

constitute a corps at all times disposable, under the direction of the commanding General."

That these resolutions were not mere words, we have General Armstrong's testimony, who says: "Nor will it appear from the report made by the Congressional Committee of Inquiry, that any time was lost in giving effect to these measures, so far as their execution depended on the War Department. "On the 2nd July," says the Report, "the tenth military district was constituted, and the command given to General Winder. On the 4th, a requisition on the States for ninety-three thousand five hundred men was issued. On the 14th, the Governors of Pennsylvania and Virginia, acknowledged the receipt of the requisition, and promised promptitude. On the 10th, the Governor of Maryland was served with a copy of the requisition, and took measures to comply with it. On the 12th, General Winder was authorised, in case of either menaced or actual invasion, to call into service the whole of the Maryland quota (six thousand men), and on the 18th, five thousand from Pennsylvania and two thousand

from Virginia, making an aggregate (the regular infantry, cavalry, marines, flotilla men, and district militia included) of sixteen thousand six hundred men."

When we run over these great preparations Jomini's surprise, that a handful of men should have been permitted to execute what they did, is natural, and after the admissions made by Armstrong as to their force, it is perfectly absurd in American writers to pretend that, at Bladensburg, they were conquered by superior numbers, or that the descents on Alexandria and Washington were not made, literally as Jomini expresses it, by a handful of men, in the face of a body outnumbering them three-fold.

Many of these reports have been drawn from Winder's despatches, but it was only to be expected that a General in Winder's position would attempt to represent matters in the most favorable light.

The two despatches which follow will give the reader a clear insight into all the plans and details of the expedition, and General Winder's despatch, which will be found in a note\* will furnish a very good instance of the truth of an American bulletin.

*From Brigadier-General Winder to the Secretary at War.*

Sin, Baltimore, Aug. 27, 1814.

When the enemy arrived at the mouth of the Potomac, of all the militia which I had been authorized to assemble, there were but about 1700 in the field, 13 to 1400 under General Stranbury near this place, and 250 at Bladensburg, under lieutenant-colonel Kramer; the slow progress of draft, and the imperfect organization, with the ineffectiveness of the laws to compel them to turn out, rendered it impossible to have procured more.

The militia of this state and of the contiguous parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania were called out *en masse*, but the former militia law of Pennsylvania had expired the 1st of June, or July, and the one adopted in its place is not to take effect in organizing the militia before October. No aid, therefore, had been received from that state.

After all the force that could be put at my disposal in that short time, and making such dispositions as I deemed best calculated to present the most respectable force at whatever point the enemy might strike, I was enabled (by the most active and harassing movements of the troops) to interpose before the enemy at Bladensburg, about 5000 men, including 350 regulars and commodore Barney's command. Much the largest portion of this force arrived

on the ground when the enemy were in sight, and were disposed to support, in the best manner, the position which General Stansbury had taken. They had barely reached the ground before the action commenced, which was about one o'clock P. M. of the 24th instant, and continued about an hour. The contest was not as obstinately maintained as could have been desired, but was, by parts of the troops, sustained with great spirit and with prodigious effect; and had the whole of our force been equally firm, I am induced to believe that the enemy would have been repulsed, notwithstanding all the disadvantages under which we fought. The artillery from Baltimore supported by major Pinkney's rifle battalion, and a part of captain Doughty's from the navy-yard, were in advance to command the pass of the bridge at Bladensburg, and played upon the enemy, as I have since learned, with very destructive effect. But the rifle troops were obliged, after some time, to retire, and of course the artillery. Superior numbers, however, rushed upon them, and made their retreat necessary, not, however, without great loss on the part of the enemy. Major Pinkney received a severe wound in his right arm after he had retired to the left flank of Stansbury's brigade. The right and centre of Stansbury's brigade, consisting of lieutenant-colonel Ragan's and Shulers regiments, generally, gave way very soon afterwards, with the