THE MADISONIAN.

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THE MADISONIAN.

THOMAS ALLEN.

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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PROSPECTUS.

The Madisonian will be devoted to the support of the principles and doctrines of the democratic party, as delineated by Mr. Madison, and will aim to consummate that political reform in the theory and practice of the national government, which has been repeatedly indicated by the general sufferage, as essential to the peace and prosperity of the country, and to the perfection and perpetuity of its free institutions. At this time a singular state of affairs is presented. The commercial interests of the country are overwhelmed with embarrassment; its monetary concerns are unusually disordered; every ramification of society is invaded by distress, and the social edifice seems threatened with disorganization; every ear is filled with predictions of evil and the murmurings of despondency; the general government is boldly assailed by a large and respectable portion of the people, as the direct cause of their difficulties; open resistance to the laws is publicly encouraged, and a spirit of insubordination is fostered, as a necessary defence to the pretended usurpations of the party in power; some, from whom better things were hoped, are making the "confusion worse confounded," by a headlong pursuit of extreme notions and indefinite phantoms, totally incompatible with a wholesome state of the country. In the midst of all these difficulties and embarrassments, it is feared that many of the less firm of the friends of the administration and supporters of democratic principles are wavering in their confidence, and beginning, without just cause, to view with distrust those men to whom they have been long attached, and whose elevation they have laboured to promote from honest and patriotic motives. Exulting in the anticipation of dismay and confusion amongst the supporters of the administration as the consequence of these things, the opposition are consoling themselves with the idea that Mr. Van Buren's friends, as a national party, are verging to dissolution; and they allow no opportunity to pass unimproved to give eclat to their own doctrines. They are, indeed, maturing plans for their own future government of the country, with seeming confidence of certain success.

This confidence is increased by the fact, that visionary theories, and an unwise adherence to the plan for an *exclusive metallic* currency have unfortunately carried some beyond the actual and true policy of the government; and, by impairing public confidence in the credit system, which ought to be preserved and regulated, but not destroyed, have tended to increase the difficulties under which the country is now labouring. All these seem to indicate the necessity of a new organ at the seat of government, to be established upon sound principles, and to represent faithfully, and not to dictate, the real policy of the administration, and the true sentiments, measures, and interests, of the great body of its supporters. The necessity also appears of the adoption of more conservative principles than the conduct of those seems to indicate who seek to remedy abuses by destroying the institutions with which they are found connected. Indeed some measure of contribution is deemed essential to the enhancement of our own self-respect at home, and to the promotion of the honor and credit of the nation abroad.

To meet these indications this undertaking has been instituted, and it is hoped that it will produce the effect of inspiring the timid with courage, the desponding with hope, and the whole country with confidence in the administration of its government. In this view, this journal will not seek to lead, or to follow any faction, or to advocate the views of any particular detachment of men. It will aspire to accord a just measure of support to each of the co-ordinate branches of the government, in the lawful exercise of their constitutional prerogatives. It will address itself to the understandings of men, rather than appeal to any unworthy prejudices or evil passions. It will rely invariably upon the principle, that the strength and security of American institutions depend upon the intelligence and virtue of the people.

The Madisonian will not, in any event, be made the instrument of arraying the north and the south, the east and the west, in hostile attitudes towards each other, upon any subject of either general or local interest. It will reflect only that spirit and those principles of mutual concession, compromise, and reciprocal good-will, which so eminently characterized the inception, formation, and subsequent adoption, by the several States, of the constitution of the United States. Moreover, in the same hallowed spirit that has, at all periods since the adoption of that sacred instrument, characterized its defence by the people, our press will hasten to its support at every emergency that shall arise, from whatever quarter, and under whatever guise of philanthropy, policy, or principle, the antagonist power may appear.

If, in this responsible undertaking, it shall be our good fortune to succeed to any degree in promoting the harmony and prosperity of the country, or in conciliating jealousies, and allaying the asperities of party warfare, by demeaning ourself amicably towards all; by indulging personal animosities towards none; by conducting ourself in the belief that it is perfectly practicable to differ with others in matters of principle and of expediency, without a mixture of personal unkindness or loss of reciprocal respect; and by "asking nothing that is not clearly right, and submitting to nothing that is wrong," then, and not otherwise, will the full measure of its intention be accomplished, and our primary rule for its guidance be sufficiently observed and satisfied.

This enterprize has not been undertaken without the approbation, advisement, and pledged support of many of the leading and soundest minds in the ranks of the democractic republican party, in the extreme north and in the extreme south, in the east and in the west. An association of both political experience and talent of the highest order will render it competent to carry forward the principles by which it will be guided, and make it useful as a political organ, and interesting as a journal of news. Arrangements also have been made to fix the establishment upon a substantial and permanent basis. The subscriber, therefore, relies upon the public for so much of their confidence and encouragement only as the fidelity of his press to their great national interests shall prove itself entitled to receive.

THOMAS ALLEN.

Washington City, D. C. July, 1837.

