



"Our are the plans of fair, delightful Peace,
"Unwarp'd by party rage, to live like Brothers."

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REDUCTION OF THE ARMY.

[Mr. Williams's speech continued.]

Believing the House will be disposed to concur in the sentiments which have been advanced, I shall proceed immediately to enquire what reduction it will be proper to make in the present military establishment, reserving any other remarks I may have to offer in relation to the danger of armies, and to the propriety of relying on the militia, for future occasions, as they may arise in the course of my observations.

Whatever difference of opinion may have heretofore existed, as to the number of men, yet all have seemed to think, that the number of officers in the army was unnecessarily great. The Secretary of War, however, has invariably adhered to this branch of the army with wonderful tenacity. That he should have done so, in the report made at the present session, is, to me, a matter of perfect surprise. He knew well the condition of the Treasury: he knew there would be a deficiency of several millions; he also knew that the officers materially contributed to the expense of supporting the army, and, yet, after all this information, he gravely recommends that the officers should be retained. I should have supposed that a very different course would have been pursued; that he would have recommended the retention of a proportion of more men and fewer officers than exists in the present organization of the army. For, in the report made by the Secretary in 1818, he says, page 5, "It is obvious that, as the officers are much more expensive in proportion to their numbers than the soldiers, that the pay of the army, in relation to its aggregate numbers, will be increased or diminished with the increase or diminution of the former." It is, then, I say, a matter of surprise, that the Secretary should have recommended the retention of all the officers, when he knew that economy was the object contemplated in the proposed reduction of the army, and when, from his own statement, the officers were much more expensive, in proportion to their numbers, than the soldiers.

From the same report of 1818, it appears that if the army were full, there would be, according to the present organization, about four men to each officer, non-commissioned officer, and musician. This disproportion has always been a great objection to the military establishment. The people saw, and the Secretary of War himself has said, that the expense of the army was greatly owing to the number of officers. In this state of things a resolution was passed at the last session, requiring that a report from the head of the War Department should be made at the present session, containing a plan for the reduction of the army. Well, sir, the report comes in, and what is proposed? Why, that the organization of the army shall be a little changed; but it is not proposed to reduce the number of officers. Not only so, but the objections to the proposed organization are much greater than to the present; for, by that which is proposed, there will be something more than two men for each officer, non-commissioned officer, and musician. Yes, sir, it is a fact which no one scarcely could have believed, that this enormous disproportion is recommended to us for our approbation.

I will venture to say, there is not an army in the world, not even in the governments the most profuse & prodigal, where the disproportion of officers to men is so great as it is with us at this time; & yet, by the plan of the Secretary, this disproportion is to be greatly increased. Military characters say, the Staff in particular is now large enough for fifty, some say a hundred thousand men. But, yet we are told, we must not reduce it, when it is admitted, or determined by the resolution of last session, that we shall reduce the number of men nearly one half. If the staff officers under the old organization have had not much to do; if, on account of their numbers, they have been permitted to idle away their time, how much more will this be the case under the proposed organization.

In 1818, the Secretary reported to us that the Staff of the army, under the existing organization, amounted only to 96. I then objected to the correctness of the statement; I mentioned that the number was upwards of 200, and called upon any gentleman who might see the thing differently, to correct me if I was wrong, or give such explanations as might satisfy the House. To prove now that I was then correct, I beg leave to call the attention of the House to some tabular and other documents contained in the two reports of the Secretary. Document B, of the late or new report, professes to be the same as document A, of the report submitted in 1818; but, yet, the former is quite at variance with the latter in some of its details. In the organization, as proposed in the new report, it is not intimated by the Secretary that the number of the staff will be increased beyond that set forth in the report made in 1818. But the number of the staff, in the organization proposed in the new report, amounts to 228, and, of the organization reported in 1818, only to 96. Whence, sir, is this

difference? Could the Secretary have thought to impose on Congress? I hope not. But, if he did, I trust he will be mistaken. I must, however, say, that both these reports have appeared to me more like speeches addressed to the Army, than communications made to this House.

