IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

INTERESTING DEBATE.

Monday, July 18.

[CONCLUDED]

Lord Castlereach replied to Mr. Pitt; and, in an able speech, vindicated the conduct of his majesty's ministers from the charges that had been brought against them. He contended that it was much wiser to have adopted the measures taken for the security of the country in succession, than by attempting them together to endanger their success. He thought his right honorable friend (Mr. Pitt) not very consistent in his attack on his majesty's ministers, as when the proposition for raising the army of reserve had been under consideration, he had given it his decided approbation, qualified however, with a declaration he only approved of it, because it was not to be a final measure, but was to be followed up by some farther efforts. If such ulterior measure had been then, in his mind necessary, the noble lord thought it would have been more candid to offer it then, and to bring forward his accusation now.

Mr. Fox did not mean to trouble the house long. This was the first time he had the opportunity of delivering his sentiments on any of the measures connected with the defence of the country or the maintenance of the war. Nor was he ashamed of not having attended in his place while the former measures had been in their progress through the house. He had already given his opinion on the war, and he was sensible how liable he should have been to the obloquy of endeavoring to embarrass the measures of government after having delivered that opinion, if in the discharge of his parliamentary duty he should have felt himself called on to give opposition to those they had brought forward. This was the first of their measures, the tendency of which he could support, and he had come down to the house this day to express his approbation of it. The system of finance that had been adopted as well as the means resorted to in the bill for raising the army of reserve, and adding to the military force of the country, was such as he could not have concurred in. But the present measure he entirely approved of, on the principle that it went to arm the people of Great-Britain, for common security against a menaced invasion. The noble lord, on the floor, he thought had misconceived the observations of the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Windham), when he supposed him to look with a jaundiced eye on every other species of force, but a regular force. He had himself understood him otherwise. The right honorable gentleman had certainly given a preference to regular troops, and for operations in the field, his predilection for such a force was one, in which every body must concur. But the right hon. gentleman at the same time had urged the same reasons for employing another species of force, that he had on all occasions advanced, & in which he (Mr. Fox) agreed; however, he differed with the right hon. gentleman on other subjects. He agreed with him, that we should have as large a regular army as the circumstances of the country would admit. But he could not suppose the right honorable gentleman to be so little read in history as to suppose that the fate of the country would be decided by the event of a battle. He hoped we should have as numerous an army, as well disciplined troops, as skillful, able, and meritorious officers as any the French could send against us; but when we had all those, he would ask, whether we could be sure of success? He would ask, whether the operations of fortune did not often influence the events of war? If it were necessary to resort to authorities, he thought that of Julius Cæsar, the greatest general that ever lived, a very satisfactory one. Whatever may have been the state of his troops as to numbers, discipline, and skill, that great master in the art of war thought that much would still depend on fortune. As to the observations of the right honorable gentleman under the gallery (Mr. Pitt) with respect to placing the regular force of the country in such a state as would be least subject to fluctuation, he thought they did not so fully apply to the regular as to another species of force, which, though not so decisive in the field, was liable to the influence of fortune, and bid fairer to be eventually and infallibly successful. The melancholy events which had taken place within the last years, proved that many countries had been compelled to submit to an invading enemy; but the cases were few in which a country, after making all the struggles possible, had been ultimately destroyed. His view of the subject was, that we should maintain as large a regular force as the country could pay, but still look for ultimate security to the exertions of the collective strength of the country by arming it *en masse*. He agreed with the noble lord opposite, in regretting that compulsory means should be necessary, and he should have no hesitation to add, that if all other means failed, we should resort even to compulsory means to place the security of the country out of hazard. He should put the regular army altogether out of the question, for he was sure the country possessed as respectable a force of that description as the circumstances required. It had a militia, which he considered an anomalous force, partaking too much of the levy *en masse*, by the manner in which it was raised, and too much of a regular force by the manner in which it was organized. Another force was now proposed to be raised that could ultimately be relied on. The enemy, if they should attempt to invade us, would make the attempt with regular troops.—They would have numerous forces, disciplined troops, and skilful and experienced officers as well as we, but there was one species of force which they could not have, an armed mass of the people of Great-Britain. This was the peculiar weapon by which their attempts to invade this country were to be defeated. But the bill did not appear to him to be consonant to the view he had of the measure that ought to be adopted under the present circumstances. It seemed to him to confound voluntary services with volunteers. In forming volunteer corps, we appeared to be hankering after an old thing; but in encouraging the voluntary services of the great mass of the population, we should provide the most substantial means of establishing the security of the country. He agreed with the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Windham) that it would be more desirable to obtain the object proposed in the bill by voluntary offers of service, than by compulsory means, and he did not at all approve of the term used to relieve the district from the service in case a certain number should voluntarily come forward with service. It might be said that he