

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING THE

EXTRA SESSION OF 1853, AND SESSION OF 1854.



Augusta:

WILLIAM T. JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE STATE.

1854.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
ADJUTANT GENERAL
OF THE
STATE OF MAINE.

1853.

Published agreeably to Resolve of March 22, 1836.

Augusta:
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STATE OF MAINE.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, }
Augusta, Jan. 1st, 1854. }

HON. WILLIAM G. CROSBY,

Governor and Commander in Chief:

SIR: Pursuant to that provision of the law, which requires from this Department annually an abstract of Militia, together with statements of the "actual situation of their arms, accoutrements and ammunition, their delinquencies, and every other thing which relates to the general advancement of good order and discipline," I have the honor to submit the following, for the year 1853.

The proper blanks having been at an early date supplied the several clerks and assessors of towns, &c., throughout the State, a commendable promptness has proved the result on their part, in the rendering of due returns. Of the whole number required for 1853, there remain at present deficient but thirty-nine; a less proportion than at any time since the establishment of the existing law in the matter. Of the points delinquent also, the greater share being remote towns and plantations of the interior, or of islands upon the coast, the reduction through their neglects, of the total of militia—whether from its actual or received standard—can be comparatively but slight. From some of the counties, as will be seen by the following table, returns have been received numerically full and complete.

MILITIA OF MAINE.

County.	1853.	1852.	Increase.	Decrease.	Returns deficient.
Aroostook,	1,399	1,147	252	—	9
Cumberland,	7,369	8,380	—	1,011	0
Franklin,	1,837	1,748	89	—	3
Hancock,	3,712	3,586	126	—	5
Kennebec,	5,358	5,888	—	530	0
Lincoln,	6,742	6,264	478	—	2
Oxford,	3,731	3,751	—	20	3
Penobscot,	6,233	6,784	—	551	8
Piscataquis,	1,386	1,369	17	—	2
Somerset,	3,494	3,368	126	—	3
Washington,	3,803	3,444	359	—	4
Waldo,	4,449	4,908	—	459	0
York,	6,199	5,386	813	—	0
Total,	55,712	56,023	2,260	2,571	39
		55,712		2,260	
Total decrease,		311		311	

Notwithstanding, however, the one point apparently gained, in the procurement of a more ready attention from civil officers charged with enrolling and returning the militia, it is yet a consideration, whether portions at least of returns as forwarded, be not open to a very decided character of exception. Whether, in fact, the number for service be not, at given localities, essentially greater or less than would appear by figures set down; and whether their condition, also, as regards age and physical capabilities, be not such as often properly to exempt them from enumeration altogether. In some instances, the disparity between the totals of different years, is so striking as not to fail in commanding attention. The return of the city of Portland, which in 1852, exhibited two thousand four hundred and fifty able-bodied, white male citizens, of the age of eighteen and under forty-five, gives for 1853, but one thousand one hundred and two,—not half the previous number;—yet Portland is not commonly held to have diminished materially in population. The return of the city of Augusta, giving for 1852, nine hundred and seventy persons for military duty, presents in 1853, three hundred and seventy-four only. Like disproportions, whether for increase or decrease, are found in other directions. It is not impossible that what appear errors of present returns,

may be but the correction of such for those of years preceding; though sufficient of the whole is manifest to develop a system exceedingly loose and unreliable. In further illustration also, I may refer to issues which have actually arisen among the responsible authorities themselves; the open protests of clerks of towns having been appended to forms sent in, and a denial entered of statements officially made by assessors. In the case of a particular town, the clerk declares his knowledge of the fact, that a portion of those returned to him as duty-men are entirely past the proper age. Yet it is upon data thus supplied, that our State stands annually forward, to claim its proportion of arms from the general government.

The following is a statement of Companies of Volunteers, as organized within the limits of the several Divisions, and as returned to this Office, for the year 1853.

No. of Div.	No. of Companies on register.	Companies returned.			Aggregate officers and men returned.
		No. Companies.	No. Officers.	No. Men.	
First,	1	1	3	38	41
Second,	2	1	3	42	45
Third,	1	0	0	0	0
Fourth,	9	3	10	161	171
Fifth,	2	2	6	93	99
Sixth,	3	1	3	39	42
Seventh,	3	1	4	28	32
Eighth,	24	6	17	310	327
Ninth,	6	1	3	112	115
Total,	51	16	49	823	872

Volunteers, it will be remembered, having been once enumerated by assessors, and carried into the total of unorganized militia, are not again noted in abstracts transmitted the President of the United States.

Of those companies which, in disregard of the statute, have failed to render statements of their strength and numbers, the most, if not nearly all, are doubtless in a condition of utter interior disorganization and undiscipline, and fast resolving themselves into their original elements of citizens, not responsible for military duty.