I will now proceed to notice more particularly the staff recommended by the Secretary. There are two Major-Generals, four Aids-de-camp, four Brigadier-Generals, four Aids-de-Camp, one Judge Advocate, six Topographical Engineers, four Assistant Topographical Engineers, one Adjutant and Inspector General, two Adjutant Generals, four Assistant Adjutant Generals, two Inspector Generals, four Assistant Inspector Generals, ten Regimental Adjutants, eight Battalion Adjutants, making, in this department, a total of 56; in the Quartermaster's department there are 37; Paymaster's department 20; Purchasing department 4; Subsistence department 1, with as many Assistants as the service may require; Medical department 75; Engineer Corps 25; Military Academy, 12 Professors and Masters; making an aggregate of 228, exclusive of Cadets; but, if they be added, of 478. At the head of this prodigious staff stand the two Major-Generals. No one but the Secretary, or some other person zealously and determinately devoted to the army, could have thought of retaining the Major-Generals. The Secretary says, page 8 of the report, "It is proposed to retain the two Major and four Brigadier-Generals. Although it is not probable there will be concentrated in time of peace, at any point, a force equal to the command of a single Major, or even a Brigadier-General, yet, it is conceived important to the service that they should be retained; as two regiments, with a proper proportion of artillery and light troops, constitute in our service, one brigade, and two brigades a division, the command of a Major-General, the number of regiments and battalions under the proposed organization, thus gives a command equal to that of two Major, & four Brigadier-Generals."

Here, sir, the Secretary admits that there will be concentrated at no one point a number of men equal to the command of a single Major, nor even a Brigadier-General. He would indeed have been equally correct if he had said that the whole army, under the plan proposed, would, if assembled at one point, scarcely be equal to the command of one Major-General and two Brigadiers. But, yet, he recommends the retention of two Major and four Brigadier-Generals, thus advising us to keep in service double the number of general officers which, according to this part of his reasoning, he proves to be necessary. I ask if we shall be gravely told this; if we shall assume it as a rule of our conduct, and keep in service the whole of these general officers, when it cannot be denied that there are not men for their command. The most that the Secretary could have done, under such circumstances, would have been to shew that there were men for the officers to command, and then to recommend that they should be retained. But he seeks further justification by saying that the number of regiments and battalions gives a command for all the generals.

This, sir, is a deception in argument easily exposed, and entitled to no weight. For, why did he not shew, not that the number of regiments and battalions, but that the number of men in those regiments and battalions, would justify the course proposed? You may call a Captain's company a regiment, and thus give to a Brigadier-General the command which ought to belong to two Captains, or to a Major-General the command which ought to belong to four Captains. In this way, sir, we might have the greatest plenty of general officers; nay, in such abundance as to satisfy the Secretary of War himself, whose appetite for officers of this rank seems quite inordinate. For my own part, I am unwilling to keep in service, at any time, general officers, when there are not men for their command. But, when there is a deficiency of several millions in the Treasury; when the country is oppressed with debt, I would dispense with officers even if they had men to command; because, by so doing, we get clear of a great expense, whereas, if only the men are discharged from service, and the officers retained, we get clear of a very inconsiderable expense.

Of what use, let it be asked, are the two Major-Generals? The Secretary says, page 8 of the report, "But, a more weighty and, in my opinion, decisive reason, why they should be retained, may be found in the principle already stated, that the organization of the peace establishment ought to be such as to induce persons of talent and respectability to enter & continue in the military service." Now, said Mr. W. the argument presented in so much of the report as I have just read, is perfectly illusory. Do the Colonels remain in service because they are satisfied with their conditions as Colonels, or from a hope of becoming Brigadier-Generals? Do the Brigadiers remain in service because they are satisfied with their condition as Brigadiers, or from a hope that they will become Major-Generals? I take it, sir, that the officers, from the highest to the lowest, remain in ser-

