SPEECH

OF

MR. CORWIN, OF OHIO,

IN

REPLY TO GENERAL CRARY'S ATTACK

ON

GENERAL HARRISON.

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 15, 1840.

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SPEECH.

Mr. CORWIN, of Ohio, rose and said:

Mr. Speaker: I am admonished, by the eager solicitations of gentlemen around me to give way for a motion to adjourn, of that practice of the House, which accords us more of leisure on this day, than is allowed us on any other day of the week. The servants of other good masters are, I believe, indulged in a sort of saturnalium in the afternoon of Saturday, and we have supposed, that our kind masters, the people, might be willing to grant us, their most faithful slaves, a similar respite from toil. It is now past three o'clock in the afternoon, and I should be very willing to pause in the discussion, were I not urged by those menacing cries of "Go on," from various parts of the House. In this state of things, I cannot hope to summon to any thing like attention the unquiet minds of many, or the jaded and worn down faculties of a still larger portion of the House. I hope, however, the House will not withhold from me a boon, which I have often seen granted to others, that is, the privilege of speaking without being oppressed by a crowded audience, which is accompanied by this additional advantage, that the orator thus situated can at least listen to and hear himself.

If you, Mr. Speaker, and the members of this House, have given that attention to the speech of the gentleman from Michigan, (Mr. CRARY,) made yesterday, which some of us here thought it our duty to bestow, I am sure the novelty of the scene, to say nothing more of it, must have arrested your curiosity, if, indeed, it did not give rise to profound reflection.

I need not remind the House, that it is a rule here (as I suppose it is every where else, where men dispute by any rule at all) that what is said in debate should be relevant and pertinent to the subject under discussion. The question before us, is a proposition to instruct the Committee of Ways and Means to report a bill granting four hundred and fifty thousand dollars to continue the construction of the Cumberland road in the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The objections to the measure are, either that this Government is in no sense bound by compact to make the road, or that it is not a work of any national concern, but merely of local interest, or that the present exhausted state of the Treasury will not warrant the appropriation, admitting the object of it to be fairly within the constitutional province of Congress.

If the gentleman from South Carolina, (Mr. PICKENS,) and the gentle-

man from Maine, (Mr. PARRIS,) who consider the Cumberland road a work of mere sectional advantage to a very small portion of the people, have attended to the sage disquisitions of the gentleman from Michigan on the art of war, they must now either come to the conclusion, that almost the whole of the gentleman's speech is what old-fashioned people would call a "*non sequitur*," or else that this road connects itself with not merely the military defences of the Union, but is interwoven, most intimately, with the progress of science, and especially that most difficult of all sciences, the proper application of strategy to the exigencies of barbarian warfare. It will be seen, that the far-seeing sagacity and long-reaching understanding of the gentleman from Michigan has discovered that, before we can vote with a clear conscience on the instructions proposed, we must be well informed as to the number of Indians who fought at the battle of Tippecanoe in 1811; how the savages were painted, whether red, black, or blue, or whether all were blended on their barbarian faces. Further, according to his views of the subject, before we vote money to make a road, we must know and approve of what General Harrison thought, said, and did, at the battle of Tippecanoe!

Again, upon this process of reasoning, we must inquire where a general should be when a battle begins, especially in the night, and what his position during the fight, and where he should be found when it is over; and particularly how a Kentuckian behaves himself, when he hears an Indian war-whoop in day or night. And, after settling all these puzzling propositions, still we must fully understand how, and by whom, the battle of the Thames was fought, and in what manner it then and there became our troops, regular and militia, to conduct themselves. Sir, it must be obvious, that if these topics are germain to the subject, then does the Cumberland road encompass all the interests, and all the subjects, that touch the rights, duties, and destinies of the civilized world; and I hope we shall hear no more, from Southern gentlemen, of the narrow, sectional, or unconstitutional character of the proposed measure. That branch of the subject is, I hope, forever quieted, perhaps unintentionally, by the gentleman from Michigan. His military criticism, if it has not answered the purposes intended, has at least, in this way, done some service to the Cumberland road. And if my poor halting comprehension has not blundered, in pursuing the soaring upward flight of my friend from Michigan, he has in this discussion written a new chapter in the "*regulæ philosophandi*," and made not ourselves only, but the whole world his debtors in gratitude, by overturning the old worn out principles of the "inductive system."