HOUSE FURNISHING GOODS.—We have for sale—
50 pieces ingrain carpeting, which we will sell low.
50 do Brussels.
62 do 5-4, 6-4, 10-4, and 12-4 Linen Sheetings.
100 do 7-4, 8-4 Barnsly Dispers.
8-4, 10-4 and 20-4 fine Table Cloths.
Napkins to match.
1 bale Russia Diaper.
1 bale wide Crash.
Also, 50 Marseilles Quilts.
BRADLEY & CATLETT.
Sep 9—3tw2w

GLOVES, SUSPENDERS, STOCKS, WOOLLEN SHIRTS, AND DRAWERS.—We have to-day opened—
30 doz. Suspenders, best kind.
50 do. superior Gloves.
50 do. Stocks, best make.
50 pieces Silk Pocket Handkerchiefs.
50 dozen Gentlemen's Ribbed Woollen Drawers.
50 do. do. do. do. Shirts.
6 do. Raw Silk Shirts.
Also,
50 pieces Irish Linens.
200 do. Sea Island Cotton Shirtings.
BRADLEY & CATLETT.
Sept. 8. 3taw2w8

WASHINGTON GUIDE.

JUST PUBLISHED in one volume with several engravings plans etc. etc., and Map of the city and District, the whole forming a complete "Picture of the Ten Miles Square," is for sale by
28 F. TAYLOR.

DOCUMENTS ACCOMPANYING THE MESSAGE.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

Department of War,
December 2, 1837.

Sir:—In compliance with your instructions, and in conformity with established usage, to present annually to you, for the information of Congress, a statement of the transactions of this Department, together with such suggestions in relation to the various subjects under its administration as the public interests may seem to require, I have the honor to submit the following

REPORT:

It will be seen by the statement of the Commanding General, that the principal part of the regular forces has been drawn from the posts on the frontiers and concentrated in Florida; and his account of the military transactions in that Territory will exhibit the progress of the war to the close of the last, and the events attending the commencement of the present, campaign. The proposals made by the Indians to submit to the terms of the treaty, and the negotiations entered into with them to this effect, caused the cessation of hostilities at a period when they might have been carried on to advantage.

This measure on the part of the General commanding the army of the South, although productive of delay and increased expense, was dictated by humanity and a laudable desire to avoid, if practicable, the necessity of further enforcing, by arms, the execution of the treaty, and was approved by the Department. Nor can any just blame be attached to the conduct of that officer for keeping his faith with the Indians, and rather suffering himself to be deceived by them than to violate his engagements by securing the chiefs who had entered his camp and placed themselves in his power, under the pledge of receiving his protection.

The enemy proved faithless, and the season for active operations passed away without any important results. Great expense was incurred in preparations for the removal of the Indians, which their treachery rendered abortive; but the honor of the Government, which is beyond all price, was preserved; and it is satisfactory to know that the renewal of hostilities has only taken place after every effort had been tried in vain to persuade these deluded people to submit peaceably to the execution of the law. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the circumstances which led to this war; they are already well understood; but it may be important to state the causes which have enabled an enemy, so inferior in number and resources, to baffle the efforts of the Government to subdue them, and which have rendered the contest, not only so disastrously protracted, but so very expensive. The theatre of war, remarkable for its natural difficulties, was entirely unknown to the commanding officers of our army. They were compelled to move their forces with the utmost caution in the face of a bold, active and wily foe, thoroughly acquainted with the passes of the rivers and morasses which intersect the country, and who hovered about their flanks, concentrating their numbers upon a point of attack, with unexampled rapidity, and flying from the open ground with a swiftness that baffled the pursuit of the white man. The difficulties of transportation, on which the success of all military operations must depend, always great, and, in such a country, involving unusual labor, expense, and delay, were in some cases insurmountable. In several instances, when within reach of the enemy, our troops were compelled to fall back upon their magazines or baggage trains for supplies, and thus lose the opportunity of striking an effective blow, because the subsistence stores could not be brought up for their use. Wherever it was possible, supplies were transported by water to points near the theatre of operations; but having to ascend rivers, steamboats were necessarily employed at an enormous cost to the Government. From these points the transportation became still more expensive, as well as difficult and dangerous; numerous and well appointed escorts had to be furnished; wagons to be dragged over pathless tracts of spongy pine barren, through almost impassable swamps, and across marshy rivers; temporary magazines to be built, and posts to be established in the wilderness, to which further supplies of provisions and forage were to be brought, for the country is entirely destitute of both, and the baggage train can transport its own forage for a few days' consumption only. When it is considered that these difficulties had to be encountered and surmounted by raw, undisciplined troops, in the face of an active enemy that destroys unseen, delivering a deadly fire at an unexpected moment, and disappearing in morasses impenetrable to the eye of the white man, the zeal and persevering courage of the officers and men are worthy of all praise. It is under such circumstances that our Indian allies have proved so useful. Their peculiar sagacity in detecting the stratagems of their race, and their untiring vigilance and activity in the field, are the best protection against the ambuscades, night assaults, and surprises, which constitute the warfare of these tribes, and are so harassing and destructive to our troops. To the strong arms and brave hearts of our own men, we may safely rely for victory in action; but we must depend upon the Indian to detect the lurking place of the Indian, to trace him in his devious path and rapid flight, to guard against his wily approach, and to discover his deadly presence at every difficult pass. For these reasons, the friendly Creeks were employed in the army of the South during the last campaign; but, as it had been found necessary to detain their families at great expense until they could all be transported together to the West, they were discharged, and are on their way to their new homes. Before their departure, measures were taken to supply their place by engaging Indians of other tribes. In extending the necessary orders, a clerical error was made, by which the Indians were offered higher pay than the law allows to volunteers. The error was corrected as soon as discovered; but as about two hundred men have been brought to Florida under the first instructions, I beg leave to suggest that an appropriation be asked of Congress to enable the Department to preserve its faith with these Indians, which I venture to hope will not be refused.