On the other hand, and as opposed to losses thus accruing, or perhaps already positively sustained, there have been applied for, and admitted to organization, within the past season, four companies additional to the number previously upon register,—two being companies of Light Infantry and two of Riflemen. One of these, the Bangor Light Infantry,—Division of General Cushman—having elected and returned its officers, stands at present regularly a portion of our volunteer militia. It may be added, also, with regard to this company, that for intelligence and respectability of material, it has never been surpassed in the State; gentlemen of fortune, and even of high civil capacity, being found upon its lists, and within its ranks, as among the ordinary members. Its steady attention as well to drill and exercise, together with its parades for the autumn, give proof that it cannot but become, in all respects, one of the brightest ornaments of our (sufficiently limited) military force. The other Light company, raised within the limits of Newcastle and Damariscotta, exhibits upon its rolls citizens of distinguished reputation, and stands scarcely second in its promise for the future. It is hoped the two companies of Riflemen will not be behind-hand in perfecting arrangements, and appearing in order for duty.

In view also of the character and standing of our volunteers generally, whether in the civil or military relation, it cannot prove irrelevant to glance for a moment at companies of the earlier formation;—companies which, in spite of every obstacle, have still held courageously to their organization, maintaining among us at least the semblance of a better system. The Bath City Grays, Captain Harding, for private worth and soldierly acquirement, may challenge comparison with the best in any direction. Their target practice is spoken of as evincing extraordinary perfection with the musket. The Portland Light Infantry, Captain Anderson, own a wide reputation for character, precision and discipline. Examples similarly worthy may be found within the eighth and other divisions,—not farther to particularize.

Nor are these remarks the less earnestly introduced that

fair presentation may be had of a class of our community, not perhaps always estimated at their truer value. A class standing at all times ready to vindicate the integrity of our interior laws, or, if need be, interpose as the first to ward assaults from without. Their conduct also in the case of the riots in one of our seaboard cities in 1849, proved eminently their reliability, as auxiliary to civil authority,—to say nothing of its establishing their claims to a higher character than that of a mere holiday soldiery.

As considered, however, in the more general aspect, the chances of any augmentation of our local military force above the disorganizations and dispersions noted as daily taking place, are very far from encouraging. Something additional is required to stimulate to any wide extent our young men, beyond the mere negative permission to parade, or the titles even based upon military warrants of office. With the knowledge also, which they possess, of thousands of stands of arms, lying idly in arsenal, it is hardly to be expected they will contribute all the other essentials—as time, effort, &c.—to the promotion of a military establishment, and afterwards furnish and equip themselves at private expense. Even of the companies recently asked for, sustained though a portion of them were, by liberal municipal grants—as next to indispensable to order in their locality—it was only upon the hope, or with the promise of arms from corps falling to decay, that any one could be got, in the legal sense, together.

Nothing is stated in the returns of companies, going to show that the arms and equipments in possession are not in an ordinary serviceable condition. No ammunition is set down.

The whole number of commissions issued from this office during the year 1853, is one hundred and twenty-nine. The whole number of discharges, fifty-four. The total of officers in the volunteer service, inclusive, with their respective staff, of nine Major Generals of aforesaid nominal or constructive divisions, is, as appearing upon register, two hundred and

thirty-five. Of this number, one hundred and seventy-seven are officers of company and battalion.

In my report for 1852, I had the honor to present a brief review of the system of laws of the United States, as compared with that of the State of Maine, concerning the militia; the discrepancies manifestly existing between those two systems, and the neglect on the part of our proper authorities to provide for what appeared the plainest requirements of the general government.

“The devising and establishment,” writes President Washington, “of a well regulated militia, would be a genuine source of legislative honor, and a perfect title to public gratitude.”* That this opinion also was not founded on any light estimate of causes or results, the difficulties, and it might almost be said, distractions, which took place in the effort by Congress to establish something like the system stated, furnish the most abundant evidence.

Some competent arrangement for defence, it was upon all hands agreed, could not but be indispensably necessary. From the remotest periods the policy of all nations, whether refined or barbaric, had been directed with this common view; and as regarded ourselves, to say the least, the very life-principle of our compact of union, was that of mutual protection and security. The doctrine of non-resistance, as a method of conciliation, or safeguard against wrong and encroachment from others, failed to obtain ascendancy in the councils of our fathers. Nurtured in the more rugged and practical school of our earlier history, their thoughts had acquired a different bent. Force must be met with force, and aggression put back with the strong arm; and if a course uniformly just and upright failed to elicit its due response, from whatever direction, we would then fall back, for the maintenance of our integrity,

* Sixth annual address to Congress—1794.

upon such means as fortune, and a position eminently favorable to our independence, had placed within our reach.