Mr. Speaker, there have been many and ponderous volumes written, and various unctious discourses delivered, on the doctrine of "association." Dugald Stewart, a Scotch gentleman of no mean pretensions in his day, thought much, and wrote much concerning that principle in mental philosophy; and Brown, another of the same school, but of later date, has also written and said much on the same subject. This latter gentleman, I think, calls it "*suggestion*;" but never, I venture to say, did any metaphysician, pushing his researches furthest, and deepest, into that occult science, dream that would come to pass, which we have discovered and clearly developed—that is, that two subjects so unlike, as an

appropriation to a road in 1840, and the tactics proper in Indian war in 1811, were not merely akin, but actually, identically the same.

Mr. Speaker, this discussion, I should think, if not absolutely absurd and utterly ridiculous, which my respect for the gentleman from Michigan, and the American Congress, will not allow me to suppose, has elicited another trait in the American character, which has been the subject of great admiration with intelligent travellers from the old world. Foreigners have admired the ease with which us Yankees, as they call us, can turn our hands to any business or pursuit, public or private; and this has been brought forward, by our own people, as a proof that man, in this great and free republic, is a being very far superior to the same animal in other parts of the globe less favored than ours. A proof of the most convincing character of this truth, so flattering to our national pride, is exhibited before our eyes, in the gentleman from Michigan, delivering to the world a grave lecture on the campaigns of General Harrison, including a variety of very interesting military events, in the years 1811, 1812, and 1813. In all other countries, and in all former times, before now, a gentleman who would either speak or be listened to, on the subject of war, involving subtle criticisms on strategy, and careful reviews of marches, sieges, battles, regular and casual, and irregular onslaughts, would be required to show, first, that he had studied much, investigated fully, and digested well, the science and history of his subject. But here, sir, no such painful preparation is required; witness the gentleman from Michigan. He has announced to the House that he is a militia general on the peace establishment!! That he is a lawyer we know, tolerably well read in Tidd's Practice and Espinasse's Nisi Prius. These studies, so happily adapted to the subject of war, with an appointment in the militia in time of peace, furnish him, at once, with all the knowledge necessary to discourse to us, as from high authority, upon all the mysteries in the "trade of death." Again, Mr. Speaker, it must occur to every one, that *we*, to whom these questions are submitted, and these military criticisms are addressed, being all colonels at least, and most of us, like the gentleman himself, brigadiers, are, of all conceivable tribunals, best qualified to decide any nice point, connected with military science. I hope the House will not be alarmed by an impression, that I am about to discuss one or the other, of the military questions now before us at length, but I wish to submit a remark or two, by way of preparing us for a proper appreciation of the merits of the discourse we have heard. I trust, as we are all brother officers, that the gentleman from Michigan, and the two hundred and forty colonels, or generals, of this honorable House, will receive what I have to say, as coming from an old brother in arms, and addressed to them in a spirit of candor,

> "Such as becomes comrades free,
> Reposing after victory."

Sir, we all know the military studies of the gentleman from Michigan, before he was promoted. I take it to be, beyond a reasonable doubt, that he had perused with great care the title page of "Baron Steuben." Nay, I go further; as the gentleman has incidentally assured us he is prone to look into musty and neglected volumes, I venture to assert, without vouching the fact from personal knowledge, that he has

prosecuted his researches so far as to be able to know that the rear rank stands right behind the front. This, I think, is fairly inferrible from what I understood him to say of the lines of encampment at Tippecanoe. Thus we see, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from Michigan, so far as study can give us knowledge of a subject, comes before us, with claims to great profundity. But this is a subject, which, of all others, requires the aid of actual experience to make us wise. Now the gentleman from Michigan, being a militia general, as he has told us, his brother officers, in that simple statement has revealed the glorious history of toils, privations, sacrifices, and bloody scenes, through which we know, from experience and observation, a militia officer in time of peace is sure to pass. We all, in fancy, now see the gentleman from Michigan in that most dangerous and glorious event in the life of a militia general on the peace establishment—a parade day! That day for which all the other days of his life seem to have been made. We can see the troops in motion; umbrellas, hoe and axe handles, and other like deadly implements of war overshadowing all the field, when lo! the leader of the host approaches,

"Far off his coming shines;"

his plume, white, after the fashion of the great Bourbon, is of ample length, and reads its doleful history in the bereaved necks and bosoms of forty neighboring hen-roosts! Like the great Suwaroff, he seems somewhat careless in forms and points of dress; hence his epaulets may be on his shoulders, back, or sides, but still gleaming, gloriously gleaming in the sun. Mounted he is, too, let it not be forgotton. Need I describe to the colonels and generals of this honorable House the steed which heroes bestride on such occasions? No, I see the memory of other days is with you. You see before you the gentleman from Michigan mounted on his crop-eared, bushy-tailed mare, the singular obliquities of whose hinder limbs is described by that most expressive phrase, "sickle hams"—her height just fourteen hands, "all told;" yes, sir, there you see his "steed that laughs at the shaking of the spear;" that is, his "war-horse whose neck is clothed with thunder." Mr. Speaker, we have glowing descriptions in history of Alexander the Great, and his war-horse Bucephalus, at the head of the invincible Macedonian phalanx; but, sir, such are the improvements of modern times, that every one must see, that our militia general, with his crop-eared mare, with bushy-tail and sickle-ham, would literally frighten off a battle-field, an hundred Alexanders. But, sir, to the history of the parade day. The general thus mounted, and equipped, is in the field, and ready for action. On the eve of some desparate enterprise, such as giving order to shoulder arms, it may be, there occurs a crisis, one of the accidents of war which no sagacity could foresee or prevent. A cloud rises and passes over the sun! Here an occasion occurs for the display of that greatest of all traits in the character of a commander, that tact which enables him to seize upon and turn to good account, events unlooked for, as they arise. Now for the caution, wherewith the Roman Fabius foiled the skill and courage of Hannibal. A retreat is ordered, and troops and general, in a twinkling, are found safely bivouacked in a neighboring grocery! But, even here, the general still has room for the exhibition of heroic deeds. Hot from the field, and chafed with the untoward events

of the day, your general unsheaths his trenchant blade, eighteen inches in length, as you will well remember, and, with an energy and remorseless fury, he slices the watermelons that lie in heaps around him, and shares them with his surviving friends. Other of the sinews of war are not wanting here. Whiskey, Mr. Speaker, that great leveller of modern times, is here also, and the shells of the watermelons are filled to the brim. Here again, Mr. Speaker, is shown how the extremes of barbarism and civilization meet. As the Scandavian heroes of old, after the fatigues of war, drank wine from the skulls of their slaughtered enemies, in Odin's Halls, so now our militia general and his forces, from the skulls of melons thus vanquished, in copious draughts of whiskey, assuage the heroic fire of their souls, after the bloody scenes of a parade day. But alas, for this short-lived race of ours, all things will have an end, and so even is it with the glorious achievements of our general. Time is on the wing, and will not stay his flight; the sun, as if frightened at the mighty events of the day, rides down the sky, and at the close of the day when "the hamlet is still," the curtain of night drops upon the scene,

> "And glory, like the phenix in its fires,
> Exhales its odors, blazes, and expires."

Such, sir, has been the experience in war of the gentleman from Michigan. We know this from the simple annunciation that he is and has been a brigadier of militia in time of peace. And now, having a full understanding of the qualifications of our learned general, both from study and practice, I hope the House will see, that it should give its profound reflection to his discourses on the art of war. And this it will be more inclined to, when we take into view, that the gentleman has, in his review of General Harrison's campaigns, modestly imputed to the latter great mistakes, gross blunders, imbecility, and even worse than this, as I shall show hereafter. The force, too, of the lecture of our learned and experienced friend from Michigan, is certainly greatly enhanced, when we consider another admitted fact, which is, that the general whose imbecility and errors he has discovered had not, like the gentleman from Michigan, the great advantage of serving in watermelon campaigns, but only fought fierce Indians, in the dark forests of the West, under such stupid fellows as Anthony Wayne, and was afterwards appointed to the command of large armies, by the advice of such an inexperienced boy as Gov. Shelby, the hero of King's Mountain.

And now, Mr. Speaker, as I have the temerity to entertain doubts, and with great deference to differ in my opinions on this military question with the gentleman from Michigan, I desire to state a few historical facts, concerning General Harrison, whom the general from Michigan has pronounced incapable, imbecile, and, as I shall notice hereafter, something worse even than these. General Harrison was commissioned by General Washington an officer of the regular army of the United States in the year 1791. He served as aid to General Anthony Wayne, in the campaign against the Indians, which resulted in the battle of the Rapids of the Maumee, in the fall of 1794. Thus, in his youth, he was selected by General Wayne, as one of his military family. And what did this youthful officer do in that memorable battle of the Rapids? Here, Mr. Speaker, let me summon a witness merely to show how military men

may differ. The witness I call to controvert the opinion of the gentleman from Michigan is General Anthony Wayne. In his letter to the Secretary of War, giving an account of the battle of the Rapids, he says:

"My faithful and gallant Lieutenant Harrison rendered the most essential services, by communicating my orders in every direction, and by *his conduct and bravery* exciting the troops to press for victory."