who came forward when an enemy should have actually landed, would do but his duty. When he considered the patriotic feelings, the generous ardor that influenced the breasts of Englishmen on every occasion of serious danger to their country to engage in its defence, he could not but wish that compulsory means should in the first instance be omitted. He was convinced, and, he believed he may perhaps be looked upon as too sanguine in the opinion, that the object of the bill would be fully and completely accomplished without them. But he should hope that he did not exaggerate much, when he asserted that if the question were put fairly to the people, there would not be five refusals out of an hundred applications. He thought it a delicate subject to inquire how far it may be prudent to resort to compulsory measures for enforcing service. But he thought that it would be much easier to make an impressed man a good seaman, or a conscript a good soldier, than to convert a mass of people, by compulsory means, into an effectual military body. The success of particular invasions of this country may be alluded to, but he would ask why such attempts had proved successful? And he should answer, that it was because the mass of the people had been well disposed to the invaders. If the people had been trained to arms and the invaders had to encounter an host of enemies in them, what possible prospect of success could they have had? He agreed with the right honorable gentleman, that it was impossible to extend this system so widely, as he was convinced that it could not be carried to too great an extent, except in the instance of instruction; and thought that a few hours in each week would be sufficient for that purpose, and that it would only be necessary to teach the men to load and discharge their muskets with effect. He might be told that this would not make soldiers of them, but he did not want soldiers, he wanted an armed mass of the people of England, which acting with the regular army, may certainly not prove decisive in the first instance, but would lead to final success.—He could not go all the length of the hon. gentleman under the gallery (Mr. Pitt) as to the danger, but he should readily admit that where an invasion was threatened, no measures of precaution could be carried to excess. He differed too with the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Windham), as to the probability of the danger; for he was one of those who thought there was less probability of its being realised, than was generally supposed in the house. He was aware that he might be asked, what his opinion signified? And he was ready to admit it was the opinion of an individual, founded upon the operations of his own understanding. But when he found that a different opinion was delivered by many respectable military authorities in that house, and generally entertained out of it, he was ready to give up his own judgment, which he admitted to be but conjecture, and to act upon the contrary opinion, as if it were certain, and to guard against even the possibility of danger. He could not, however, admit with the noble lord (lord Hawkesbury) that if we were reduced to a single acre, we should still be in a situation to dispute the cause with the enemy. The expression was a little figure of oratory, *(A laugh)* which might perhaps be allowable. But he felt confident, that if the enemy should land and should succeed in getting possession of some part of the country, even of London, they would then be as far as ever from the conquest of the country. *(A cry of hear! hear!)* One thing, however, was certain, that great inconveniences would result from such an event; but he believed, that any inconvenience that should arise, might be easily removed. Even if the city of London should fall into the hands of the enemy, he was one of those who thought the mischief might be repaired in a few years. He thought that we should endeavor to defeat any attempt of the enemy; first, by the efforts of our navy, then by impeading their progress, and afterwards by putting it out of their power to return. But he should return to the point, whether voluntary services were to be particulary resorted to. As nearly as he could understand the right honorable gentleman (the secretary at war) in the cursory attention he had been able to pay to his explanation of his measure, he conceived it to be his intention to divide the persons enrolled into certain classes, but he could not see why those, who should be disposed to serve voluntarily, had not been made one; and he could not help thinking, they ought to be the first. The house was told that this measure was to give effect to the prerogative of the crown, in calling upon the exertion of the people; but he could not conceive why the first step towards the effectual security of the kingdom, by arming the people, had been deferred from the commencement of the war to the 18th of July. By his majesty's message of the 18th of March, the house had been given to understand, that there were then in the ports of Holland and France, armaments, which in the event of certain circumstances, might be employed, not against Jamaica, not against Malta, which the enemy was then desirous to wrest out of our hands, but in an invasion of this country. If there had been at that period, reasonable grounds to apprehend an invasion, he could not conceive any sufficient reason, why this specific weapon which of all others was most likely to be successful, had been so long deferred. He felt he might be told, that the only regular course in such a case would be to move an enquiry but he was aware that an enquiry depended on other circumstances. If the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Windham) who had urged the charge against his majesty's ministers, should move for the enquiry, he should be told, "you inform us that the enemy is at our gates, and is this a time to prosecute an enquiry, when we ought to be employed in providing for our security?" And the right honorable gentleman under the gallery (Mr. Pitt) would be ready to cry out, "What, will you keep parliament together, when we ought all to separate for the purpose of exerting our influence in our respective counties, and exciting the spirit and energy of the country?" *(A laugh)*. He had heard of a high tone being held, and of large majorities; but he was happy to find that salutary advice had nevertheless been taken. No defence could be so easy as for ministers to say, that any charge brought against them was utterly destitute of foundation. But whatever may have been the conduct of ministers, whatever might be thought of that conduct, he was sure that all classes of men would be ready to come forward and repel an invading enemy.