But what, in the secondary consideration, were the resources thus left at our disposal? And what the system best calculated to ensure the end in view, with the least hazard to the stability and general permanence of our institutions? The fatal example of republics before us, in maintaining large standing armies—open to corruption, and disciplined to regard but the will of the one—led at once to the rejection of that dependence for the preservation of our liberties. Except for the commonest purposes of coast defence, or for service in scattered detachments upon our remote interior borders, there would be no fixed or regular force. To the people alone could a free government legitimately look for security; to a people holding stake and interest in all for which they might ultimately strive, and at the same time so perfected in the art and discipline of war, as to render them formidable to any and every foe.

By the constitution, however, it was found that with reference to the power to erect, and bring into order and arrangement a force composed of citizens at large, the same had never been conceded wholly to the general government, but had been left divided between it and the States respectively;—as thus: to the United States was conceded the power to organize, arm and equip the militia, and to govern such portion of them as might be employed in the general service; while to the States, in their individual capacity, was reserved “the appointment of officers, and the authority of training the militia, according to the discipline prescribed by Congress.” The United States, in short, were at their option to furnish forth, and by virtue of their conceded right, to direct; while the States, one with another, were through their authorized agents, to fulfill, and carry out in detail, the provisions of what system soever should come to be regarded best.

Under the circumstances, then, and with relations thus peculiar, and perhaps, at first sight, in some sort complex,—as between the central and local governments—the task of legis-

lation for the militia became far from trivial or even attractive. And to evolve and establish a system calculated to draw forth and instruct in military art, the greatest available number of inhabitants, and at the same time provide for the most judicious proportion of exempts; to keep sedulously within the bound of powers expressly delegated, and avoid trenching upon those named as held in reserve; to render organization perfect and complete; to ensure the arming and equipment of all who should at any time be called into service; to equalize duties, and protect the poor from compulsion in bearing the military burthen of the rich;—these were considerations, serving not only to awaken high solicitude, but at intervals to baffle, if not well nigh put at fault, the sagacity of our most discriminating and intelligent statesmen. Nor was the responsibility of their position at all lessened, with the danger of clauses repugnant to the sentiments of masses,—clauses whose insertion or incorporation, might tend to reduce to an ultimate neglect, or even contempt, the authority of legally constituted bodies.

Previous to the introduction, and more interested discussion of this topic in Congress, (1791–2) and in accordance with the original articles of confederation, most of the States had maintained internally some peculiar system of militia of their own;—geographical locality, and the habits and capabilities of their people, having more or less to do in determining the character of the same. Wherever established, however, these several systems could not but vary from each other in many and important points; and in order to render efficient upon common ground the mass of citizen soldiery, or any portion thereof from diverse quarters, as well as to bring each State, and individual therein resident, to the full amount of obligation, whether in war or peace,—it was foreseen that the first and most essential element to embody in any extended system was that of uniformity.

Impressed with these, or similar views, our great first Chief Magistrate early communicated to the Senate a plan for the purpose;—adding that “it was unnecessary to offer arguments in recommendation of a measure, on which the honor, safety,

and well-being of the country so evidently and essentially depended.”*

This plan—elaborated and perfected in detail by the veteran General Knox, with the final approval of the President—contemplated the division of the militia, by their ages, into three distinct and separate classes—each to perform a given character and period of service.

Encampments, by so-called “Legions,” were to take place yearly, holding the youngest class for from ten to thirty days thorough discipline. The whole of the more active, or encamping corps, were to be clothed, and subsisted at the expense of the United States, and the officers thereof were to receive, for the time being, pay according to their respective rank.

The next class—looked upon as the chief reliance in case of war—were to perform drill and exercise four days in the year. The oldest class were required to assemble once only annually, for inspection of arms and equipments,—standing subject to no active duty, except in the last resource to repel invasion.

Doubtless, no more comprehensive or brilliant arrangement has ever been proposed, for the advancement of our people in the elements and practice of war; nor could its adoption and earnest administration have presented us at this time in other than a condition vastly more efficient for defence. From causes, however, connected mainly with expense, and the then reduced condition of the national treasury, the project in question failed of the support necessary to its final establishment as a law.

In its stead—session of 1791—was brought in a bill embodying, in its chief features, the system at present, in the legal sense, in force. Even upon this the debates were strenuous and extended; nor was it until the year following its introduction, that its provisions became adopted, and then only by a meagre majority. The section relative to exempts, and the extent of the powers of Congress in designating and providing for the same, as also those clauses for the arming and equipping of

*1790—See American State papers.

citizens at individual cost, were examined and discussed with the most intense earnestness;—the whole evincing the tenacity of States in guarding their respective inhabitants, and interior usages, and their jealousy of even the show of undue interference on the part of the central legislative or executive authorities. At the same time became exhibited the full proportion of service insisted upon by the federal government, and the imperativeness of a general arming at every hazard.