Another cause of unusual expense is to be found in the character of the troops employed. At first they were drafted men or volunteers engaged for so short a period of service as to render their employment not only expensive but inefficient; and when they were engaged for a longer time, the inexperience of their staff officers occasioned great and unnecessary expenditures, while the description of force, chiefly mounted men, augmented very much the cost of the campaign. The remuneration this irregular cavalry received from Government, merely for the use of their horses, amounted, in six months, to a sum nearly, if not quite equal to their real value. The Government has had, besides, to pay a large amount for horses that perished for want of forage, which the state of the country rendered it impracticable to transport in sufficient quantities for the supply of so large a body of cavalry. The irregular force thus employed in Florida during the campaign of 1836 amounted to about 10,000 men; one-half of which were cavalry, at an expense greatly exceeding that of regular troops, and by no means so efficient as one half the number of that description of force.

Notwithstanding the experience gained during the two last campaigns showed the great cost of employing volunteers, the Department had no alternative but to engage them again, which the patriotic offers of the citizens from every part of the country enabled it to do. The nature of the climate of Florida requires that the active operations of the campaign should be concentrated into a short period of time, and this can only be effected by bringing into the field a much greater number of troops than would otherwise be necessary. The regular force, although collected from every point, was deemed inadequate, and resort has been had to militia in order to make up, with the regulars, four columns, having each the component parts of an army sufficient to encounter the whole force of the enemy, and destined to move into the interior of the peninsula from distinct points of the coast. Added to these means of offensive operations, the squadron on that station may confidently be relied upon to scour the coast and intercept all communications from without, and in every way practicable to contribute, by its co-operation, to the success of the land forces.

Throughout the whole conduct of this war, the West India squadron has co-operated with the army in the most active and efficient manner, not only by promptly furnishing every aid which the appropriate duties of that branch of the service required, but by the officers taking upon themselves the defence of posts on shore, and lending the aid of their professional skill, in every situation in which it could be usefully applied, with that persevering courage, zeal, and ability which have, at all times, distinguished our gallant navy. The revenue cutters, placed under the command of the commodore of that squadron, have likewise rendered the most efficient service, under the direction of that excellent officer. Part of the marine corps, which volunteered its services in Florida, and distinguished itself during the last campaign, still remains there, and it is hoped that they may be permitted to continue their valuable services to the army of the South, until the close of the war.

The events of this war, and the heavy expenses attending it, have shown the propriety, and even necessity, of increasing and organizing the staff, and of augmenting the army of the United States. In the last annual report from this department, this measure is strongly recommended, and the reasons for its adoption ably urged. I do not think, however, that the manner of augmenting the forces proposed by the bill which received the favorable action of one branch of the legislature, ought to be carried into effect. The organization of the army when it was reduced to the peace establishment, ought not to be abandoned. It is fitted to render the greatest service in time of peace, and to afford a basis for the augmentation of the effective forces of the country to a much greater extent in time of war. This arrangement should not, therefore, be disturbed, but the same system carried out in making new levies. I would recommend the addition of three regiments of infantry, and that the companies both of artillery and infantry should be increased to sixty-four rank and file, with authority vested in the President to augment their number, not to exceed one hundred men, whenever the exigencies of the country may require it. This would secure all the advantages of the present peace establishment, and enable the Executive, on any sudden emergency, to place the army on a respectable footing of defence.

Sound policy and an enlightened economy equally require that every department of the staff of the army should be augmented. A properly organized staff would have rendered the conduct of the war in which we have lately been engaged both more effective and more economical. As the army is now constituted, officers are drawn off for staff duties, to the great injury of the service of the line; and these duties are by no means so well performed as they would be by officers properly instructed and entirely devoted to them. The present organization does not give to regiments or companies any supernumery officers. They are no more than the performance of the various duties of their military command actually requires, and to reduce the number must weaken the army, render it irregular and inefficient in its operations, and greatly impair its discipline. Such, however, is the present defective state of every branch of the staff, that all are supplied from subalterns of the line. The department of the Quartermaster General, the Commissary General, the Engineers, the Ordnance, the Paymaster General, and the Topographical corps, are all compelled to make drafts from the line of the army for the performance of their indispensable duties; and the returns of the Adjutant General's office, of the regiments in the field during the last campaigns in Alabama and Florida, exhibit a lamentable deficiency of officers to fulfil the duties properly belonging to them.

The Quartermaster's department requires not only some enlargement, but the addition of higher grades, to render it adequate to the duties required of it. The functions of this branch of the staff, comprising, as they do, the quartering, supplying, and moving the army, with all its stores, and the execution of various objects of national improvement, are important at all times; but they become peculiarly so in seasons of active operations, like the present, when large bodies of irregular troops are necessarily called into service to aid our limited regular force.