There may be, and he hoped there always would be persons in the country who were attached to a republican form of government. But even such persons would unite against an invading foe; for what liberty could they expect from the effect of a French invasion? He had heard of a suggestion thrown out, on a former occasion by a right honorable gentleman (Mr. Windham) if it were fair for him to allude to what passed when he had not been himself in his place, that military officers should be sent into the different parishes and districts for the purpose of training the peasantry to arms. Whatever may be the credit due to the right honorable gentleman's opinion, and he considered him a half military man *(a laugh)*, he thought his plan the simplest and most likely to be effectual. If the bill, however, should be intended only as a circuitous mode of raising a military force, such as the army of reserve, or for recruiting the army, he thought it would defeat itself, and interfere with the success of the levy *en masse*. He had no doubt or apprehension with respect to the issue of such a contest, if the spirit and unanimous exertion of the great body of the people should be wisely called forth in support of it.

The chancellor of the exchequer did not mean to detain the house long. He had considerable satisfaction in perceiving that no opposition had been made to the motion of his right honorable friend, but that every speaker had declared his entire and unequivocal approbation of the measure which was to be brought forward. The only difference that had existed was as to the scope of voluntary service. The principle of the measure he took to be this, to afford his majesty all the means of employing the population of the country for its defence, and of calling upon all, within given ages, for assistance to repel invasion. His right honorable friend, though calling on the house to render his majesty's prerogative more effectual, was only desirous of enabling him to call upon the people at an earlier period than he could actually do. The honorable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had made a correct distinction between voluntary service and volunteers, and he confessed he disliked equally with him the term relieved, which had been inadvertently used; but it only had been meant to express that districts which should furnish a certain proportion of voluntary offers, should be exempt from military service in that instance. He was not disposed to vindicate the conduct of his majesty's government which had been attacked from two or three quarters, but he contended that they neither had been insensible to the danger nor deficient in their communications to parliament and the country. Their measures had been directly contradictory to such a statement. The right honorable gentleman had charged them with having been tardy in their measures, and the honorable gentleman who had spoken last, had stated that there was an apprehension of invasion at the time of his majesty's message of the 8th of March. The message had been sent down to parliament while discussions of importance were pending, and armaments considerable certainly with reference to the force we had then on foot were equipping in their ports, avowedly, no doubt, for colonial purposes, but which, in the event of a certain turn of the negociation, might have been turned against this country. What was the conduct of government on that occasion? The message was sent to parliament announcing the circumstance. The militia to the number of 40,000 had been called out, and 15,000 for Ireland. The military force had been augmented in cavalry, and in its other various branches. On the rupture of the negociation the supplementary militia had been called out, and before that could be carried into effect, his right honorable friend has brought forward his proposition for raising the army of reserve to consist of 50,000 men. And now before those different measures are fully accomplished he submits a plan for arming all the men in the country capable of bearing arms. He would ask at what period more effectual measures had been taken.—We had begun the contest with a larger military force than in any former war, and that force had been augmented in the manner he had stated. It had not been made a reproach to government, that they had not called the militia out in time, nor the supplementary militia, nor that they had neglected to recruit the army except in the manner the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Windham) recommended. He contended, therefore, that it was wise to carry the measures into effect successively. Something had been said as to the danger of arming a great proportion of the population of the country; but he knew of no period when it would not have been safe to arm them against such a danger. There had been, he was aware, malignant spirits in the country, persons who would have been desirous of overturning our happy constitution, but no serious danger could have been derived from giving them arms in common with the great mass of the people. There never had been a moment when the people had been more unanimous to defend their king, constitution and country, and amongst the causes of that unanimity, he could not but enumerate the reprobated treaty of Amiens. In that treaty the people had a proof of the sincere desire of government for peace, and though the ambition of France had forced us into another war, the people convinced of the necessity of it, were become unanimous in its support. Another circumstance led him to a comparison of the present with the latter period of the late war.—Then it had been necessary to continue the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act, and to establish martial law in Ireland; but ministers would be criminal, were they to propose either measure on the present occasion; and it was to the reprobated peace that this was owing. He should not advert to the deliberations in which the house had sanctioned all the measures of his majesty's government. But he maintained that the cordial co-operation of the people in the present contest had been altogetherthe effect of the peace; for it was impossible that such blessings could under any circumstances, be at the time enjoyed. He was happy that the measure proposed had the unanimous concurrence of the house; and he was sensible it would meet the cordial and universal concurrence of the people. His right honorable friend intended to bring up his bill this night, and proposed that it should be read a first and a second time, and then committed; that it should be then printed, and a day or two allowed for considering it in that state.