The system as adopted, commanded little more than the constructive approval of President Washington; and in his next annual address* he presented it as “an enquiry which could not be too solemnly pursued, whether the ‘act more effectually to provide for the national defence, by the establishment of a uniform militia throughout the United States,’ had organized them so as to produce their full effect,” &c. Individual States also memorialized Congress upon the subject of said act, evincing in almost all cases, a desire to substitute in its stead some plan approximating more nearly to the original of Gen. Knox; that is to say, a plan for the establishment, in the words of a memorial from North Carolina, in 1794, “of a select and efficient corps of militia, formed upon the principle of rotation, and taken from the classes least injurious to the industry of the community.” With the exception, however, of the measure of 1808, for the gradual arming of the militia at the expense of the United States, no action took place revolutionizing the principles of former legislation in the matter.

At as early a period of our own state history as 1820, the excellent Governor King, in an eloquent appeal to the citizen soldiery of Maine, pointed out to them the advantages to be derived from thorough organization and efficiency. Thenceforward also for a lengthened series of years the policy of our legislative bodies was most liberal toward the militia; large sums being annually appropriated for their benefit, and many articles of military equipment or consumption—as ammunition, tents, colors, musical instruments, books of tactics, &c.—freely be-

stowed. On occasions were supplied full complements of artillery, with implements and gear, as well as given proportions of small arms, for companies more select and reliable. Furthermore there were granted allowances to officers employed upon the more difficult duties of the staff, and finally a per annum of one dollar, to be paid each member of a company, on the day of general inspection and review.

That abuses came to be associated with the militia, is doubtless as true as that the elements of such exist to be developed in any extended organization, whether of a military or other description. But that things had arrived at a point, justifying the utter paralyzation and prostration of our entire military establishment, as was practically the effect under the enactment of 1844, is a question even at this day to be submitted to the impartial judgment of citizens. For the whole rests simply upon the proposition, whether difficulties in providing internally for the execution of a United States constitutional law by a State, warrant that State in the attempt to abrogate, by the letter of its own statutes, the said law, or otherwise to foil or evade the same, by any species of technicality or subterfuge. To the States respectively is reserved "the authority of training the militia." But the militia are to be trained "according to the discipline prescribed by Congress." What is the discipline so prescribed? That "system of discipline (and field exercise) which is and shall be ordered to be observed by the regular army of the United States." No organization or body of troops can be trained or disciplined, short of duty physically "active" upon the part of its constituent members. In the absence of emergency, and except for the mere purpose of "choosing officers," the law of 1844 declares that the militia "shall be subject to no active duty whatever." Plainly enough the general provision is herein directly thwarted and defeated; or would legislators fall back upon the assumption, that the object "effectually to provide for the national defence," is an object sufficiently answered by the "election of officers" among the militia of the several States; or further, that the "authority

to train the militia," does not imply that the same were expected to be trained? It was the opinion of Mr. Madison, as expressed to Congress,* that "practical knowledge and promptitude for active service," were the great ends to be pursued with regard to the militia; and that to give that "great mass of physical and moral force the efficiency which it merited, and was capable of receiving, it was indispensable that they should be instructed and practiced in the rules by which they were to be governed."

The act of 1848, although providing for the raising of volunteers, did not, as before intimated, make them properly returnable to the United States; nor otherwise recognize or regard them than as an organization wholly within the scope and control of the State, by itself. But even had it done so, the subsequent act of 1852, denying to corps all further issues of arms, had, as has also been presented, the effect so utterly to check and retard their growth, as to render the whole system, in point of any positive increase, little better than a downright nullity. The only portion, in fine, of the law of 1848, holding any direct reference to the general code, did but serve to make still broader the proposition relative to "active duty;" and insist that, in time of peace, the militia as enrolled, should in no wise be subject to such,—not even for the "election of officers."

Eminently to be deprecated, and beyond measure painful to minds truly philanthropic, are evils incident to, or which follow in the train of war. Nor can the incipient preparation even for a condition of hostilities, be held at all to comport with those theories of abiding peace, those visions of tranquil contentment and security, by many so ardently entertained, and by all so devoutly to be desired in their fulfillment or realization. But in view of the antecedents of our race, and the fact also that so far as our own prescience may extend, their relations are likely to remain yet essentially the same, can it be wise, or even prudent, to forego all provision for contingencies possible to occur?

*Message of December, 1810.

