congress, he tells them that he has supplied all the garrisons with men, and that there is a surplus left for which the government has no use; and accordingly we see the army cut down from 5000 to about 3,300 men, thus saving to the nation annually the sum of \$522,000. Yes, sir, the peace establishment of that day consisted only of 3,300 men, and only cost about one million of dollars annually. Now, sir, contrast that with the present army consisting of 10,000 men. Two major generals, four brigadier generals, with aids, colonels, lieutenant colonels, majors, and inferior officers in the greatest abundance, costing annually more than three millions of dollars.

Let me ask, what wonderful changes have taken place in our affairs, to justify this great increase of the peace establishment? The gentleman from South-Carolina, (Mr. Simpkins,) tells us, indeed, that our frontiers have considerably enlarged in their extent, and that the number of our posts have multiplied. This is all true, and I will answer the gentleman by simply asking him, have our frontiers enlarged in the proportion of ten to three, and have our posts increased in the same ratio? Surely not. We are at peace with the savages, with the world; and if it is said, we shall have Florida to occupy, I will answer, that Mr. Jefferson, with his three thousand men, took possession of, and occupied, Louisiana, a country of many times the extent, and a thousand times the value, of Florida, and that, too, where there was much greater disaffection than will be found in Florida. Then, sir, I come to this conclusion: if 3,300 men were sufficient for the purposes of the country in 1803, surely double that number will answer for the present times. By fixing the peace establishment at six thousand men, we save to the nation more than one million of dollars annually, and send to the plough four thousand citizens. But I have other, and, to my mind, even weightier reasons than those of economy, in favor of reducing the present large standing army of the country.

Sir, in the early days of our government, (and I believe the time will come when those days will be celebrated by historians, and sung by poets, as the golden age of this republic)—in those days it was held, that standing armies were dangerous in times of peace: not dangerous, as some gentlemen would suppose us to mean, from their physical force: No, sir, we are not so timid as to fear that the country has any thing to apprehend from the swords and bayonets of the army, were it even much larger than it is—but dangerous from their moral and political tendency to corruption. My colleague, who has gone before me in this debate, has so fully shown the immoral tendency of standing armies, that I shall not dwell long upon this part of the argument.

Sir, the military establishment, in all governments, and, above all, in our government, is essentially different from the civil establishment. The army is a body of men separated and removed from the great mass of the people. They are governed by different laws, and upon different principles. Blind obedience to the will of their officers is their only principle. On the part of the soldier, this begets a spirit of servility; on the part of the officer, a spirit of overbearing tyranny—both equally averse to the theory and practice of our government. In this point of view standing armies are evils in our country, and, like all other evils, we should have as little of them as possible. The absolute necessity of the case should be the rule by which to regulate the size of the army; if we can garrison our posts with 6,000 men, why have more than that number? I say garrison our posts; for the idea of defending the country with a standing army is preposterous. The constitution never contemplated such a defence, nor did it ever enter into the heads of our political forefathers. The militia is the legitimate, the constitutional defence of the country. Sir, I was shocked to hear the gentleman from Virginia, (General Smyth,) deliver the sentiments he did upon this subject. If ever his notions of the militia became the prevailing ones of this people, good bye to your republicanism.

situations—they are gone forever. But his argument is entirely fallacious. In speaking of the militia, he taken them as they were at the beginning of the Revolutionary war, and all the extracts that he read from the letters of Washington and others, describe the militia as they then were—without order or previous discipline. This is unjust, sir. We should consider what the militia are capable of being made, and not what they were before we existed as a nation—before we became an independent people. This is the light in which Washington viewed the militia when he said, "The militia may be trained to a degree of energy equal to every military exigency of the United States," and Jefferson says: "A well disciplined militia is our best reliance in peace, and for the first moments in war, till regulars may relieve them."

But, sir, the arguments of the gentleman from Virginia have been so fully refuted by the venerable member from Massachusetts, (Mr. Eustis,) that I shall add nothing further upon that, but proceed to another part of the question. Sir, standing armies have a political tendency subversive of the principles of our government. I lay this down as a proposition—in the proportion in which a government keeps up a large military establishment, in that proportion will the government neglect the militia of the country. This is a proposition which the history of all free governments that ever existed fully proves. Let but a government, let but the people, once place their reliance on standing armies for defence and protection, and the militia, as a natural, as a certain consequence, will fall into neglect, and sink into disrepute. It is plain, that, when nothing is expected from them, they will expect to do nothing. Their ability is distrusted, their enterprise is gone. Yes, sir, standing armies weaken the military spirit of the nation. If any illustration of this principle is required, it can be furnished from English history. It was in the reign of the second James that a standing army was first established in that country. This monarch, under various pretences, formed a standing army of four thousand five hundred men. This was the nucleus of the English standing army; it soon grew larger, and we now see what it is—and, mark it! at the very time at which we date the origin of standing armies in England, at that very time we may also date the decline of the militia; and, sir, it is a striking circumstance, that the very same arguments used by James and his ministry, to justify their armed force in time of peace, are now urged by gentlemen on this floor, in defence of the present establishment, namely, that the militia are inefficient, and that no reliance can be placed upon them. This, then, being the practical tendency of standing armies, I ask, if it is proper, in times of peace, to keep up a single company more than the absolute necessity of the country demands?

But, sir, I have another objection against the present size of the peace establishment. We should never enlarge the army beyond what necessity strictly requires, for the reason that it increases the patronage of the government; it extends the influence of the Executive branch. The patronage of this government, I admit, is small, compared to that of other governments, but yet its increase is alarming. Look at the progress of patronage in this government for the past 12 years; turn over your laws, and examine them, and it will be found that not a year has gone by, not a Congress has passed over, but the powers of the Executive have been enlarged. Indeed, it would seem that all the powers of the states are passing into the hands of Congress, and many of the powers of Congress into the hands of the Executive. The army adds to this patronage. The President is commander in chief of the army; he virtually has the appointment of all the officers; he, at pleasure, has the power of removing them. He and the head of the War Department are the only persons seen by the army; Congress is never seen, until first felt by some law.

Patronage is power. See what it does in Great Britain; what a mighty machine in the hands of that government! And, whenever corruption dims the glory of our institutions, it will enter in at the door of patronage. If, then, we value our republican privileges, guard against the increase of Executive patronage.

Again; I will advance another objection against large military establishments. To keep up a large army necessarily requires to have at the head of the army great military chieftains. Now, these chieftains, commanding the army, may at times have the power to involve the country in difficulties and war. The chiefs of armies are generally men of great influence and popularity in the government, and it may so happen that they themselves may not only violate the constitution and laws of the country, but, by their influence, bring the government to support and protect them in this violation. History furnishes examples to support this view. I think gentlemen will remember what happened a year or two since, when our army, led, perhaps, by the military science so much talked of, entered into a neighboring province, not only without orders, but plainly contrary to orders, and, what is worse than all, contrary to the constitution of the country. I need not recall to the minds of gentlemen the excitement produced on the occasion, not only in this house, but in many parts of the country.

There are other cases in point, but I shall only allude one more in support of the proposition; and for this one I am indebted to the annals of England, a country from which we draw so many of our good and bad examples. Sir, those any-wise conversant with English history, will remember the long wars that were waged by that nation against the continent during the reign of Queen

have been terminated long before they were, but for the intrigues of the commander in chief of the British forces. Peace would at once have deprived him of his emoluments, and cut short his career of glory. He determined, therefore, to continue the war, though the treasures and blood of his country might flow in torrents. This commander, sir, was the great Duke of Marlborough.

But this is not all. The chiefs of the army are always apt to take a part in the civil disputes of the country; and let it be remembered that the soldiery always take the side espoused by their commanders. Sir, how many civil disputes have been decided by the army! In England, we see Cromwell, with a force not three times as large as our present army, drive the Parliament out of doors, overturn the constitution, and set himself quietly on the throne. We see Gustavus of Sweden, with a less army than ours, subvert the constitution, and establish a new order of things. And, sir, how long is it since a handful of guards, in Russia, murdered their King, and made Catharine their Empress? In short, look to the seat of an ancient republic, the master-state of the world, and say, from Caesar down, how many Emperors were made, how many destroyed, by the praetorian bands—the standing army of Rome? All this shows what may be expected of standing armies, what they have done, and always will do.

I will now briefly consider some of the arguments advanced in favor of keeping up the present establishment.

First, it is said to be necessary to preserve the present army for the purpose of keeping alive the military science of the country. This is a favorite argument of gentlemen, and, I fear, we who doubt its great force, subject ourselves to the imputation of ignorance and illiberality. Be that as it may, I rejoice that we do not live under a military government, and that it is not our interest to have a great deal of this military science. The best method, in my humble judgment, to preserve this science is to diffuse it among the militia. Organize them; look to their discipline; put arms in their hands, and let them see that the country relies on them for defence. Do this, sir, and when the voice of the country calls, it will be heard. When military spirits are wanting, they will arise—they will spring from every corner of the country. Sir, I would ask, whence came your best generals in the late war?—your Jackson and your Brown? They were not educated in a standing army; they issued from the walks of civil life; and, it is worthy of remark, that the first laurels that crowned their brows were won with the bayonets of the militia.

Sir, the Secretary of War has laid before us a very able defence of the present establishment; he certainly has placed the subject in its strongest lights. But, it appears to me, before we yield to the full extent of his reasoning, we must admit two hypotheses; first, that war is not distant; and, secondly, that when it does come, it will come upon us suddenly. Now I apprehend that neither of these suppositions should be taken for granted. We see no immediate prospect of war; our political horizon is without a speck; the only little cloud that appeared in it, has been swept away by the ratification of the treaty. And, in the next place, whenever war does come, it will not come upon the nation suddenly. In other governments, where the war making power is lodged in the hands of Kings and ministers, war may be declared unexpectedly to the country; but, here there must first be a sufficient cause of war; negotiation must fail; the whole nation must see and feel the necessity of war; and surely in this time, a wise government and prudent Congress, will have sufficient time to make ample preparations. There are two things that this government will never do, until impelled to them by the public sense: to declare war, and to impose taxes.

Sir, I have always thought, that one of the best features in our government is its unfitness for war; this very unfitness for belligerent operations will save the country from many wars and preserve much blood and treasure. It cannot be denied that a nation, combining the political facilities of war, is much easier propelled to that state than one not calculated to carry on wars. It is with governments, as it is with individuals, give them power, and they will soon find pretences for the exercise of that power. Frederick of Prussia has furnished us an illustration in point; he candidly avows, that one of his leading inducements for declaring war against Maria Theresa, was the martial appearance of his fine army; for, said he, "I had a mind to play upon the instrument which I found in such excellent tune." This King has written another sentiment, that should be well remembered by every member of this house; which should be inscribed in glaring letters over the doors of the War Office, "great armies render governments enterprising, but they make the people slaves."

But, as an argument to preserve the present army, gentlemen have attributed all the disasters of the late war to the reduction of the peace establishment in 1802. This is a view of the subject to which I will not consent. I deny that the reduction of the army in 1802 was the cause of these disasters. There are plainer causes, some of which I will name. First, a want of correct knowledge of the resources of the enemy, and of the difficulties of the enterprise against Canada. The Congress declaring the war, if we judge from their speeches, thought that the capture of Canada would be a mere frolic; that a few regiments of militia would take it in six weeks; in fact, so misinformed were they of the dispositions of the Canadians, and the resources of the enemy there, as to make disappointment

A second cause of these disasters was owing to treachery, or something very like it, in the commander that moved the first army towards Canada. This failure set the current of fortune against us, and at once gave confidence to the enemy, and cause of accusation to the opposition among ourselves.

But, sir, the great cause of the disasters of the late war, was the want of union among ourselves; in our councils, in the nation. A formidable minority in the country doubted the justice and propriety of the war; and they used every means to shackle the powers and energies of the government, and to prevent its prosecution. No war or great enterprize can ever be successfully conducted by this government, when the nation is divided among themselves; disunion paralyzes all our energies. To prove that this was the fruitful source of disasters of the late war, we have only to look to the theatre where they occurred. In the south, where there was no difference of opinion among the people as to the propriety of the war, our failures were few. From the woods of Talladega, to the battle of New Orleans, success and victory crowned our arms. But come here, in the very focus of discord; go to the north, where treason stalked abroad, and you see defeat and disgrace rise up before you at every turn.

And, sir, another cause of our failures was the treason of our citizens on the frontier, who gave every aid and comfort to the enemy, as well as speedy information of all our movements. Among these may be placed the blue-light traitors. And, let me not forget another class, who by their conduct shackled our efforts and gave hopes to the enemy—I mean, sir, that of politicians, who, about the close of the war, concentrated in the Hartford Convention; a set of men that never should be forgotten; on whom should fall the lasting imprecations of posterity; on whom should rest "the curses of hate, and hisses of scorn" of all who love their country. These, sir, are the causes of the disasters of the late war, and not as gentlemen would suppose the reduction of the army in 1802, or its bad organization in 1808.

Again, the gentleman from South Carolina has called in, as an argument, the examples and situation of Europe: that our army is nothing compared to the establishments of the governments of Europe. Sir, I deny that the examples of Europe, in this particular, should have any influence upon us; because there is no similarity in our situation and that of any government in Europe.

The governments of Europe keep up large standing armies for two purposes. First, to keep down their own subjects. What but a standing army prevents the people of England from reforming the abuses of the government? What but a standing army keeps Louis the 19th on the throne of France? All the legiūmates are supported on their thrones but by the bayonets of their armies. But this is not the case in our blessed land. Our rulers hold their seats by the free suffrage of the people, and no army is necessary to keep down the people.

In the second place, the governments of Europe keep up large standing armies to repel foreign invasions. Every kingdom in Europe has powerful neighbors, separated only by a river, a hill, or an ideal line. They have reason to look at each other with distrust and suspicion; and wisdom and past experience warn them always to be ready. Take for example the kingdom of Prussia, with the immense front of Russia pressing on one side of her frontier, France looking over on another, and the German empire on a third, her natural attitude is that of defence, and her only defence is her standing army. She must keep up a strong military force because her neighbors do so. The same may be said of all the other governments of Europe; for, in reality, that continent presents rather the appearances of war than of peace. This is not our case: we have no fears of sudden invasion. If we pursue the true American policy, keeping clear of all foreign entanglements, we will require no standing armies to defend us from invasion. But the gentleman from South Carolina says, we know not how soon our foreign commerce may be cut up. Admit, for the sake of argument, that it is cut up to-morrow, and I should like to learn from him how he supposes to defend our foreign commerce with a standing army. Our commerce is on the ocean, and if any enemy strikes at it on that element, how will you reach him on the mountain wave? Surely not with the army, but with our glorious little navy. And here, by the way, permit me to observe, that the navy is our proper and only efficient defence against attacks from abroad; and I, for one, will not consent to touch even a cock-boat of the navy, if, by doing so, we weaken the force of that defence. Sir, while your soldiers are demoralizing in camp, the tars of the navy are exercised on the rough bosom of the ocean, and purified by the winds of heaven.

Mr. Chairman, I have already detained you longer than I could have wished, but, before I sit down, I must express my dissent from some of the remarks of my coadjutor and colleague; (Mr. Williams.) Although I do not entirely agree with the results of the report of the Secretary of War, yet, I cannot by any means think of that report as lightly, and with the same feelings, as does my colleague. On the contrary, it seems to me that his strictures were very ill bestowed. The Report, in my humble opinion, is not only highly creditable to the distinguished gentleman that produced it, but it is the ablest defence of the present establishment that I have seen, or expect to hear in this House. As for the lameness of any figures of speech used by