The deficiency in the number of officers provided for this service has been sensibly felt from the commencement of our late border disturbances, and especially during the past season; and with respect to higher grades than those now authorized, experience has clearly shown the necessity of some clothed with the adequate ranks to enable them to take the charge of remote districts, and supervise the expenditure, and direct and control the complicated operations of the department in the field. It is certain that there can be no effective military operations, without a high degree of efficiency in that branch of the staff which is to move and supply the army. I would, therefore, recommend the addition of some officers of rank, with a limited number of that subordinate but useful class of agents, forage, wagon, and barrack-masters.

The department of the Adjutant General is entirely inadequate to perform its appropriate duties, even to our small army, and I respectfully recommend that it be enlarged so as to supply assistant adjutants general to each division and department of the army.

Since the establishment of the Commissariat of Subsistence, great regularity and economy have been introduced in furnishing the supplies of the army; but, in order to render it more complete, and to enable it to perform all the duties assigned to it, in the most economical and efficient manner, I recommend an addition to the present establishment of at least four officers.

I would recommend an immediate increase of the corps of topographical engineers. The extensive range of duties which have of late years devolved upon this corps, renders its increase a matter of necessity as well as of economy. It is physically impracticable, as the corps is now constituted, to obey the injunctions of Congress. Important surveys are neglected; works of improvement are slowly and imperfectly carried on, and the expectations of the country disappointed.

By a reference to the statements of the officer at the head of that branch of the service, it will be seen that the entire corps consists but of ten officers, and to these it has been found necessary to add, during the present year, about thirty individuals, employed as civil engineers, at compensations greater than are allowed to military engineers; thus making the entire cost of this branch of service much greater than it would be in the form of a properly organized corps. In addition to this consideration, discipline and a proper subordination cannot be introduced in a mixed service, where the smaller part only is subject to the rules and articles of war, the greater being entirely exempt, and without those positive distinctions of authority and of rank, upon which discipline so eminently depends.

The duties of this corps require the combined knowledge of the military and civil engineers. Their military duties consist in surveys for the defence of the frontier, inland and Atlantic, and of positions for fortifications; in reconnoisances of the country through which an army has to pass, or in which it has to operate; the examination of all routes of communication by land or water, both for supplies and for military movements; the construction of military bridges; the position and erection of field works; the defences of encampments, fords, ferries and bridges. For these purposes, topographical engineers should always accompany armies in the field, and without their aid the organization of a staff is defective and incomplete. Their civil employment, in the survey of the coast, rivers, harbors, bays, and water courses, in order to their being improved for commercial and other purposes, and in superintending the various works for these improvements; in surveys of roads and canals under the law of the 30th of April, 1824; and in conducting all civil constructions connected with the commerce of the country, and such international communications as Congress may direct.—This brief recapitulation of the various military and civil duties of the corps, clearly points out the necessity of its complete organization, and indicates the propriety of attaching it to the general staff of the army. The direction of all the works, both civil and military, herein described, properly belongs to this branch of the service. A simple enumeration of the functions of the Quartermaster General will show that the duties of his office cannot be performed without the assistance of the officers of the topographical corps. They are to insure an efficient system of supply, and to give facility and effect to the movements and operations of the army, which cannot be accomplished without a thorough knowledge of the topography of the country. It is his duty, likewise, to select sites for encampments, and to assign to the different corps the ground they are to occupy—a duty which requires the aid of topographical engineers; as does the superintendence of the works at the several posts; the construction of military roads; the acquisition of such knowledge as the department is expected to possess with regard to the military resources of the country; the means and facilities of transportation; the state of the frontiers, with the most eligible points for concentrating troops and collecting supplies, whether in relation to offensive or defensive operations. This information cannot be obtained without the active co-operation of the topographical corps.

I cannot dismiss this subject without adverting to the opinion of my predecessor, in relation to the employment of the topographical engineers of the army by States and incorporated companies, in which I fully concur. At a period when it became a practice of the Government to permit these officers to aid in the construction of the public works in the several States, the description of talent and knowledge which they possessed was uncommon in our country, and works of great public utility would have been suspended or abandoned altogether, if this permission had been withheld. A different state of things now exist. The demand for civil engineers has created them, and not only is it no longer necessary to aid States and companies by lending them officers of the army, but in doing so an act of injustice is committed toward the civil engineers of the country. There can be no doubt that the practice impairs, very sensibly, the efficiency of the corps as a branch of the army, and deprives the Government of their services for military surveys, and the erection and superintendence of works of national utility. The commander of the army of the south says emphatically, in a late communication to the Adjutant General, "Had the topographical engineers been employed in their appropriate duties in Florida only one year of the sixteen since we have obtained possession of the country, from two to three millions of dollars might have been saved in the expenditures of the war." The ignorance of the topography of the country, here complained of, exists with regard to other important regions of our country, which will, probably, sooner or later, become the theatres of war; and I earnestly hope the Department will have it in its power to remedy this defect, by confining the members of the corps to their appropriate duties of examining and surveying the country for the purposes of national improvements, and national defence, and superintending the erection of national works.