For neither is passion dead, nor malevolence palsied. In our own time, as in the periods past, is wrong enacted, man towards man, and right subverted, or seemingly entirely overthrown. And were there wanting other evidences of debasement and criminality, the crowded condition of our prisons, together with the ever-recurring establishment or revision of measures of punishment and reform, afford the most abundant assurance. Among nations, as among individuals, may come to operate, with only a higher concentration of bitterness, those causes, which sooner or later, lead through their various channels, to distrust, division—to open dissension. With regard to ourselves also, standing as we do, the antipodes, not to say the living reproof of so many of the despotisms of the older world, the danger would appear to be peculiarly imminent. Certainly it cannot be lessened with the impression that we are willing to sit down, heedlessly unprovided and unprepared. Turning again to the distinguished patriot quoted at the outset,—to him whose valor failed not on the field of combat, as his wisdom still shone in the council,—we find him not to have been without his strong convictions on this point. “The United States,” argues he, in his fifth annual address,* “ought not to indulge a persuasion, that contrary to the order of human events, they will forever keep at distance those painful appeals to arms, with which the history of every other nation abounds.” Since, too, the penning of the prophetic paragraph, not less than two bloody and vindictive wars have befallen our country; each generation, as it were, having been called upon to pass its ordeal of the battle-fire.

But more formidable than all, more to be apprehended than either doubting or denunciation, are impressions only too common among many even well-ordered minds—impressions that though war were to come, vast bodies of our people could be congregated and armed, and put in order speedily and competently to meet the foe—maintaining under all circumstances, the honor of their flag and soil.

* December 3, 1793.

Remote from the probable theatre of any extended warlike operations, and engrossed, for the greater part, with matters of present domestic necessity or expediency, much can be pardoned the citizen, who, through inadvertence, or too strong a reliance upon the innate courage of Americans, shall have suffered himself to become thus impressed or influenced. But true it is, that conclusions such as these, however honestly entertained, cannot but from the very outset be imbued in error; nor can they, if persisted in, and maintained as a rule of policy and administration, fail ultimately to induce the most disastrous, if not wholly fatal results. Military knowledge is not the growth of a moment, nor the offspring of any impulse, however generous or patriotic;—while of two equal bodies of troops, placed each upon equal ground, and possessed of the same inherent courage and vigor, that one is certain to be successful which brings to its aid the greatest amount of artificial acquirement. This the immutable law of force compels. Or admitting even, the theory sometimes urged, of exasperation as opposed to high military skill, is not the element insisted upon of a character too uncertain, whether of extent or duration, to afford the least possible safe reliance? No longer since than our last war with England, there proved to be in this country, parties who did not conceive the time had arrived for any resistance whatever. Intractable, as well, and without governing principle superior to themselves, impulses, of the kind stated, could not otherwise than lead to the most wanton waste and sacrifice, even in their fullest tide of success. They might prompt to the onset, but they would never ward the blow; while once defeated, they were certain to remain helpless, and without resource. And besides, could it, even at the best, be in other respects, always politic for a nation to delay assuming arms, until it should have become wholly desperate?

It was not an entirely unregulated, nor, in the military sense, untaught population, whom the wrongs of our earlier day at length aroused in opposition to the mother country. Scarcely a citizen of the period, not in some degree familiar with the use

and handling of weapons; while many were veterans of the extended campaigns of the English against the French upon this continent. The detachment of British regulars sent to destroy the military stores at Concord, found the "minute-men" of the neighborhood drawn up in at least fair battle-order. The heavier columns which advanced upon the celebrated height near Boston, encountered their resistance from a redoubt constructed as scientifically as the time, locality, and means at hand, would possibly permit. Less discernment, in fact, in the choice of position, less judgment in the preparation of defences, and less order and arrangement in the masses so suddenly got together, and results might have proved of a character widely different,—and a bloody and perhaps fatal spot, have been presented upon the pages of our history, for the glory which now adorns them.

Throughout all the succeeding years of the war, General Washington failed not, at every available moment of leisure, to put in practice the strictest system of drill and instruction among his troops. Even at Valley Forge, where scarcity of clothing and other necessaries, rendered so many, both of officers and men, in reality unfit for parade, orders were constantly put forth for renewed effort in perfecting all to the highest point. Whatever his confidence in the patriotism, earnestness, or capabilities of his soldiers, the Great Commander wisely preferred to add to the whole, practice with arms, and readiness and promptness in the formations and evolutions.

Nor does the policy of present existing governments abroad—governments better experienced, and scarcely less discerning than our own—indicate other than an abiding reliance, both upon the necessity of beforehand preparation, as indispensable to efficiency in war, and the value of art and experience to the native valor of the soldier. Scarcely a private in all their armies not trained and disciplined for full a year, before being sent to join his regiment or corps. And as relates to candidates for the higher grades, it were needless to point to the multitude of military schools, with which Europe is at this moment studded through nearly its whole extent. From these,

it is, that go annually forth the graduates, to officer and control, beneath their common masters, the vast bodies in question; adding soon to the abstruser theories of the professors, the more rigorous and practical duties of the camp and field.