Sir, this evidence was given by General Wayne in the year 1794, some time, I imagine, before the gentleman from Michigan was born, and long before he became a militia general, and long, very long, before he ever perused the title page of Baron Steuben. Mr. Speaker, let me remind the House, in passing, that this battle and victory over the Indian forces of the Northwest, in which, according to the testimony of General Wayne, "Lieutenant Harrison rendered the most essential services, by his conduct and bravery," gave peace to an exposed line of frontier, extending from Pittsburgh to the southern borders of Tennessee. It was, in truth, the close of the war of the Revolution; for the Indians who took part with Great Britain in our Revolutionary struggle never laid down their arms, until after they were vanquished by Wayne, in 1794.

We now come to see something of the *man*, the *general*, whose military history our able and experienced general from Michigan has reviewed. We know, that debates like this have sometimes been had in the British Parliament. There, I believe, the discussion was usually conducted by those in the House, who had *seen*, and not merely *heard* of service. We all know that Colonel Napier has, in several volumes, reviewed the campaigns of Wellington, and criticised the movements and merits of Beresford, and Soult, and Massena, and many others, quite, yes, I say, *quite* as well known in military history as any of us, not even excepting our general from Michigan. We respect the opinions of Napier, because we know he not only *thought* of war, but that he *fought* too. We respect and admire that combination of military skill, with profound statesmanlike views, which we find in "Cæsar's Commentaries," because we know the "mighty Julius" was a *soldier*, trained in the field, and inured to the accidents and dangers of war. But, sir, we generals of Congress require no such painful discipline to give value to our opinions. We men of the 19th century know all things intuitively. We understand perfectly the military art by nature. Yes, sir, the notions of the gentleman from Michigan agree exactly with a sage by the name of "Dogberry," who insisted that "reading and writing come by nature." Mr. Speaker, we have heard and read much of "the advance of knowledge, the improvement of the species, and the great march of mind," but never till now have we understood the extent of meaning in these pregnant phrases. For instance, the gentleman from Michigan asserts that General Harrison has none of the qualities of a general, because, at the battle of Tippecanoe, he was found at one time at a distance from his tent, urging his men on to battle. He exposed his person too much, it seems. He should have staid at his tent, and waited for the officers to come to him for orders. Well, sir, see now to what conclusion this leads us. Napoleon seized a standard at Lodi, and rushed in front of his columns, across a narrow bridge, which was swept by a whole park

of German artillery. Hence, Napoleon was no officer; he did not know now to command an army. He, like Harrison, exposed his person too much. Oh, Mr. Speaker, what a pity for poor Napoleon, that he had not studied Steuben, and slaughtered water-melons with us natural-born generals of this great age of the world! Sir, it might have altered the map of Europe; nay, changed the destinies of the world!

Again: Alexander the Great spurred his horse foremost into the river, and *led* his Macedonians across the Granicus, to rout the Persians who stood full opposed on the other side of the stream. True, this youth conquered the world, and made himself master of what had constituted the Medean, Persian, Assyrian, and Chaldean empires. Still, according to the judgment of us warriors by nature, the mighty Macedonian would have consulted good sense, by coming over here, if, indeed, there were any *here* hereabouts in those days, and studying, like my friend from Michigan, first Tidd's Practice, and Espinasse's Nisi Prius, and a little snatch of Steuben, and serving as a general of militia awhile. Sir, Alexander the Great might have made a man of himself in the art of war, had he even been a member of our Congress, and heard us colonels discuss the subject of an afternoon or two. Indeed, Alexander, or Satan, I doubt not, would have improved greatly in strategy by observing, during this session, the tactics of the Administration party, on the New Jersey election question. Mr. Speaker, this objection to a general, because he *will* fight, is not original with my friend from Michigan. I remember a great authority, in point, agreeing with the gentleman in this. In the times of the Henrys, 4th and 5th, of England, there lived one Captain Jack Falstaff. If Shakspeare may be trusted, his opinions of the art military were exactly those of the gentleman from Michigan. He uniformly declared, as his deliberate judgment on the subject, that "discretion was the better part of valor;" and this is an authority for the gentleman. But who shall decide? Thus the authority stands—Alexander, the mighty Greek, and Napoleon Bonaparte, and Harrison, on one side, and Captain John Falstaff and the General from Michigan on the other! Sir, I must leave a question thus sustained by authorities, both ways, to posterity. Perhaps the lights of another age may enable the world to decide it; I confess my inability to say, on which side the weight of authority lies.

I hope I may obtain the pardon of the American Congress, for adverting in this discussion to another matter, gravely put forward by the gentleman from Michigan. Without the slightest feeling of disrespect to that gentleman, I must be allowed to say that his opinions, (hastily, I am sure,) obtruded on the House on this military question, can only be considered as subjects of merriment.

