Mr. HOLLAND. This appears to me to be a very improper course. The President is required to tell us what measures he has taken, and what measures he hereafter intends to take, to suppress this conspiracy. This seems to me extremely exceptionable, and may go to defeat the very end intended to be answered by obtaining the information desired. Where is there any necessity at all for this measure at this time? Is it not the duty of the President to give us such information at all times as the exigencies of the country require? And have we not reason to repose confidence in the executive? If we have, this resolution is altogether useless. We have been told by the gentleman from Virginia, that if the measures recommended at the last session had been adopted, he thinks it would have been much better for the country, and that all kind of danger would have been removed. I, however, am one of those who do not possess that confidence in a regular establishment, which the gentleman from Virginia possesses. Nor have I any apprehension for the peace and safety of the country. I have reason to believe that there are some desperate characters engaged in disturbing the peace of society; but I confide in the integrity of the people; and I believe the strength of the militia will always be found competent to the exigency. If I have any fears, they do not arise from this quarter; they do not arise from the want of a regular establishment. The larger that establishment the greater my fears. If any fears are to be entertained, in my opinion they ought to be fears of the disaffection of the army. I hope, however, that we have no grounds for fears at present on this head. But if there should be any such disaffection, I believe the energy of the people would be sufficient to resist it, would be sufficient to resist any danger from within or from without. Thinking differently from the gentleman from Virginia, and that the safety of the country does not consist in the extent of our military establishment, I am for taking different measures. I am against extending the army, but in favor of organising the militia, in such a way as to render it efficient. I am, however, hostile to the adoption of this proposition. The gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Burwell) has remarked that the time has come when we may safely adopt the proposition. That gentleman may have information which we do not possess, that may induce him to form this opinion. But from the information I possess, I think differently. I believe the President will communicate to us all the information that is necessary and proper for us to possess, and his not having communicated it in this instance, is conclusive evidence to my mind of the impropriety of asking it.

Mr. FINDLEY considered the resolution as of some importance and worthy of consideration before it was adopted. He therefore moved its postponement till Monday.

Mr. BURWELL said he had a single remark to make in reply to the gentleman from North Carolina, who had intimated that he might be acquainted with some circumstances not in possession of the House. He begged leave to inform him, and the other members of the House, that he was acquainted with no circumstances other than those which he had obtained thro' the newspapers or from official communications.

Mr. LLOYD. When this resolution was laid on the table, it appeared to me so simple that nobody could doubt its propriety. For my part, I shall not enter into a consideration of the measures of the last session; the propriety or impropriety of which are not now at issue. The only question before the House is this—Is it proper for this House, when the country is threatened with an insurrection or an invasion, when there is reason to think imminent danger exists, to request the necessary information, to prevent the injurious consequences that may ensue, without the application of proper remedies? I have heard but three objections made to this resolution, neither of which seems to me entitled to the least force. The first is, that if the resolution be carried to the President, he will consider it his duty to communicate all the information in his possession. But gentlemen who make this objection surely have not attended to the language of the resolution. Does it not expressly confine the request to the communication of such information as the President may think proper, and such as may not defeat any objects he may have in view? If, then, he has received any information, which he may deem it improper to communicate, he is authorized by this very resolution to withhold it. I should have very little confidence either in the ability or integrity of the executive, if in contravention of the wishes of this House, and in direct hostility to the objects intended to be answered by this request, he should communicate information which ought to be withheld. The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. Alston) who has spoken of the resolution as compelling the executive to communicate information in his possession, must surely have overlooked its discretionary language.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania has observed, that the resolution appears to him as expressive of a want of confidence in the executive. If the doctrine of confidence is to be carried to this length, that you, who are the guardians of the people, shall sit idle spectators of every impending storm, I shall never subscribe to it. However I may confide in the integrity and wisdom of the President, I owe something to myself; nor can I sit here merely to legislate under executive patronage. I want facts on which to act. If the resolution shall be adopted, it will betray no want of confidence in the executive; it will only manifest the zeal of the House to possess information, which it is necessary for them to have before they can be prepared to act.

Mr. ALSTON. The gentleman from Maryland says this call on the executive is necessary. But what is the state of the case at present? Is it not the duty of the President, under the constitution, at all times to give such information to the legislature, as he may deem necessary and proper for them to act upon? And what is the language of the resolution?—To give such information as in his judgment shall not be improper? On this ground, then, it is not necessary to adopt it. But take the subject in the view in which I before presented it. If we call on the executive in this way, he will deem it his duty to give the information called for. I have not particularly attended to the phraseology of the resolution, but I question very much whether the qualification in the fore part of it applies to the latter part, which refers to the measures taken, or intended to be taken by the executive. It is clear that some parts of this information may be improper to be communicated. For my part, I believe that such a communication on this subject, as is proper, will be laid before us as soon as practicable. On the point of confidence in the executive magistrate, I will say, that I am not in the habit of subscribing to the opinions of any man, or set of men whatever. An implicit dependance on the opinions of others is altogether contrary to my habits; but can any man doubt that if there is any thing in the possession of the President, proper in his opinion to be communicated, he would have conceived himself bound to have communicated it before this day? As I said before, two or three days may bring us a western mail, and news of the extent and state of the conspiracy. Let us wait till this time; the state of things may then induce us to call on the President for information. It is but a few days since we have heard from Orleans: there appears to exist there the greatest confidence in the executive, and a force sufficient to meet any force that may be brought from the upper country. Do we know the extent of this combination, or all the characters implicated in it, and where they now are? If the President were to make a communication on the subject, is it not probable, that if there are any among us concerned in it, we should disclose it to those interested in making their escape, even were it communicated in confidence? May not the safety of the union depend on defeating it before a disclosure be made? If such a disclosure be made, will not the conspirators either make a decided stand, or, by retreating, screen themselves from punishment? We have had, however, I believe, enough of confidential communications; and I hope we shall not soon have any more. I for one am ready to wait till the President shall deem it adviseable to make a communication to this House.

Mr. HOLLAND. If we were called upon by the executive to act in this case, it might be proper to ask for information. As, however, we have not been so called upon, and as the executive is the proper organ for taking the necessary measures on this subject, the adoption of this resolution on our part would evince a desire to intermeddle with his duties. As the constitution enjoins it upon him as his duty, to give information to the legislature from time to time, I can only consider the request made, under the impression that we have not confidence in him. It is true the resolution is couched in very curious language—it requests only such information as he may deem the public welfare requires not to be disclosed. But what is the balance of the information? Exactly what the constitution enjoins upon him to give. What is the inference? That the President of the U. S. has not discharged the duties of his office; that he has not done what it was his duty to do; that he has been guilty of delay; and that Congress has been compelled to tell him he has not done his duty. Such considerations ought to induce us at least to hesitate before we pass such obloquy on any branch of the government, and more especially upon the President, as the confidence we now ask for him is merely that reposed in him by the constitution.

At the instance of Mr. DANA, the clerk read the following extracts from the Journals of the Houſe:

"MONDAY 2d January, 1797.

"*Resolved*, That the Preſident of the United States be requested to cauſe to be laid before this Houſe, information what meaſures have been taken for carrying into effect, the treaty between the United States and the Dey and Regency of Algiers; and alſo, whether any, and what further legiſlative aid may be neceſſary for that purpoſe."

"FRIDAY, 30th March, 1798.

"On a motion made and ſeconded, that the Houſe do come to the following reſolution:

Resolved, That the Preſident of the United States be requeſted to communicate to this Houſe, the diſpatches from the Envoys Extraordinary from the United States to the French Republic, mentioned in his meſſage of the nineteenth inſtant; or ſuch parts thereof, as conſiderations of public ſafety and intereſt, in his opinion, may permit.

"*Ordered*, That the conſideration of the ſaid motion be poſtponed until Monday next."

"MONDAY, 2d April, 1798

"The Houſe proceeded to conſider the motion of the thirtieth ultimo, relative to the diſpatches of the Envoys Extraordinary, from the United States to the French Republic: Whereupon,

"The ſaid motion being amended at the Clerk's table, to read as followeth:

"*Resolved*, That the Preſident of the United States be requeſted to communicate to this Houſe the inſtructions to, and diſpatches from the Envoys Extraordinary from the United States to the French Republic, mentioned in his meſſage of the nineteenth ultimo,

"The queſtion was taken, that the Houſe do agree to the ſame, as amended, and reſolved in the affirmative—Yeas 65—Nays 27."