vice because they are satisfied with their present condition, and not from any hope of getting to be Major-Generals. It is with them a money-making business, perhaps more profitable than any in which they could engage, and this is the reason they remain in the army, as I will hereafter shew. Besides this, the argument is defective in another point of view. It is said that, even with the office of Major-General, many resignations take place. Assuming, then, the opinion of the Secretary as the fact, in this case, to wit, that the rank and compensation now given to the Generals are not sufficient to prevent resignations, what does it prove? It proves this: that you have not yet done enough; that you must even go further, and institute the office of Lieutenant-General, attaching to it the highest honors and emoluments. For, we are told it is necessary to prevent resignations in the army, and that high offices will have the desired effect. But we are told, again, that the offices of two Major and four Brigadier-Generals, already established by law, will not prevent resignations. It follows, then, as a necessary consequence, from the Secretary's own reasoning that we must create the office of Lieutenant-General, in order to prevent resignations. This course of argument proves quite too much.

But I differ from him altogether on the subject of the resignation of officers of the army. It is to be ascribed to very different causes. Perhaps the most influential cause has been, the belief officers have had that the army would be reduced; and, rather than wait for this event, they have anticipated it by handing in their resignations: at the same time they have solicited the best civil offices which were to be had; not because they preferred those civil offices, but because they thought them the only alternative. But let it once be understood that the army is not to be reduced, and, my word for it, you will hear no more of these voluntary resignations. This would be the case, whether or not you have the office of Major or Brigadier-General. If there were no higher rank than a Colonel, then all officers subordinate to that rank would hold on to their commissions just as they do at present. It is not the office so much as the highest office, which is the object of emulous pursuit amongst men. If the rank of Colonel or Brigadier-General were the highest office known to our laws, then there would be all that aspiration to attain it; there would be all that complacency and self-satisfaction in having attained it, which are to be observed in the conduct of those who (according to the Secretary's views) may now be in pursuit of the office of Major-General. Did the officers of Mr. Jefferson's peace establishment think themselves deficient in rank? Not at all. There was then no Major-General. But the officers, knowing they filled the highest military stations in the country, were satisfied, and consequently remained in service. Therefore, the reasoning of the Secretary on this head either proves nothing, or it proves too much, which is worse than nothing.

This plan, said Mr. W. of retaining men in service by the hope of receiving the greater rank, pay, and emoluments, attached to the office of Major-General, is radically wrong. It costs too much. It is paying too dear for the whistle. We have two Major-Generals, with two great divisions, the northern and southern. The head-quarters are at Brownville in the north, and at Nashville in the south. This arrangement was evidently made for the convenience and accommodation of those officers; not for the good of the service: on the contrary, it introduces complexity and confusion into our system of military affairs. We all recollect the strife between the War Department and the Major-General of the south, relative to certain rules of etiquette to be observed in the transmission of orders. As matters now stand, an order must travel all the way to Nashville, and then back to Washington before it can reach an officer stationed at the Marine barracks, not distant more than a mile from the Department from this Capitol; that is, an order must travel twelve or fifteen hundred miles before it comes to the officer who is the subject of it, and who has always been distant about one mile from the Department from whence the order issued. The same regulation, I understand, exists in regard to the northern division; and, if it is thus necessary that orders should pass through the Major Generals, why not direct their head-quarters to be at more favorable positions—at Washington and Baltimore, for example. Then there could be no delay in the progress of orders to inferior officers, because the Major-Generals, through whom, we understand, they must pass, would be stationed immediately on the lines of direct communication. But no; this would not do; these officers must be accommodated; and, for their especial benefit, they have been permitted to reside at home; to live on their own farms, and to mind their own business, receiving from the government, at the same time, as nearly as I can estimate, about seven thousand dollars a year. Some calculate that the amount received is considerably greater, as much perhaps as eight or ten thousand dollars a year. Sir, I think it, if not an abuse, at least a very great grievance, that these

