

in his system of national defence. I think you have suggested the readiest and most efficient means of reform, and that is, to incorporate military with literary instruction, in such a way that nearly all the rising male population will successively receive some degree of military knowledge, and this is certainly a most important consideration. I see no other feasible plan by which the militia as a body, can be rendered available for defensive warfare. The system of uniformed volunteer companies, I think highly of, but it is only possible in large towns, or in densely populated counties. This does not solve the problem, except to a partial and limited extent, and still leaves the great mass of the population in its present condition.

Another advantage to be derived from the system you propose, is the combination of physical with mental culture, in which view alone it deserves serious consideration, and I am rejoiced to learn that the commissioners of the Baltimore High Schools have acted on this idea, by engrafting the military drill in the course of scholastic instruction. The studious and intellectual youth, is prone to indulge in sedentary habits alike inimical to mind and body, but military display possesses great attraction for all boys and for many of older growth, and he may thus be induced to take that exercise, so necessary for his corporeal health, which he might otherwise seek to avoid. Besides this, the drill may be made, not only an agreeable relaxation from severe academic studies, but the substitute for other amusements of more doubtful propriety.

Without a well and efficiently organized militia, we certainly cannot repose in safety, the only question is, how can this desirable end be attained. Many different opinions may be expressed upon this subject, but all will agree that it is one which from its importance, demands the prompt and serious attention of those, to whose hands it has been committed by the people. "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

Suppose we were to adopt, what I have understood to be the new Pennsylvania plan; that is levying a dollar or two upon every able bodied man, who should fail to uniform and join some volunteer company for the purpose of raising funds, applicable to the support, or pay expenses of those who do: it would still be nothing more than the old system under a new name. Exacting penalties before, instead of after parade, and be as practically defective, as the present system always has been, and from its inherent principles of decay, must forever continue to be. Some plan ought to be projected and matured, before we can realize what is most desirable, a suitable system during peace, and to work most efficiently in time of war.

To continue the attempt to force, or coax the people to play with muskets against their own inclination, would be unwise,