"Mr. Allen, from the committee appointed to preſent to the Preſident of the United States, the reſolution of this Houſe relative to the inſtructions to, and diſpatches from the Envoys Extraordinary to the French Republic, reported, that the committee had, according to order performed that ſervice; and that the Preſident ſignified to them, that he would take the ſubject into his conſideration, and do thereon, what it ſhould appear to him, the public ſafety required."

Mr. G. W. CAMPBELL. I underſtand the queſtion to be on poſtponing the conſideration of the reſolution till Monday. I have never oppoſed a reſolution calling for information in any caſe where I believed the information could be of any poſſible uſe; nor am I diſpoſed to ſay that it is at preſent neceſſary to negative this reſolution, but I do not ſee any uſe in adopting it at this time. I ask what use is to be made of the information the resolution proposes to obtain? In introducing it, we were told that the country was threatened with a conspiracy. Will gentlemen say their object is to raise a standing army to quell it? Are we to do nothing until we get a war establishment? If so, the conspirators will have time to accomplish their object, or to fly from justice, before they are overtaken. Whatever may have been the object of the conspiracy, it is at this time either consummated or exploded. It is either carried into effect, or the probability of its being effected is destroyed. It has been said, if the measures proposed at the last session had been adopted, the country would not now be menaced from abroad, or conspiracies be engendered within. I cannot conceive the use of introducing, on this occasion, such observations. The object recommended at the last session was to raise a war establishment, not merely to encrease the existing peace establishment. This was declared the last year, and it has been declared this year. Gentlemen have said, they will not increase the peace establishment, but will create a war establishment. What were the apprehensions entertained the last year, on which the proposition of these measures was founded? Has the danger from Spain, then insisted upon, been realised? No, sir, official documents tell us the contrary. If the reasons brought forward last year did not justify it, nothing has since intervened to sanction it.

Will the gentleman, who says if we had adopted the measures recommended the last session, they would have averted the dangers which now threaten us, tell us whether there was then any reason for apprehending them; will he say that he then expected this man would at this time have been carrying on this conspiracy? If so, he surely ought to have told us of it. I am disposed to believe, that so far as relates to this, or any other combination within our limits, no standing army is necessary. If we must have a standing army, to put down our own citizens, whenever there is any serious violation of the laws, it is high time to lay down our liberties. If the militia are incompetent to maintain the peace, it is full time to acknowledge the futility of our political principles. On this ground never will I agree to raise a regular army, to meet our own citizens. As far as it depends upon me, it never shall be said, that we have raised a regular army to turn their bayonets against our citizens. If a majority of the people shall be embarked in an insurrection they ought not to be controlled; and if the majority shall be on the other side, they will have power to crush it. It has been stated, on the introduction of this resolution, that a member of the select committee who bro't in the bill, authorising the President to raise volunteers, proposed an increase of the regular army, similar it is added to the increase proposed during the last session. The fact, however, is this. The gentleman alluded to offered two propositions; one to add to the present peace establishment, which was rejected by all the members of the committee but himself. Even the gentleman who introduced the resolution under consideration gave his vote against this proposed increase of the peace establishment.

There is a bill now before me from the Senate, the object of which is to encrease the peace establishment; and this the gentleman says is one of the measures proposed at the last session. I have, however, already observed, that that gentleman opposed the proposition for increasing our peace establishment, and yet he informs us that this measure is the same with that proposed the last session for the creation of a war establishment. I have considered it my duty to make these observations, because at the last session, I was opposed to raising an army; and I am still opposed to it unless the public exigencies require it. I do not, however, consider this the proper time to investigate this point; as, if it be intended to crush the conspiracy, the measure will be too late.