officers, while they reside at home, should have received the whole pay and emoluments attached to their office. The allowance for forage, fuel, four servants, seven horses, three rooms and a kitchen, I have believed, was intended for actual service; for a state of war, and not for a state of profound peace to the country and domestic retirement of the officer. When they go abroad, it is said, all these paraphernalia accompany them. Forage, fuel, four servants, seven horses, three rooms and a kitchen, and 1250 pounds of baggage, all adhere to, and march on with the Generals! Indeed, sir, they must have great strength to draw after them such a ponderous and heterogeneous load of items. No Eastern Satrap could move with greater pomp.

As to preserving and perpetuating a knowledge of the military science, by keeping these generals in service, the plan, I say, is utterly fallacious. Their situation at home precludes the possibility of learning any thing new, and almost of retaining what they do know. The knowledge to be preserved, or information to be acquired by them, while they reside on their own farms, will qualify them much better for the corn-field than the field of battle, and no doubt they study the operations of the former much more than of the latter. It is true, they come on to the seat of government, but for what purpose nobody knows, unless it be to drill Congress or attend the parties.

Another reason assigned by the Secretary for retaining the Generals is, that it will operate upon the army like the "high prizes in a lottery;" that men of talents will thereby be induced to enter and continue in the service. Of all the figures of speech with which our language abounds, I think this "metaphor" the most unfortunate which could possibly have been selected. For there are no two things so little comparable to each other as a lottery and the regular gradation by which officers are advanced in the army. The high prizes in a lottery are distributed, not according to any rule whatever, but entirely by chance, by accident, by the most capricious turns of fortune. Not so in relation to the advancement of officers in the army: there you have certain fixed rules, a perfect scale of gradation, according to which every one must be promoted. Does not every inferior officer know that all his superiors must be promoted in preference to himself? Surely he does. Then it follows that this inducement proposed by the Secretary operates, not as a lottery, hereafter to be drawn, and in which no one knows how the prizes will be distributed, but rather as a lottery already drawn, and in which the fate of every adventurer is fixed and determined. Many of the remarks which have been made respecting the Major Generals are also applicable to the Brigadiers. I cannot, for my life, determine what use the Secretary intends to make of the four officers of this rank he proposes to keep in service; that is, as I understand it, in the pay of government. These officers are allowed forage, fuel, three servants, five horses, two rooms and a kitchen. But the Secretary tells us there will not be concentrated at any one point a force equal to the command of a single Brigadier; and why be at the expense of keeping four of them? I call upon gentlemen to tell us what they are to do. It has been suggested that we ought to retain three Brigadiers: one to be stationed here, another in the north, and a third in the south. But, cannot one Colonel in the north, and another in the south, answer the same purpose? Our desire for general officers seems truly inextinguishable. When going abroad, these Brigadiers must also assume the style of Satraps, and draw after them a great load of items; nay, more, I have understood, from good authority, that between 3 and 4000 dollars have been allowed to one Brigadier, as a sort of extra pay (I suppose) for fatigue duty performed in travelling over Europe—or, perhaps the allowance was made out of the fund appropriated for foreign intercourse. But I never heard of any treaties being negotiated by that gentleman, or that he was in any respect to be considered the diplomatic agent of the U. States.

By dispensing with the two Major Generals and three Brigadiers, we also get clear of seven Aids de Camp.

(To be continued.)

COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

Fourth Annual Report of the American Colonization Society.

Read at the Annual Meeting on Thursday, January 18, 1821.

Since the last Annual Meeting of the Society, the Board of Managers have found it necessary, on several occasions, to communicate to the members, and to the public, some of the interesting occurrences of the past year.

The first of these communications stated the arrival of the Elizabeth on the coast of Africa, and the reception and situation of the colonists on the island of Sherbro, and was accompanied with the letters of our Agent, and the Agents of the government, filled with the hopes & expectations which then flattered them.