Doctor Lawrence conceived that the peace had lowered the spirit of the people, which it would have been found difficult to have raised had it not been from the idea of an invasion. From accounts which had been received from France, it appeared there was a spirit there, which had not yet made its appearance here. He knew, however, that it was in the country; not that it was of the restless nature of that spirit which belonged to the enemy; but it was a steady, solid spirit. We were in a state in which he did not doubt we should be found equal to ourselves; but we were in a state in which it was necessary that we should do every thing to rally the spirit of the country round us. Doctor Lawrence concluded by saying that he was afraid, if the British oak ever died, it would die at the top.

Sir James Pulteney said, that his opinion had always been, that a regular army was proper for the defence of the country, but he had also, always maintained, that the spirit of the country was such, that no apprehensions were to be entertained, with respect to the result, should an invasion be attempted. He wished to say one word with respect to the volunteers: he supposed that a provision would be made in the bill for subjecting them to the same conditions, as persons would be subjected to by the present measure.

After a few words from Mr. Alexander and colonel Vereker, leave was given, *nem. con.* to bring in the bill.

The bill was immediately brought in and read a first time.

The secretary at war hoped the house would see no objection to the bill's being read a second time, committed *pro forma*, and the report received to-night. It might then be printed, and be taken into further consideration on Wednesday.

BY THIS DAY's MAILS.

BOSTON, September 1.

Arrived, brig Sally, Hillyer, St. Johns, 14 days; schr. Eagle, Wiley, New-Orleans, 26.

September 2.

Arrived, schr. Hibernia, Dench, 5 days from Digby.

Same day, via quarantine, the brig Nancy, captain Harris, 30 days from Grenada. Nothing new.

Same day, the schr. Columbia, captain Scudder, 26 days from Fayal. Left, schr. John, Saunders, of Salem, for the West-Indies. Spoke, August 15, lat. 14, 13, long. 36, brig Caroline and Mary, 24 days from Cadiz for New-York. Markets, fish 5 dollars 50 cents, clear of duties; corn dull, retail price 90 a 92 cents.

September 3.

Arrived, ship Hazen, captain Turner, 58 days from Liverpool. Spoke nothing of consequence.

Same day, ship Hannah, capt. Wilder, 27 days from Charleston, S. C. Spoke nothing.

Performing quarantine, the galliot Nelly, capt. Morrison, from Stronway, Scotland, via Shelburne, N. S. with 87 passengers on board—she left 20 at the latter place. Also at quarantine, the brigs Lion, captain Rice, 23 days from the Havanna; Dispatch, Moore, Trinidad, 33; and sloop Betsy, Lewis, New-York.

Captain Moore left at Trinidad, America, Hatch, to sail in 10 days for Kennebunk; Phebe, E. Perkins, in 30; Alliance, Ephraim Perkins, in do. schooner Meriam, in 5 for Marblehead; Thomas, Light, in 10 days; brig Margaret, M'Lellan; and Nabby, M'Lellan, for Portland. Spoke, in lat. 32, 30, long. 69, 30, schr. Hercules, 12 days from Martinico for Salem.