To what else, as well, beside their thorough educational course at the United States' military academy, can be justly attributed the germ of that well-earned character for skill and ability, which distinguishes the officers of our own small standing army? That character which through the operations of its *morale*, as well as by its practical bearings upon the rank and file, carried the older regiments of the service without a defeat, through the numerous engagements of the late war with Mexico?

As regards any influences to be extended from our national institution to the militia of the several States, it is evident the same can be comparatively but slight; and except as relates to the development or elucidation of common tactics, of a nature voluntary, or entirely accidental. Few officers resign in time of peace, to become incorporated with the militia; and in time of war, although they are found, to a limited extent, to enter corps of regular establishment, the clause reserving to the States "the appointment of officers," would of course exclude them, except, perhaps, in the higher commands, from any direct connection with citizen troops proper.

Another theme not unfrequently alluded to, as illustrative, if not wholly demonstrative, of the capacity of our people to enter abruptly upon campaigns against an enemy, is that of the conduct and achievements of our volunteers in the war alluded to with a neighboring Republic. Although of a peculiar stamp, and for the most part not strictly the offspring of a system of enrollment merely for defence, volunteers may be admitted as a species of militia,—that is, troops not previously professional. And here—dealing earnestly, and for such good as may result from all just effort—it may not, perhaps, be held too obtrusive of personal relations, to allude to results impressed upon my own observation, in the course of a sufficiently active, though brief period of service, in said war at the south. And it is a

question which I submit to the candor of any truly military mind, or to any of our community, such as may have had similar experience with myself,—as to how much of unnecessary fatigue and privation; how much of want and debilitation; of brokenness, disease, and ultimately death in forms the most lingering or appalling; how much of all this,—to say nothing of moral perversion through the hardened indifference engendered as to suffering in others—might have been spared our gallant and most certainly self-sacrificing countrymen, under a different system of things;—a system which, instead of hurrying them forward, in hastily collected, half organized, and well nigh wholly undisciplined masses, had presented them before the enemy with the attributes of even a well-trained citizen soldiery?

For it is not alone in mere proficiency with the musket, or exactness in the ordinary marchings and wheelings, that the soldier, or even officer, finds his truest school of service. The interior economy of the camp, the adoption and rigid pursuance therein of method and system in all things; the subsistence, cleanliness, housing and general health and good order of the individual off the immediate field of drill or battle,—these are among the essential elements of strength and power in military organizations; elements without which, as attained in at least a fair degree, the most numerous and well-appointed army finds itself shorn full half its capabilities for the purposes of its creation.

But in addition to much that had yet to be accomplished in these regards by the oldest veteran of barrack-routine, when once fairly upon the path of the enemy,—our volunteers found themselves, in at any rate a very large proportion, unskilled, perhaps, in even the first chief rudiments of the profession of arms. Under the very cannon, therefore, of the enemy, and in the midst of marches, expeditions, guard-tours, and other duties sufficient in any climate, to have worn and reduced the most robust, they were, from an imperative necessity, constantly summoned forth to learn new things upon the company or regimental parade.

But not farther to enter upon subordinate causes more directly operating, the table of losses alone of volunteers—or new troops of whatever organization—as compared with that of corps more thoroughly bred, cannot but afford the most striking demonstration of the argument. And by data officially furnished by the Adjutant General of the Army, it appears, that the proportion of ordinary deaths among volunteers—that is, deaths irrespective of killed in battle or died of wounds—stands, for the same average period of service, at almost to a fraction, *double* that of regulars of the old establishment. The number of soldiers discharged for disability (a few from wounds, but in the vast majority for diseases contracted in service) holds, as between the older and newer corps, at about the same ratio. Of those so discharged, also, it may be fairly estimated that more than two-thirds subsequently died. In the regular regiments, the loss from ordinary deaths and discharges for disability, amounts to about one-eighth; in the volunteers, to one-fourth,—averaging, in particular cases, nearly one-third. The total of actual deaths among volunteers from hardship and disease, is registered at between *eight and nine thousand men*. The total of died and discharged as aforesaid, at NEARLY SIXTEEN THOUSAND MEN;—and these, generally speaking, from a portion of our population, young, hardy and enduring.

At the same time, also, it is stated by the authority named, that the aggregates as given with regard to volunteers, and the newer levies, must have been “much less than the actual loss, owing to the missing muster-rolls and returns, which could never be obtained, though repeatedly written for, to commanders of regiments and corps.”* So that not so much of discipline prevailed, as to account properly, in all cases, for reductions, even by the hand of death itself.

Nor is anything here said of rashness, or the useless waste of numbers, in cases of actual collision with the enemy; a waste which through a better foresight and skill, could never have occurred, to widen the circle of the widowed and bereaved.

*House Doc. 24. Communicated January 24, 1850.

Neither is the matter of expense alluded to; it being a statement no less officially well avouched,* that the cost for our raw troops, is usually twice that of troops better inducted and disciplined.