It may be proper to observe that in my opinion this conspiracy has been painted in stronger colours than there is reason to think it deserves. It has been stated as dangerous to the union. On what grounds? There is no evidence that there is in any part of the U. S. two hundred persons collected for the purpose of carrying it into effect. We have not even evidence of this. We have indeed newspaper evidence, that it was reported that the author of it was to march at the head of 2000 men, and that 4000 Kentuckians were to follow. At the same time, however, we learn that Kentucky is taking the most effectual measures to crush it. So far from there being 4000 Kentuckians enlisted, I do not believe there are ten, unless, indeed, the stragglers passing through that state are so denominated.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania has observed that the members from the Western country are either ignorant, or pretend to be so, of this plot. *I* cannot suppose the gentleman alluded to any member of this House. There is one circumstance on this head worthy of notice—the greater part of the men associated came from the Eastern country, and from the state of the gentleman from Pennsylvania. With regard to the sentiments of the Western country, *I* believe they are as well affected towards the union as those of any other part of the confederacy. *I* do not conceive there is ground for the alarm that has gone forth. *I* am, however, willing to take any proper measures to aid the Executive in crushing the plot.

It has also been observed by the introducer of this motion that the expences attending the military expedition on the Sabine will be equal to the expences that would have attended the proposed augmentation of the army. But it seems to me that this must be altogether a mistake. This expedition was composed of the regular forces and about five hundred militia, who were engaged but for a few weeks. The expences of the former may have been somewhat increased by their movement, and the price of provisions; but no additional expence has been incurred for their pay. The only important item of expence must arise from the militia—this cannot be considerable; it will not be pretended that it can bear any comparison with the expences of raising an army of five or ten thousand men. *I* am not disposed to say any thing of the expences incurred by the commander of the army at New Orleans, as *I* am unacquainted with the subject; but *I* presume it cannot be considerable.

But, to return to the only question before us, the President has informed us that there is a combination, the object of which is to conduct a military expedition against the territories of Spain. What is the information which we have since received? Does it not go to the same object? If the President is convinced from information since received, that the object is a different one, is it not most probable that he would have so advised us? If the secret information respecting those implicated be divulged, will it not put many concerned in it on their guard, and induce them to escape? This is the evil I apprehend from agreeing to this resolution, and none other. Believing, therefore, that the information we may receive will not enable us to strengthen the hands of the executive, I shall vote for postponing the further consideration of this resolution until Monday. The President has already advised us that he has taken such measures as are calculated to check the expedition, and bring its abettors to punishment. He possesses the power of calling out the militia if he thinks the case requires it; and I know of no acts which we can pass, which can strengthen the hands of the executive more than the existing laws.

[Want of room compels us to reserve the remainder of the debate for our next paper.]

Mr. J. RANDOLPH spoke again in support of the resolution, and Mr. SMILIE against it.

Mr. EPPES spoke in favor of it.

When the question to postpone its further consideration was disagreed to—Ayes 38.

Mr. J. RANDOLPH again spoke in its support.

Mr. THOMAS requested a division of the resolution at the words "United States," and observed that he should vote in favor of the first, but against the second member.

Mr. EARLY moved to adjourn, which motion was lost—Ayes 47—Noes 68.

Mr. ELMER spoke against agreeing to either member of the resolution.

Mr. JACKSON declared himself in favor of the first member of the resolution, but against the second.

Mr. SLOAN spoke against the whole resolution.

Mr. GREGG declared himself in favor of the first member, but against the second, as it stood.

Mr. J. RANDOLPH gave notice that in case the first member of the resolution should be agreed to, he meant to modify the second.

Mr. ALSTON again spoke against the resolution, and moved to postpone it till to morrow; which motion was lost—Ayes 48—Noes 68.

The Yeas and Nays were then taken on the first member of the resolution, which was agreed to—Yeas 109—Noes 14.

Mr. J. RANDOLPH then moved to strike out of the second member of the resolution the words, "and proposes to take;" which was agreed to without a division.

When the question was taken on the second member, which was agreed to—Yeas 67—Nays 32; and Messrs. J. Randolph and Lloyd named a committee to carry the resolution to the President.

A meſſage was received from the Senate, ſtating that they had paſſed the following bill.