Cleared, ships Hibernia, Leach, Mediterranean; Catharine, Blanchard, Batavia; brigs Tarantula, Taylor, Demerara; Mars, Falie, Arischat and Jersey; British Queen, Carpenter, Windsor.

NEW-YORK, September 7.

The committee of health report, that 11 deaths and 26 new cases of the prevailing fever occurred during the 24 hours, ending at 8 o'clock last evening. The deaths were those of

William Carnes, baker, 376, Greenwich-street.

Elizabeth Clashene, 28, Front-street.

Garret Mahon, Bellevue,

James Waldron, do.

Samuel Kenyon, son of W. Kenyon, merchant, Chamber-street.

Mrs. Taylor, wife of Mr. Benjamin Taylor, New-Bath, Washington-street.

John M'Murdie, 23, Chapel-street.

Peter Hagar, 11, Rutgers-street.

Giles Hathaway, George-street slip.

Stephen Westervelt, Carman, 10, Thomas-street.

Nicholas Walsh, 46, Front-street.

By the committee,

GEO. A. VALENTINE, Sec'y.

September 7.

Letters are received at Boston, by the way of Plymouth, from commodore Preble, commander of the frigate Constitution, dated in lat. 42, long. 57. The officers and crew were in good health.

Price of American Stocks at London, July 19.

3 per cents. 56 56 1-4.

5 per cents. 108

Old 6 per cents. 90 1-2 91

New 6 per cents. 90 91.

Bank stock, 132l. per share, with dividend from July 1.

The dysentary has proved very mortal of late in Cornish, a small village in New-Hampshire. Within four weeks, forty deaths have taken place; some adults have died, but most of those who have fallen victims to it are children.

A singular instance of salubrity of climate.

The parish of Presteign, in Ranorshire, in Wales, embraces a circle of nineteen miles. The burials, on an average of seven years, are only twenty-six persons a year; and births for the same time forty-two. And of the burial upwards of eighteen of the twenty six were of persons from eighty to one hundred years old.

Letters from St. Pierre's, Martinique, dated the 15th of August, state, that for thirteen days previous, no American vessel had been permitted to enter that port, and that more than thirty had been ordered off by the blockading squadron; yet, in spite of the uncommon vigilance of the British cruizers, a French privateer had captured an English schooner from St. John's, (N. B.) laden with fish, and carried her safely into Martinique.

Flour at Cape Francois on the 18th ult. was at 40 to 50 dolls. per barrel, beans 30 dolls. do. and all kinds of vegetables very high. A flag of truce had been sent from Port Republicain to Jamaica, and it was expected that place would speedily be surrendered to the British. The Cape was closely blockaded, and no neutral vessels permitted to enter.

Cleared, ship Rising-States, Shaler, Amsterdam; True American, Teubner, Barcelona; brig Bulah, Lee, Barbados.

Arrived since our last,

Schooner Hope, Geer, from Richmond. The schooner Sisters, Goodwin, and sloop Almira, Welber, had just arrived from this port.

At quarantine,

Brig Sally, Van Antwerp, from Guadaloupe. Left, sloop Mary, Martin, of and for Providence, (R. I.) in 2 days; sch'r Success, Neil, of and for Portsmouth, (N H.) in 10 days; brig Aurora, Silby, of Snowhill, for New-York, in 10 days; schooner Fairplay, Shoemaker, of and for New-York, in 12 days; sch'r Hope, Drake, of Alexandria, just arrived; sch'r Mary-Ann, Bacon, of and for Boston, in 16 days; brig Fair American, Manning, of Baltimore, uncertain; brig John and Joseph, of do. in 10 days; brig Union, Thomas, of and for Philadelphia, in 10 days; schooner Industry, Marriner, of and for New York, in 30 days; schooner Alexandria, Ronalds, of and for Philadelphia, in 2 days. Sailed in company, brig Nymph, Foster, of and for Newburyport; schooner Union, captain dead, of Plymouth, (N. C.) and sloop Mars, of Portsmouth, (N. H.) Captain Van Antwerp informs that there were no British ships of war off Point Petre when he sailed.

Brig Lapwing, Bourne, from Cape-Francois. Left, brig Gayoso, Hamilton, just arrived; schooners Citizen, Muir, do. from this port; Katy, Allen, of this port, for Charleston; brig Sophia, Thornton, for Philadelphia, in two days; schooners Nancy, Jeffry, of do.; Phœbe, Mills, do; ——, Gardner, do; brig Fair Ame-