But I come to notice, since I am compelled to it, one observation of the gentleman, which I feel quite certain, on reflection, he will regret himself. In a sort of parenthesis in his speech, he said that a rumor prevailed at the time (alluding to the battle of Tippecanoe) that Colonel Joseph H. Davies, of Kentucky, who commanded a squadron of cavalry there, was, by some trick of General Harrison, mounted, during the battle, on a white horse belonging to the General, and that, being thus conspicuous in the fight, he was a mark for the assailing Indians, and fell in a charge at the head of his men. The gentleman says he does not

vouch for the truth of this. Sir, it is well that he does not vouch here for the truth of a long-exploded slander. It requires a bold man, a man possessing a great deal of moral courage, to make even an allusion to a charge such as that, against one whose only possessions in this world are his character for courage and conduct in war in his country's defence, and his unstained integrity in the various civil offices it has been his duty to occupy. Did not the gentleman know that this vile story was known by every intelligent man west of the mountains to be totally without foundation? The gentleman seemed to appeal to the gallant Kentuckians to prove the truth of this innuendo. He spoke of the blood of their countrymen so profusely poured out at Tippecanoe, as if they would give countenance to the idea that the gallant Davies, who fell in that engagement, fell a victim to the artifice of the commanding general, and their other gallant sons who fell there, were wantonly sacrificed by the gross ignorance of General Harrison in Indian warfare. Now, sir, before the gentleman made this appeal, he should have remembered a few historical facts, which, if known to him, as I should suppose they were to every other man twenty years of age in Western America, would make the whole speech of that gentleman little else than a most wanton insult to the understanding of the people and Government of Kentucky. Let us briefly notice the facts.

In November, 1811, the battle of Tippecanoe was fought. There Colonel Davies and Colonel Owens, with other Kentuckians, fell. These, says the gentleman, (at least he insinuates it,) were sacrificed by either the cowardly artifice or by the ignorance of General Harrison. Now, Mr. Speaker, I abhor the habit of open flattery, nay, I do not like to look in the face of a man, and speak of him in warm terms of eulogium, however he may deserve it; but, sir, on this occasion I am obliged to say, what history will attest, of the people of Kentucky. If any community of people ever lived, from the time of the dispersion on the plain of Shinar up to this day, who were literally cradled in war, it is to be found in the State of Kentucky. From the first exploration of the country by Daniel Boon up to the year 1794, they were engaged in one incessant battle with the savages of the West. Trace the path of an Indian incursion any where over the great valley of the West, and you will find it red with Kentucky blood. Wander over any of the battle-fields of that great theatre of savage war, and you will find it white with the bones of her children. In childhood they fought the Indians, with their sisters and mothers, in their dwellings. In youth and ripe manhood they fought them in ambuscades and open battle-fields. Such were the men of Kentucky in 1811, when the battle of Tippecanoe was fought. There, too, as we know, they were still found foremost where life was to be lost or glory won; and *there* they were commanded by General Harrison. Now, sir, if in that battle General Harrison had not conducted as became a soldier and a general, would not such men have seen and known it? Did Kentucky in 1811, mourning as she then did the loss of one of her greatest and most valued citizens, condemn (as the gentleman from Michigan has attempted to) the conduct of the general who commanded in that battle? Let us see how they testified.

In January, 1812, two months after the battle of Tippecanoe, the Legislature of Kentucky was in session. On the 7th of January, 1812, the following resolution passed that body:

"*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Kentucky*, That, in the late campaign against the Indians upon the Wabash, Gov. William Henry Harrison has behaved like a hero, a patriot, and a general; and that for his cool, deliberate, skilful, and gallant conduct in the battle of Tippecanoe, he well deserves the warmest thanks of his country and his nation."

Mr. Speaker, the resolution I have just read was presented by JOHN J. CRITTENDEN, now a Senator from the State of Kentucky, whom to name is to call to the minds of all who know him, a man whose urbanity and varied accomplishments present a model of an American gentleman, whose wisdom, eloquence, and integrity have won for him the first rank amongst American statesman. Such a man, with both branches of the Kentucky Legislature, have testified, two months only after the event took place, that in the campaign and battle of Tippecanoe, General Harrison combined the skill and conduct of an able commander, with the valor of a soldier and the patriotism of an American. Who rises up twenty-eight years afterwards to contradict this? The young gentleman from Michigan! He who, at the time referred to, was probably conning Webster's spelling book in some village school in Connecticut. But, Mr. Speaker, I must call another witness upon the point in issue here. On the 12th of November, 1811, the Territorial Legislature of Indiana was in session. This is just five days after the battle. That Legislature, through the Speaker of its House of Representatives, General William Johnson, addressed General Harrison in the following terms:

"Sir: The House of Representatives of the Indiana Territory, in their own name, and in behalf of their constituents, most cordially reciprocate the congratulations of your Excellency on the glorious result of the late sanguinary conflict with the Shawnee Prophet, and the tribes of Indians confederated with him. When we see displayed in behalf of our country not only the consummate abilities of the general, but the heroism of the man; and when we take into view the benefits which must result to that country from those exertions, we cannot, for a moment, withhold our meed of applause."