Reviewing, then, the argument as presented, we find little to stimulate belief or confidence in the proposition, that our people, as taken at large, and with no previous training or preparation, are likely to prove competent in all respects, to the difficulties and emergencies of war. Nor does it appear even that in point of money economy alone, their presence in the field could be desirable, without some better order and arrangement.

As relates, too, to the government, or portion of a government, which, with the means of preparation amply within reach, will thus send, or even suffer to go forth, its citizens to sacrifices not less needless than certain, can either stand absolved of blame, in view of the justice to be meted to all? Are lives alone the counterpoise to be thrown into the scale, as opposed to a skill and acquirement equal with that of our army? Are we to hem ourselves within a barrier of those more gallantly perishing upon our outer borders, and, sitting down, congratulate our hopes, or fears, upon interior quiet and security? Satisfying ourselves, also, that in event of future hostilities, there will always be found those equally brave, and equally generous, to immolate themselves as before.

Under institutions such as our own, all, sharing alike, stand alike bound to protect the common weal. And if, with the rest, there shall chance to be found among us a class entertaining sentiments similar to the above—a class who would perhaps urge even the stipend of the volunteer (the more uncertain in hostilities) as a sufficient remuneration for his services,—it is that which should of itself call for the most rigorous investigation into our resources for defence.

And what, again, though there were to befall no more of war in our own day? Are there no farther considerations which

* Communication of Adjutant General U. S. Army to this department.

should stimulate the action of the patriotic citizen? Our fathers, toiling always, toiled not more for themselves than for those who should come after them. And, in addition to all else, they flung around us a system, which though held to be still imperfect, was yet the best that, under the circumstances, could be devised for our protection. The principles embodied in that system,—those of military art and science, as applied to the people at large,—became a portion of a legacy in trust, which we were in like manner with our ancestors, to transmit, unimpaired, to others. How we have thus far fulfilled the objects of that trust, and how we are likely in the future to fulfill them, let the laws alluded to as existing upon our statute books, furnish for themselves answer.

To do all was neither expected nor demanded of States individually. To do much was guarantied by their reservations of powers, and of the right to the immediate administration of the militia. Enough has been done if we are to rely upon a standing force; too much can never be done, if we are to rely upon the masses alone—or mainly. What our citizens require—what by numerous petitions now pending before the Legislature, as well as manifold applications to this department, within the past year, they would seem almost to demand, is, the fostering aid and care of their State government. With such, lacking not, as has been well proved, in the original true elements of a military character, they would doubtless soon exhibit among us a militia, second in accomplishment and soldierly bearing to none in the Union. The example of other States would not appear unworthy of imitation in these regards. Or if, in the meantime, the spirit of our legislative authorities should be found averse to an organization, or re-organization, of the whole, may we not—without presuming more upon the service of one than another—hold in condition for order and defence, at least a better proportion of our community liable to duty? As, for instance, by the apportionment of corps to the number of inhabitants at given localities.

So should the letter of the superior law, together with the

injunctions of the framers of our Republic, remain more faithfully answered, and our State be placed in a position better comporting with its honor and integrity, as a member of the Great Confederacy.

Out of the appropriation of one thousand dollars for military purposes in 1853, there has been drawn and expended by and within this department, for repairs upon arsenals, gun-houses, and artillery carriages; for transportation of arms and camp-equipage; for the publishing of general orders, and for the purchase of orderly and other necessary books for volunteers, as well as in liquidation of former outstanding liabilities, and of the ordinary contingencies of office, &c., &c.—the sum of three hundred and sixty-four dollars, forty-nine cents. All accounts connected with these expenditures, have been regularly submitted to the proper auditing authorities, and by them duly passed and closed.

A new, and it is hoped more convenient and thorough system of money accountability, based upon that of the army, has been introduced, for the benefit both of this department, and of arsenal keepers, or other proper agents, from time to time employed in disbursements.

Two hundred and thirty-seven brass-mounted percussion rifles, with five hundred and thirty-seven sets of accoutrements and appendages, constituting the quota of this State for 1853, were received in April last, at Portland, and placed in deposit at the arsenal in that city. The quota for 1853, being based upon the return of 1852, and the total of militia having, through neglect of civil officers, fallen short several thousand for the former year, the adjustment of this with other similar balances between the United States and Maine for previous years, will unquestionably find us in debt to the general government, beyond any offset to be had by means of our proportion for 1854. So that for the coming twelvemonth we are likely to realize small addition to our stock of arms and equipments for the militia.

The following is a statement of the amount and description of arms, and other military property belonging to the State, whether as deposited in arsenals, in possession of volunteers, or as in a few cases of artillery, in trust with towns.