Having stated the increase which appears to me indispensably necessary to render the several parts of the general staff of the army effective, it becomes my duty to submit to your consideration the defects of the present system, and to suggest a better organization of this most useful and important branch of the service.—On examining the functions of each of the separate divisions, it will be seen that in the moving and subsisting the army, providing for clothing and supplies, including transportation, barracks, camp equipage, and all things necessary for the health, comfort, and efficiency of the troops, the duties of every branch of the general staff are so connected and dependent upon each other, that the best planned measures may be defeated by the failure or neglect of any one of them; notwithstanding which, they are distinct bodies, entirely independent of each other, differently organized, governed by different regulations, and, although purely military in their functions, depending only upon the civil authority at the head of the Department of War. Such an arrangement is complex, and incompatible with the uniformity and subordination which ought to distinguish the organization of every branch of the military service. I recommend, therefore, that there be created a staff corps, to consist of one brigadier general, chief of the staff; six colonels, six lieutenant colonels, eight majors, twenty captains, and twenty first lieutenants, who shall exercise all the functions, and perform all the duties at present exercised and performed by the Quartermaster General, Adjutant General, Inspectors General, Commissary General of Subsistence, and their assistants, and also by the topographical engineers and assistant topographical engineers; and that the Commissariat of Purchases, and the medical staff of the army, be attached to the said staff corps; thus uniting under one head a homogenous body sufficiently numerous to ensure promotion within itself, create an *esprit de corps*, excite emulation, and keep alive hope. This organization, at the same time that it secures uniformity and efficiency to the operations of the staff, is entirely compatible with its present division into separate bureaus, and will not disturb the existing relations of the present officers of the corps with the branch to which they are now attached.

This increase of the rank and file and staff of the army here recommended, by which its efficiency would be greatly augmented, and its administration rendered much more economical, has become necessary, independently of the causes assigned, from our greatly extended frontier, from the number and description of our maritime fortresses, and the large body of Indians which the humane and enlighted policy pursued by the Government towards that people has concentrated upon our western borders. When, in 1821, the army was reduced to 6,127 men, the extent of our frontier did not exceed 6,373 miles, along the inland portion of which the Indian tribes were sparsely scattered, a large proportion of their numbers being within the States, and rendered harmless by the surrounding white population; and the maratime frontier was occupied by a few inconsiderable forts. Since that period, its extent has been increased, by the acquisition of Florida and other causes, to 8,500 miles, most of our principal harbors and bays have been fortified by extensive works, and the Indians concentrated upon the western line so as to present a front of not less than 45,000 warriors. The protection due by the Government to the inhabitants of this extensive and exposed portion of our country would require a much larger force than is here proposed, if their safety were made to depend entirely upon the regular army; and I would respectfully recommend the construction of a chain of permanent fortresses along that line, and a competent organization of the militia of the frontier States, as important and necessary auxiliaries for this purpose. If any danger is to be apprehended from an army of fifteen thousand men, scattered along a frontier of more than 8,000 miles, and commanded by officers educated to reverence the laws and cherish the freedom of their country, it is effectually to be guarded against by a proper organization of the militia. Their aggregate force now is little short of a million and a half of men, and whatever may be their efficiency against a foreign enemy, they may always be relied upon when the liberties of the country are assailed.

That the necessity of this measure may be fully understood, I have annexed statements, furnished by the Chief Engineer, exhibiting the number and names of the different fortifications completed and under construction, and the full armament and amount of force which each requires to arm and garrison it; of the works projected by the Board of Engineers, but which are not yet commenced; and for the prominent points along the sea frontier which require protection, and for which no plans or projects have yet been made; and a list of the posts on the inland frontier of the United States, with a notice of the garrisons deemed necessary for them in time of peace, and to preserve peace, furnished by the acting quartermaster general.

The measures of defence for the border settlements, which the policy of the Government towards the Indians has rendered it their imperative duty to adopt, have engaged the anxious consideration of this Department, and the matter will be fully treated, in answer to a call of Congress for information on that subject.

The report of the Chief Engineer, which is herewith submitted, contains a summary of the numerous and important works under the superintendence of this branch of the service. It is manifest, from a review of this document, that some further increase of this corps is rendered necessary, from the great accumulation of the public works confided to its charge. But the high order of talent, united to great acquirements, which have hitherto distinguished this corps, and which are required in the discharge of duties involving not only large expenditures, but, in many cases, the safety and honor of the country, demand that this should be done with the utmost caution. The youth who exhibited the greatest aptitude for such studies, and who, in their progress through the Military Academy, distinguished themselves above their fellows, and are deemed worthy to enter this corps by those who are appointed by the Government to decide the relative merit of the candidates, ought alone to be added to it; nor should they be placed in charge of any work until they have been at least two years assistants to some older and more experienced officer. It is due to this corps to say that their pay and emoluments are insufficient for their support. Performing duties that require the exercise of talents and attainments which, in civil life, command the highest rate of remuneration, and in a manner honorable to themselves and useful to the country, they receive a less amount of pay than any other branch of the service. I beg leave, therefore, respectfully to recommend that the officers of this corps be placed on the same footing as those of the cavalry of the United States. A proper regard to the interests of this branch of the public service induces me to recommend the appointment of an inspector of fortifications, with the rank of colonel, whose duty it shall be, under the orders of the Chief Engineer, to make regular and systematic inspections of all the fortifications and public works under the superintendence of that officer.