Here, sir, we have two Legislatures of the States whose citizens composed the militia force at Tippecanoe, grieved and smarting under the loss of their fellow citizens uniting in solemn council in bearing their testimony to the skill and bravery displayed by General Harrison in that battle, which the gentleman from Michigan, with a self-complacency that might well pass for insanity, now says *he* has discovered was marked by palpable incapacity in the commanding General. But, Mr. Speaker, I must call yet another, nay, several other witnesses, to confront the opinion of the Michigan general.

In August, 1812, about nine months after the battle of Tippecanoe, news of fearful import concerning the conduct of General Hull reached Ohio and Kentucky. Our army had fallen back on Detroit, and rumors of the surrender of that place to the British, which did actually take place, were floating on every breeze. Three regiments of militia were immediately raised in Kentucky. Before these troops had taken the field, it was well known that our army under Hull, with the whole Territory of Michigan, had been surrendered to the combined British and Indian forces, commanded by Brock and Tecumseh. Our whole frontier in the Northwest lay bare and defenceless to the invasion, not only of the British army, but the more terrible incursion of a savage foe, hungry for plunder and thirsting for blood, led on by the most bold and accomplished warrior that the tribes of the red man had ever produced. In this

state of peril, the gallant army of Kentucky looked round for a leader equal to the imminent and momentous crisis. There was Scott, the then Governor of Kentucky, who had fought through the Revolutionary war, and, under the eye of Washington, had risen to the rank of brigadier in the regular service. There, too, was the veteran Shelby, one of the heroes of King's Mountain, a name that shall wake up the tones of enthusiasm in every American heart, while heroic courage is esteemed, or lofty integrity remains a virtue. There, too, was Clay, whose trumpet-tongue in this Hall was worth a thousand cannon in the field. These were convened in council. This, let us not forget, was about nine months after the battle of Tippecanoe. Whom, sir, I ask, did these men select to lead their own friends and fellow-citizens on to this glorious enterprise? Their laws required that their militia should be commanded by one of their own citizens; yet, passing by Scott and Shelby, and thousands of their own brave sons, this council called General Harrison, then Governor of Indiana—he who had commanded Kentuckians but nine months before at Tippecanoe—he who, according to the gentleman from Michigan, had shown no trait but imbecility as an officer—he, against the laws of Kentucky, was by such a council asked to resign his station as Governor of Indiana, and take the rank and commission of Major General in the Kentucky militia, and lead on her armies in that fearful hour, to redeem our national disgrace, and snatch from British dominion and savage butchery the very country now represented by the gentleman from Michigan. I have yet one other witness to call against the gentleman from Michigan. Sir, if the last rest of the illustrious dead is disturbed in this unnatural war upon a living soldier's honor and a living patriot's fame, the fault is not mine. It will appear presently that the gentleman from Michigan has—unwittingly, it may be—dishonored and insulted the dead, and charged the pure and venerated Madison with hypocrisy and falsehood. If General Harrison had been the weak, wicked, or imbecile thing the gentleman from Michigan would now pretend, was not this known to Mr. Madison, then President of the United States, who gave the orders under which General Harrison acted, and to whom the latter was responsible for his conduct? Surely no one can suppose that there were wanting those who, if they could have done so with truth, would have made known any conduct of General Harrison at the time referred to which seemed in any degree worthy of reprehension. With all these means of information, what was the testimony of Mr. Madison respecting the battle of Tippecanoe? I will quote his own words from his message to Congress about a month after the event. The message is dated 18th December, 1811, and reads as follows:

"While it is deeply to be lamented that so many valuable lives have been lost in the action which took place on the 7th ultimo, Congress will see with satisfaction the dauntless spirit of fortitude victoriously displayed by every description of troops engaged, *as well as the collected firmness which distinguished their commander on an occasion requiring the utmost exertions of valor and discipline.*"

Mr. Speaker, I have no pleasure in thus recapitulating and piling proof upon proof to repel an insinuation, which I think is now apparent to all has been thrown out in the madness of party rage, without consideration, and founded only on a total perversion, or rather flat contradiction, of every historical record having relation to the subject.