		ORDNANCE AND ORDNANCE STORES.	
		BRASS.	
		IRON.	
Total on hand Dec. 31, 1853.	2	12 pounders.	
	40	6 pounders.	
	3	4 pounders.	
	4	3 pounders.	
	2	6 inch howitzers.	
	2	Eprovettes.	
	1	42 pounders.	
	4	32 pounders.	
	22	24 pounders.	
	7	18 pounders.	
	9	12 pounders.	
	2	9 pounders.	
	2	6 pounders.	
	12	4 pounders.	
	6	3 pounders.	
	1	10 inch howitzers.	
	263	Sponges and rammers.	
	172	Lades and worms.	
	462	Bricoles and drag ropes.	
	125	Trail handspikes.	
	19	Lead aprons.	
	35	Ammunition boxes.	
	15	Tumbrels or powder carts.	
	32	Sets of harness.	
	15,246	Rounds of shot and shells.	
	10,388	Muskets.	
	10,861	Bayonets.	
	2,864	Cartridge boxes and belts.	
	2,675	Bayonet scabbards and belts.	
	1,764	Brushes and picks.	
	2	Spare flints—boxes of.	
	71	Ball cartridges—cases of.	
	100	Musketoons—Artillery.	
	62	Carbines.	
	3,808	Rifles.	
	2,687	Powder horns or flasks.	
	2,202	Pouches and belts.	
	91,800	Loose balls.	
	336	Horsemen's pistols.	
	1,262	Swords.	
	1,268	Sword scabbards and belts.	
	61	Haversacks.	
	34	Drums.	
	30	Fifes.	
	305	Tents and marquees.	
Received in 1853.	-	-	-
On hand December 31, 1852.	-	-	-

It is proper to state in connection with the foregoing table, that a more perfect and thorough investigation than, in the present condition of things, it were well possible to make, would doubtless exhibit a portion of the small arms and camp-equipage, actually belonging to the State, and previously issued from the arsenals, in a position not readily to be recovered, or placed again within the custody of agents regularly appointed. In view also of this state of matters, and of any future legislation to be had in favor of the militia, it could hardly be injudicious to provide for the establishment of armories; that arms and accoutrements might be placed therein, when not in hand for drill and exercise, or other purposes prescribed or allowed by law. The indications are, that many of our towns and cities would materially aid to furnish these depositories, for the sake of advantages to be derived from a better organization of the military within their limits.

The annual allowance by the United States, of two hundred thousand dollars, for the arming and equipment of the whole body of the militia, having been provided for in 1808, when the numbers for duty were comparatively very few, it is submitted whether some form of memorial from our Legislature, might not be justified, asking an increase in the sum allowed, and, by sequence, of the complements of arms and equipments to be transmitted the several States. Coupled with the rest, also, might be a request for supplying the militia with books of tactics by the general government,—a measure already urged upon Congress by the Secretary of War, on the ground of procuring a wider uniformity of drill and manœuvre.

A resolution was last session adopted, requesting and instructing the members of Congress from Maine, to obtain, if possible, by legal enactment, the authority for an exchange of the flint-lock arms of this State, for arms of the United States having the percussion lock, and being otherwise of more improved and recent pattern. Like the match-lock, which it displaced at former periods, the flint-lock, too, has had its day; being doubtless destined, in the practical sense, soon to become

an obsolete of the military vocabulary. Militia ought not to be behindhand with the more regular establishment, to whom, it is understood, few or no muskets or rifles, other than with the percussion lock, are now issued. Nor could it be fairly expected, that, in addition to the rest of their deficiencies, our citizen troops would prove equal, with but inferior weapons, to an enemy, better appointed, and more perfectly trained and disciplined.

Owing to the failure of specific appropriation for the purpose, nothing has been done, during the past year, towards cleaning, repairing, or in any form putting in order, the arms belonging to the State. Many of the muskets—and particularly of the mass in deposit at the Bangor Arsenal—are in a condition rendering them liable to the most serious injury from rust and corrosion. Some of the locks also upon these, have, from the mere stiffening of the oil about their springs and tumblers, become so fixed and set, as hardly to answer to the trigger. Whether or not the proposition to exchange shall prove successful, a moderate appropriation for the benefit of the arms in question cannot but be advisable.

The enclosure about the Arsenal at Portland having fallen into decided dilapidation,—portions thereof, in fact, being frequently prostrated by the high winds prevailing in the vicinity,—I would recommend, as desirable to the protection of said Arsenal, and the safety of the public property therein contained, an appropriation sufficient for the most complete re-enclosure. Estimates for this purpose, and for the construction of a picket similar to that at Bangor Arsenal, are expected soon to be furnished from Portland. The buildings, generally, whether at Portland or Bangor, are in fair condition and preservation.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

ALBERT TRACY, *Adjutant General.*

ERRATUM.

Page 21, line 20, for "army" read "enemy."