The very important work of deepening the channel at the mouth of the Mississippi has not yet been commenced. Three plans were submitted by Captain Chase, of the engineers, who was entrusted with the necessary examinations; first, by deepening one or more passes by dredging; second, by closing all but one pass where they leave the trunk of the river; and thirdly, by cutting a ship channel from the river. The Engineer Department suggested the propriety of adopting the first plan, as the least costly and the soonest executed; and preparations were made, and all things in readiness to commence the work by the middle of December. In consequence, however, of representations received by the Department from the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce, the whole matter was submitted to a Board of Engineers, consisting of Col. Totten, Col. Thayer, and Capt. Chase, who have required further preliminary surveys, in order to enable them to form a correct opinion as to the character of the works most likely to be successful in improving the navigation of the mouths of this river; a request which, considering the very important nature of the works, and their bearing upon the commerce of the whole valley of the Mississippi, and its tributaries, has been acceeded to by the department.

The operations on the great raft, in the Red river, closed on the 25th of May, for want of funds, with the exception of one boat, which worked until the end of June.

During the season, twelve miles and a half of this dense mass of wood, comprising the remaining portion of what is styled the Old Rafts, have been removed. The part now remaining, being four hundred and forty yards in length, was formed by the freshet of 1836, and is by no means so dense or difficult to remove; and the timber of this portion of it will be employed to stop up the only bayou which now remains to be closed. It is estimated that the cost of completing the operation, which will effectually open the navigation of this river throughout its whole course, will amount to fifty thousand dollars. If the appropriation be made early in the next session, the work may be completed or nearly so, by May next; otherwise, it must lie over until the autumn of 1838, to the serious injury of the increasing population of the valley of the river, and to the great detriment of the work itself, from the constant accumulation of drift timber, which must necessarily take place until there is a free current in the river. If the work be delayed, the superintendent estimates that the increased expense, from this cause alone, will amount to twenty thousand dollars.

The act of the 2d of July, 1836, which appropriates $100,000 for surveying and opening a military road along the western frontier, imposes on the President the duty of selecting situations near it for the military posts which in his opinion, may be most proper for the protection of the frontier, and for the preservation of the necessary communications. On taking up this subject for consideration, it appeared manifest that the conditions of defence, which it is supposed Congress had in view in making this appropriation, could not be fulfilled, if the road were surveyed and opened before the sites for the permanent military stations were determined upon; as without a knowledge of their ultimate position, the road might not approach them sufficiently near to afford "the necessary communications" contemplated by the act.

The selection of these sites has to be made without regard to lateral communications, but with a view to the tribes in front, and to the facility of approach from the rear. I am also of opinion that the contemplated communications, in reference to the security of the fortresses and the protection of the borders, ought to be perpendicular to the line of defence, and not lateral.

Parties are now making the required examinations, and as soon as they are completed, and the sites for permanent posts determined upon, the survey and works for opening the road designated by Congress will be commenced, unless, upon a review of the subject, they may think proper to adopt the plan of defence for the western frontier which, as has been before observed, will be presented to them in accordance with a resolution of the Senate to that effect.

The state of Charleston harbor demanded and received the early attention of the Department. It was represented that Sullivan's Island was being washed away, and the channels which form the entrance of the harbor, filling up with the sand from its beach, By direction of the Engineer Department, a minute examination of the situation of the island was made in June last, by Lieutenant Mansfield, who submitted a plan for its protection against the encroachments of the sea, that was approved by this Department.

It is stated in the report of the engineer, that the island and southwestern peninsula will be entirely carried away by the action of the currents and storms, unless timely measures be adopted to arrest the progress of destruction; that this island shelters the port of Charleston from the fury of the northeastern storms; and that its destruction would expose the harbor to the violent gales of the autumnal equinox, by leaving it open from northeast to southeast, besides the probability of lessening the depth of water on the bars.

Independently of the necessity of the proposed works for the preservation of the port they are essential for its defence. The island forms the site of Fort Moultrie, which checked the approach of the British squadron during the Revolutionary war, and now constitutes, in conjunction with Fort Sumter, the only defence of this important harbor. These considerations induce me to recommend that an appropriation be asked of Congress to commence these works without delay.

It is my duty to call your attention to the present state of the works for the protection of the waters of the Chesapeake. Fort Monroe will require further repairs and new works to render it even defensible. One front of the fort is peculiarly liable to attack, for it is more exposed to a *coup de main* than any other, and is at the same time the only front liable to siege, and the only one exposed to land batteries within reasonable distance. The works intended to protect this front were commenced, and a large body of earth collected to complete them, and so arranged as, in some measure, to shelter the vital parts until the whole should be completed.—From some misunderstanding, without the knowledge or participation of the Engineer Department, this mound was levelled. Earth has also been placed upon the parapet wall. These operations have proved injurious to the works, and immediate measures must be taken to repair the evils they have produced. In loading the parapet it was found that the masonry was not sufficiently dry and consolidated to bear the pressure of the great superincumbent weight; and although, from their original strength and solidity, the walls have not yet sustained any material injury, still it is of a nature to call for prompt repairs. I recommend, therefore, that proper measures to protect this fort from a *coup de main*, to which it is now so evidently exposed as to invite attack, be adopted without delay, together with the necessary repairs to strengthen the existing works. From an examination of the state of the works at the Rip Raps, it appears that the subsidence of the artificial foundation of stone, on which it is intended to erect Fort Calhoun, has not yet entirely ceased; and orders have been given to replace the mass of materials, collected for the completion of the fort, upon the arches, in such a manner as to render the subsidence uniform; and when this is done it will be prudent to leave it there for some time longer before recommencing the works.