The pleasing anticipations excited by this intelligence were soon changed to doubts and fears—rumors of the most distressing calamities awakened many anxious apprehensions, and the Address of the Board in October last stated the melancholy intelligence then received, and the true extent of the affliction which, in the unsearchable dispensations of Providence had been permitted to occur. The arrival of this intelligence placed before the Board a subject for its immediate & most solemn consideration. They were, in the first place, to determine whether a great and beneficent object, the importance of which is scarcely questioned, should be abandoned as hopeless and impracticable. If a full and fair experiment decided this point, if the effort made, had ended in total disaster, proceeding from causes the operation of which they could not hereafter control or avoid; if no reasonable means presented themselves for a further prosecution of the enterprise—then, whatever might be the feelings of the Board, their judgment must decree, at least, a suspension of their labors.

The result of their deliberations appears in that Address. They lamented, in the death of their agent, Mr. Crozer, and in that of Mr. Bacon and Mr. Bankson, the agents of the government, the untimely loss, in the midst of their usefulness, of men highly qualified for the difficult and interesting stations in the service of their country, their fellow-beings, and their God, in which they had fallen.

The fate of the officer and boat's crew of the Cyane, detailed by the humane commander of that ship for the assistants of the agents, was an affecting event, calling for peculiar commiseration. To these abundant causes of sorrow were to be added, the sickness and mortality prevailing among the colored laborers and colonists, some of the most useful and deserving of whom became the victims of disease.

But the Board, in the midst of these regrets, could not see, in any or all these circumstances, the total failure of their attempt. The sickness and deaths which had occurred did not prove to them, that a fatal and inevitable disease rendered that part (much less every part) of the African coast uninhabitable to strangers; for they saw that about 70 out of 83, of the colored people exposed to the disease, had survived and recovered, and many instances of a much greater mortality had occurred in various places owing certainly to other causes than a pernicious peculiarity of climate. They were at no loss to conjecture what causes most probably operated in this instance. The unfortunate period of the Elizabeth's arrival, (it being near the commencement of the rainy season) was of itself sufficient to excite apprehensions.

The want of preparation and accommodation for their reception was another cause. This threw the agents into a state of great exposure, fatigue, and anxiety, and the early death of Mr. Crozer left them without medical advice or aid. This was followed by the immediate sickness and early death of the United States' agents. The colored people, it was fairly supposed, must have been thereby left exposed to the attacks of disease, without that advice and authority, care and skill, so necessary to combat it with success. The officer and sailors of the Cyane were exposed to the same, and, probably, (from their confined situation in a small boat) to greater dangers, and with no better means of resistance. The Board knew that settlements had been made & persisted in, and resulted most favorably, where causes such as these could not have operated so powerfully, and where the first ravages of disease were far more destructive. The early history of our own country furnished such instances: & when they looked along the African coast, and found that this supposed fatality of climate had not deterred the guilty votaries of avarice from forming and holding to this day their various establishments of iniquity, they could not but believe that similar attempts, undertaken with far other views, and in high reliance upon Him whose bidding can restrain "the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon day," would be made (as they were intended) the means of extending the glory of his name and the good of his creatures.—Thus they must have believed, even without that proof which Sierra Leone affords, of what benevolence thus persevering and thus relying, will be permitted to achieve.

Another difficulty may be supposed to have interrupted the progress of their enterprise, and demanded the consideration of the Board. The land had not been ceded by the natives, and some unexpected delays and obstacles were to be encountered. The Board thought this was to be in some degree accounted for by the death of the agent, and the consequent absence of what the natives might consider a sufficient authority. Still there was nothing from which to presume that a well selected territory in that neighborhood, if not the one already designated, was unobtainable.

Much difficulty in obtaining lands from a people to whom it was of little or no value, in exchange for such articles as were most important and desirable to them

(Continued on 4th page.)