Something was said by the gentleman from Michigan about the encampment at Tippecanoe. If I understood him rightly, he condemned it as injudicious, because it had a river on one side, and a morass on another. Now, Mr. Speaker, I shall give no opinion on the question thus stated; but it just now occurs to me that this very subject, which I think in the military vocabulary is called castrametation, admits of some serious inquiry bearing upon the criticism under consideration. In almost all scientific research, we find that what is now reduced to system, and arises to the dignity of science, was at first the product of some casualty, which, falling under the notice of some reflecting mind, gave rise to surprising results. The accidental falling of an apple developed the great law of gravitation. I am sure I have somewhere seen it stated that Pyrrhus, the celebrated King of Epirus, who is allowed by all authority to have been the first general of his time, first learned to fortify his camp by having a river in his rear and a morass on his flank; and this was first suggested to him by seeing a wild boar, when hunted to desperation, back himself against a tree or rock, that he might fight his pursuers without danger of being assailed in his rear. Now, sir, if I comprehend the gentleman from Michigan he has against him on this point not only the celebrated king of Epirus, but also the wild boar, who, it seems, was the tutor of Pyrrhus in the art of castrametation. Here, then, are two approved authorities, one of whom nature taught the art of war, as she kindly did us colonels, and the other that renowned hero of Epirus, who gave the Romans so much trouble in his time. These authorities are near two thousand years old, and, as far as I know, unquestioned, till the gentleman from Michigan attacked them yesterday. Here, again, I ask who shall decide? Pyrrhus and the boar on one side, and the gentleman from Michigan on the other. Sir, I decline jurisdiction of the question, and leave the two hundred and forty colonels of this House to settle the contest, "*non nostrum tantas componere lites.*"

Mr. Speaker, I feel it quite impossible to withdraw from this part of the debate without some comment on another assertion, or rather intimation, of the gentleman from Michigan, touching the conduct of General Harrison at the battle of the Thames. All who have made themselves acquainted with the history of that event, know that the order in which the American army was to attack the combined force of British and Indians at the Thames was changed at the very moment when the onset was about to be made. This order of the general drew forth from Commodore Perry and others, who were in the staff of the army, and on the ground at the time, the highest encomiums. The idea of this change in the plan of attack, it is now intimated, was not original with General Harrison, but was, as the gentleman seems to intimate, suggested to him by another, who, it is said, was on the ground at the time. Who *that other person* is, or was, the gentleman has not said, but seemed to intimate he was now in the other end of the Capitol; and thus we are led to suppose that the gentleman intends to say that Colonel Johnson, the Vice President, is the gentleman alluded to. Sir, I regret very much that the gentleman should treat historical facts in this way. If there be any foundation for giving Colonel Johnson the honor of having suggested to General Harrison a movement for which the latter has received great praise, why not speak out and say so? Why insinuate? Why hint or

suppose on a subject susceptible of easy and positive proof? Does not the gentleman know that he is thus trifling with the character of a soldier, playing with reputation dearer than property or life to its possessor? Sir, I wish to know if Colonel Johnson, the Vice President of the United States, has, by any word or act of his, given countenance to this insinuation? It would be well for all who speak at random on this subject to remember that there are living witnesses yet who can testify to the point in question. It may not be amiss to remind some that there is extant a journal of Colonel Wood, who afterwards fell on the Niagara frontier. For the benefit of such, I too, will state what can be proved in relation to the change made by General Harrison in the order of attack at the Thames.

The position of the British and Indians had been reported to General Harrison by volunteer officers—brave men, it is, true, but who, like many of us, were officers who had not *seen* a great deal of hard fighting. On this report the order of attack first intended was founded, but, before the troops were ordered on to the attack, Colonel Wood was sent to examine and report the extent of front occupied by the British troops. Colonel Wood's military eye detected at once what had escaped the unpractised observation of the others—that is, that the British regulars were drawn up in open order; and it was on his report that, at the moment, the change was made by General Harrison in the order of the attack—a movement which, in the estimation of such men as Wood, and Perry, and Shelby, was enough of itself to entitle General Harrison to the highest rank among the military men of the age.

Mr. Speaker, when I review the historical testimony touching this portion of General Harrison's history, I confess my amazement at the Quixotic, (I pray my friend from Michigan to pardon me,) but I must call it the Quixotic exhibition which he has made of himself. Sir, the gentleman had no need to tell us he was a general of militia. His conduct in this discussion is proof of that—strong even as his own word for the fact. He has shown all that reckless bravery which has always characterized our noble militia, but he has also, in this attack, shown that other quality of militia troops which so frequently impels them to rush *blindly* forward, and often to their own destruction. I should like to hear many of the brave men around me speak of General Harrison. Some there are now under my eye who carry British bullets in their bodies, received while fighting under the command of General Harrison. I should be glad to hear my whole-souled and generous-hearted friend from Kentucky, (Major Butler,) who agrees with the gentleman from Michigan in general politics, who has not merely *heard* of battle, but who has mingled in war in all its forms, and fought his way from the ranks up to the head of a battalion—I say I should be glad to hear his opinions of the matters asserted, hinted at, and insinuated by the gentleman from Michigan.