The great difficulty which has been experienced in fixing upon a suitable site for a new fort ordered to be constructed on or near the Arkansas frontier, and in determining its precise position, has occasioned unusual and unexpected delay in the commencement of the work. The commissioners appointed to make the selection, by my predecessor, being military men, fixed upon a site with a single eye to its military properties; whereas, it is believed to have been the intention of Congress to erect a fortress which should serve as a refuge for the border settlers, who are exposed, from their situation, to the hostile incursions of the Indians; and it became necessary to direct a subsequent examination, in order to meet that object. A board of competent officers were accordingly appointed, and proceeded in the execution of this duty. Their report may be looked for daily, and the work will be commenced as soon as the situation is fixed upon by the Department.

From a variety of causes, not necessary to recapitulate here, but chiefly from a disputed title, which has been only recently decided by the courts, the land on which Fort Delaware is situated has not yet been acquired by the Government. The Pea Patch island might have been purchased when the fort was projected for comparatively a small sum, and, since the commencement of its construction, was offered to the United States for a slightly advanced price. Since the decree in their favor, one hundred thousand dollars, with interest from that date, are asked for it by the proprietors, and it remains to be decided whether this large sum shall be paid for the land, or whether the works be abandoned.

The importance of having a fort upon this island, in order to protect the harbor of Philadelphia, has been recognised by every board of military engineers that have examined the subject. It is the lowest point at which, in connection with works upon the main land, Philadelphia is defensible; and, while it covers that harbor, Chester, and Newcastle, prevents an enemy from finding shelter in Delaware bay, secures the debouche of an important link in the great inland chain of water communication—the Delaware and Chesapeake canal, and covers the extensive powder manufactories near Wilmington. For these reasons, it is important the United States should possess it; but whether it is to be acquired at the price now asked for it, or after an equitable appraisement of its real value, is a subject to be decided by the wisdom of Congress. In the mean time, the works in progress there will render its abandonment more costly hereafter, and may enhance still further the value of the island. An early decision is therefore highly desirable.

The ordnance corps, organized in 1832, requires some enlargement in order to render it efficient. At present, there is not an officer to superintend each arsenal, and it appears to me that the public interest will be promoted by the addition of two majors and ten first lieutenants. But, above all, this branch of the service demands the creation, by law, of a mixed board of artillery and ordnance, to be composed of officers of rank and experience, to digest a general system of ordnance and small arms for the use of the United States. Similar boards have been formed, from time to time, by regulations of the War Department; but experience proves the necessity of some legal enactment, to ensure the due performance of this important duty; for up to this time there exists no general system, such as I propose, and such as is absolutely necessary to place this branch of the service on a level with that of other countries, and preserve it there.

Doubts having been entertained by my predecessor in office of the power of the Department to enter into contracts for supplies of cannon and arms, without previous advertisement, it has become the practice of the ordnance office to make informal arrangements with the proprietors of foundries and manufactories of arms, to receive a certain amount of cannon and muskets on inspection at a settled price; an engagement equally binding as a written contract on the part of the Department, but uncertain in its obligation upon the manufacturer. The former method of contracting for limited periods, is, in every respect, preferable. These establishments require expensive preparations, and having no other market than that afforded by the demand of Government, ought to have some assurance of the articles they may manufacture being taken off their hands. A contract for a limited period gives this assurance, enabling them to secure the most competent workmen, and encouraging them to render their machinery as perfect as possible. A recent opinion of the Attorney General declares this method to be legal, and it will be followed in future unless prohibited by legislative enactment. The existence of our own armories enables the Government to establish a standard of comparison to which the private manufacturers are compelled to conform, and secures the acquisition of good arms at equitable prices. With the same view, the establishment of a national foundery has been frequently urged, and I beg leave, most respectfully, to repeat the recommennation. It is not intended that this establishment should, at once, furnish the amount of cannon and projectiles required; but it would enable the Ordnance Department to make the necessary trials and experiments, so as to determine the proper mixture of metals to combine the greatest strength with the greatest lightness, and produce the most perfect models. This would secure, at all times, a sufficient supply of the best arms at a fair price. Intending to submit a plan by which the casting of cannon and projectiles and the manufactory of gunpowder shall be placed under the supervision of a joint board of the united service of army and navy, the proposed establishment will, if adopted, be made useful to both branches of the service.

