

CHAPTER 12.

Professional soldiers' policy is to create permanent forces—Extravagant methods of defence proposed by them—Their sentiments dangerous to political condition of State—Evils induced by large military establishments—True patriotism, what is it?—Motives that lead to selection of military life—War a less evil than subjugation—Obligation of national defence—Opinions against standing armies.

We began our paper by boldly declaring that we should give no favor to our English military critics; citing authorities to show that, from want of experience of military operations carried out on a grand and scientific scale, the British army officer was not to be held an infallible guide in military organization and defence, in cases where millions of souls are concerned. Should our efforts have failed to convince our countrymen to this extent, we trust they have had at least the effect of causing them to receive with great caution, and only after due deliberation thereon, the opinions of these men when enunciated in an authoritative or dictatorial manner.

Although the professional man of war may, as we said before, best understand what is technically known as tactics, yet as in the organisation for defence of a whole nation, where political or moral questions must be held of importance, general knowledge comes into play, an unprofessional person may without blame speak or write on military subjects, and may judge of them sufficiently well; and farther, professional men labor under some disadvantages of their own, looking at their calling from within always, and never from without, and from their very devotion to it, not being apt to see it in its relations with other matters.

It is this very devotion to their profession which is so dangerous to society, and the greater the enthusiast, the more his doctrines are to be feared. Next to a spiritual arrogance, a military arrogance is most to be dreaded: