

are looked upon as mere pastimes; no one, when your militia will shoulder their muskets and march to their trainings with as much unconcern as they would go to a sumptuous entertainment or a splendid ball. But, Sir, when the hour of danger approaches, your white 'militia' are just as willing that the man of color should be set up as a mark to be shot at by the enemy, as to be set up themselves. In the War of the Revolution, these people helped to fight your battles by land and by sea. Some of your States were glad to turn out corps of colored men, and to stand 'shoulder to shoulder' with them.

"In your late war, they contributed largely towards some of your most splendid victories. On Lakes Erie and Champlain, where your fleets triumphed over a foe superior in numbers and engines of death, they were manned, in a large proportion, with men of color. And, in this very house, in the fall of 1814, a bill passed, receiving the approbation of all the branches of your government, authorizing the Governor to accept the services of a corps of two thousand free people of color. Sir, these were times which tried men's souls. In these times, it was no sporting matter to bear arms. These were times, when a man who shouldered his musket did not know but he bared his bosom to receive a death wound from the enemy ere he laid it aside; and, in these times, these people were found as ready and as willing to volunteer in your service as any other. They were not compelled to go; they were not drafted. No; your pride had placed them beyond your compulsory power. But there was no necessity for its exercise; they were volunteers; yes, Sir, volunteers to defend that very country from the inroads and ravages of a ruthless and vindictive foe, which had treated them with insult, degradation and slavery.

"Volunteers are the best of soldiers. Give me the men, whatever be their complexion, that willingly volunteer, and not those who are compelled to turn out. Such men do not fight from necessity, nor from mercenary motives, but from principle."

The Hon. Tristram Burges, of Rhode Island, in a speech in Congress, January, 1828, said:—"At the commencement of the Revolutionary War, Rhode Island had a number of