The erection of a manufactory of small arms west of the Alleghany mountains cannot be too strongly recommended. The transportion of the armament required by the western portion of our Union is very expensive and ought to be avoided. It appears to me that the establishment best suited for that country is one for finishing, polishing, and putting together, the several parts of the muskets, to be made by individual artisans, after models furnished them by the superintendent, and received on inspection. In this manner the works can be curtailed or extended to any amount that may be required without inconvenience, and this description of manufacture become familiar to a large class of mechanics. The buildings and fixtures, suitable for this purpose, would be much less expensive than those of the present national armories, and, unlike them, the number of arms fabricated might be increased tenfold without requiring any addition to the original establishment. This armory might embrace the manufacture and inspection of rifles for the supply of the friendly Indians, of which numbers are purchased annually.

Disputes have arisen with persons who withhold the lead rent due by them to the United States, under the terms of a license to smelt lead ore on lands belonging to Government; and, on full consideration of this subject, I think it my duty to state that, in my opinion, the reservations of the lands in the lead region, and the plan now pursued of collecting rent on their produce for the use of Government, whatever may have been its former advantages, is now prejudicial to that portion of the country where they are situated, and injurious to the interests it was intended to foster. Individuals will not engage in extensive, systematic, and costly works, such as are required in mining operations, without some better security than a mere license for smelting ore. Nothing more is done, therefore, than to scarify the surface of the earth, and the mine is given up at a time when it yields most ore, because its further extraction would require an outlay not justified by the tenure of the land. The miner then removes to another spot, where the same process is followed, and the whole region is dotted over with these imperfect and abandoned works.—Whereas, if these lands were brought into market, to be sold at moderate prices, in small tracts, to those who will actually settle there and work the mines, they might be purchased by enterprising and industrious individuals, who would erect permanent works, develop fully the mineral resources of that region, and render iron and lead so abundant and cheap, that Government would be benefitted by the reduction in the price there of articles of which it is so large a consumer, as well as by the general improvement of that portion of the country. For these reasons, it appears expedient that authority be asked of Congress to dispose of these lands; and also of all ore banks and lands containing minerals, of any description whatsoever, under the control of the War Department.

The accompanying report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs contains a full and lucid statement of the various and important matters under the control of that office. The complicated and arduous duties of that branch of the War Department have been performed in a manner highly creditable to the officers charged with their execution. But there are some important subjects connected with these duties which require the early attention of Congress. The Commissioner represents "that the present system of disbursing, through the agency of military officers, has proved inconvenient, in consequence of their frequent transfer to other duties;" and it is, in my opinion, liable to still stronger objections, as it imposes upon these officers duties foreign to their profession, and of great responsibility, abstracts them from their regiments, and, not unfrequently, unfits them to return to them. I would recommend that this method of disbursing these funds be abandoned, and a sufficient number of civil agents be appointed, so that disbursements may be made by persons giving bond for the faithful discharge of their duties. I concur with the Commissioner in the propriety of providing by law for the more liberal compensation of agents and interpreters. On their faithful execution of the trusts reposed in them depends the success of all our efforts to civilize the tribes and maintain the peace of the frontiers; and the price now paid for such important services is not equivalent to that received by the same class of persons in the employment of trading companies, whose interests are not, I am sorry to say, identical with those of the Government, and whose conduct too frequently counteracts the human policy of the United States towards the Indians.

In accordance with the opinion of the Commissioner, I would recommend the passage of a law by which all sums accruing on moneys invested for the use of the several Indian tribes be deposited in the Treasury, to be drawn out upon the requisitions of this Department, in the usual form; and further, that the whole business connected with the investment of the funds, for the interest of the Indians, and the management thereof, be transferred from this Department to that of the Treasury, to which it properly belongs.

Intelligence was received at this Department early in the spring, that the Indians were in an unquiet state on our northwestern frontier, and apprehensions were expressed that the hostile feelings which existed between the Sioux and the Sacs and Foxes, might endanger the peace of our border settlements. Sensible of the weakness of our forces in that quarter, having been compelled, from the state of our army, to strip both the inland and maritime frontiers of their garrisons to supply the army of Florida with a sufficient regular force, it was deemed most prudent to bring down to the seat of Government the principal chiefs of those warlike tribes.—It is believed to be important to exhibit to those people the strength of the nation with which they would have to contend in venturing to attack our defenceless borders, and at the same time to impress upon them the advantages which flow from civilization. With several of these tribes it was made our duty to treat; and it would have been in a high degree imprudent, in the excited state of feeling which existed among them, to assemble large bodies in the neighborhood of our ungarrisoned posts, thereby exposing our utmost weakness at a period when it was important to display our utmost strength. The superintendents were therefore instructed to invite them to send deputations of their chiefs to Washington; and on their arrival here, treaties were negotiated with several of the tribes, by which large tracts of land have been purchased, and the object so much desired by Government, to extinguish the title to all the Indian land east of the Mississippi, nearly accomplished. The Sioux of the Mississippi have ceded their possessions east of that stream, together with all the islands belonging to them, and are to remove to the western shore. The Winnebagoes have at length agreed to dispose of their lands in East Wisconsin, and retire to the neutral ground on the west of the river.—It is probable that their sojourn there will be temporary, and therefore a portion only of the neutral ground has been allotted to them, with permission to hunt upon the remainder. The interests of the country appear to require the existence of a line of frontier States between the Mississippi and the Missouri, and the extinguishment of the Indian title to all the land east of the Missouri, to the 43d degree of north latitude, would effect