A BILL

Supplementary to an act, entitled "An act fixing the military peace eſtabliſhment of the United States.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That in addition to the preſent peace eſtabliſhment of the United States, and as a part thereof, the Preſident of the United States be, and he is hereby authoriſed to raiſe one regiment of infantry and one battalion of cavalry; and the ſaid regiment of infantry ſhall conſiſt of the ſame number of commiſſioned officers, non-commiſſioned officers, muſicians, and privates as are directed by the act to which this is a ſupplement. And the ſaid battalion of cavalry, ſhall conſiſt of one major, and of one adjutant, one quarter maſter, and one pay maſter (each being a lieutenant,) one ſurgeon, and four companies; each company of one captain, one lieutenant, one cornet, one ſergeant major, one quarter maſter ſergeant, one trumpeter, four ſergeants, four corporals, one farrier, one ſadler, and ſixty four privates: And ſhall moreover at the diſcretion of the Preſident do duty either on horſe or on foot.

Sec. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That the Preſident ſhall be, and he is hereby authoriſed in all caſes of imminent danger, when in his opinion the defence or ſafety of the United States ſhall require it, to increaſe the number of men in each company of infantry on the peace eſtabliſhment to one hundred privates.

Sec. 3 *And be it further enacted,* That ſuitable cloathing be provided for the cavalry, adapted to the nature of their ſervice, and as near as may be of the value of the clothing allowed to the infantry and artillery.

Sec 4. *And be it further enacted,* That the commiſſioned officers, non-commiſſioned officers, muſicians, and privates, by this act directed to be raiſed, ſhall be entitled to receive the ſame pay, emoluments, and bounty, as are allowed to the troops now in the ſervice of the United States, and they ſhall be governed by the rules and articles of war, which have been, or may be by law eſtabliſhed.

The House adjourned at half past 5 o'clock.

Other business was transacted which a want of room prevents us from noticing to day.

Extract to the editor, dated Orleans, Dec. 6, 1806.

"The utter uncertainty of receiving any thing by the medium of the post office, induces me to request you will forward the Aurora to me by every opportunity that offers by sea.

"Commodore Shaw has purchased the schooner Ranger, and she is now arming and manning for immediate service. The recruiting has also commenced briskly for this, and, (it is said) *for other purposes!*

"On Thursday last (December 1) the Charlotte schooner arrived here with arms and other warlike stores.—Since the arrival of Gen. Wilkinson here, I understand he has given instructions for repairing all the old military works, and the construction of pickets round the city; in a word, to put the city in as good a military state as it is susceptible. We know not the cause of these preparations, they are the subject of much and very contradictory surmise."

Aurora.

BAILY WASHINGTON,
Has received by the sloop Olive Branch and other Conveyances.

MADEIRA and Liſbon Wine, Cogniac Brandy, Apple, do. Antigua Rum, country, do. Whiſkey, Gin, Molaſſes, Imperial, Old Hyſon, Young Hyſon, and Souchong teas, table Salt in Baskets, Capers, Cloves, Mace, Cinnamon, Nutmegs, Allſpice, ground Ginger, Starch, Almonds, Raiſins, warranted Chocolate, London refined Salt Petre, Coffee, Pearl Barley, Rice, Pepper, fig Blue, Dixon's Philadelphia Muſtard, Cayenne Pepper, Lump, Loaf and Brown Sugars, freſh and ſalted Butter, Windſor ſhaving Soap, Eagle Gunpowder in caniſters of one pound each and of a very ſuperior quality, genuine Spaniſh Segars and Demijohns with a neat ſelection of Dry Goods, Glaſs and Crockery Ware, which he is ſelling as uſual at the moſt reduced prices at his ſtore South B ſtreet near the Capitol.

January 19—tawaw

CHARLES H. VARDEN,
Merchant Taylor
New Jersey Avenue, near the Capitol.

RESPECTFULLY informs the gentlemen of the diſtrict of Columbia, he has imported by ſhip Eliza ANN lately arrived at Philadelphia,

A choice aſſortment

Of Extra Superfine cloths, Bennets, Velvets, and Cords, Caſſimeres, ſingle and double milled Sattin cloths, faſhionable Spaniſh Orleans and Tollenets, with ſilk Moleſkin velvets, ſilk and ſattin Florentines, with a variety of other articles ſuitable for the ſeaſon.

N. B. Ladies habits, regimentals and navy uniforms made in the firſt ſtile of faſhion.

Richard Harwel's celebrated patent parallel Suſpenders, can be had on the ſame terms as at his manufactory.

November 12—tf