Why, I ask, is this attempt to falsify the common history of our country made *now*, and why is it made *here*? Is it vainly imagined that Congressional speeches are to contradict accredited long-known historical facts? Does the fierce madness of party indulge a conception so wild?

Sir, I repeat, that I feel only amazement at such an attempt. I could not sit still and witness it in silence. Much as I desired to speak to the

House and the country on the question touching the Cumberland road, I should have left it to others, had I not been impelled to get the floor to bear my testimony against the gross injustice which I thought was about to be done to a citizen—an honored, cherished citizen of my own State. This House, Mr. Speaker, knows that I am not given to much babbling here. Yes, sir, you all know that, like Balaam's ass, I never speak here till I am kicked into it. I may claim credit, therefore, for sincerity, when I declare that a strong sense of justice alone could have called me into this debate. Let me now remind gentlemen who may be tempted into a similar course with my friend from Michigan, that all such efforts must recoil with destructive effect upon those who make them. Sir, it has been the fortune of General Harrison to be identified with the civil and military history of this country for nearly half a century. What is to be gained, even to party, by perverting that history? Nothing. You may blot out a page of his biography here, and tear out a chapter of history there; nay, you may, in the blindness of party rage, rival the Vandal and the Turk, and burn up all your books, and what then have you effected? Nothing but an insane exhibition of impotent party violence. Gen. Harrison's history would still remain in the memory of his and your *co*temporaries; and coming events, not long to be delayed, will show to the world that his history, in both legislation and war, dwells not merely in the memories of his countrymen, but is enshrined in their gratitude and engraven upon their hearts.

Mr. Speaker, I come now to the discussion of what is really the question before the House, and, with the hope that I may be entitled to the floor on Monday, I will, if it be the pleasure of the House, give way for a motion to adjourn. If I can obtain the floor on Monday, I promise the House that nothing shall tempt me to wander from the question touching the appropriation for the Cumberland road, a work which, if it be not crushed by the wretched policy of this Administration, will reflect as much glory upon your civil history as the deeds of the great and patriotic citizen, whose conduct I have been compelled to notice, ever did upon your military annals.

On motion, the House then adjourned.

APPENDIX.

TESTIMONIALS OF THE MILITARY CHARACTER OF GENERAL HARRISON.

Colonel Johnson said, (in Congress)—

"Who is General Harrison? The son of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, who spent the greater part of his large fortune in redeeming the pledge he then gave, of his 'fortune, life, and sacred honor,' to secure the liberties of his country.

"Of the career of General Harrison I need not speak—the history of the West is his history. For forty years he has been identified with its interests, its perils, and its hopes. Universally beloved in the walks of peace, and distinguished by his ability in the councils of his country, he has been yet more illustriously distinguished in the field.

"During the late war he was longer in active service than any other general officer; he was, perhaps, oftener in action than any one of them, and never sustained a defeat."

Mr. Madison, in his message of December, 1813, says:

"The success on Lake Erie having opened a passage to the territory of the enemy, the officer commanding the Northwestern arms transferred the war thither, and, rapidly pursuing the hostile

troops, fleeing with their savage associates, forced a general action, which quickl the capture of the British, and dispersion of the savage force.

"*This result is signally honorable to Major General* HARRISON, *by whose* it was prepared."

The following tribute of praise was paid to General Harrison, eleven of the officers who fought under his banner at the battle of Tippecanoe

"Should our country again require our services to oppose a civilized or a savage foe, should march under General Harrison with the most perfect confidence of victory and fame.

"JOEL COOK,	JOSIAH SNELLING,
"R. B. BURTON,	O. G. BURTON,
"NATHAN. ADAMS,	C. FULLER,
"A. HAWKINS,	G. GOODING,
"H. BURCHSTEAD,	J. D. FOSTER."
"HOSEA BLOOD,	

Resolution directing medals to be struck, and, together with the thanks of Congress, presente to Major General Harrison, and Governor Shelby, and for other purposes.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America i Congress assembled, That the thanks of Congress be, and they are hereby, presented to Maj General William Henry Harrison, and Isaac Shelby, late Governor of Kentucky, and, throug them, to the officers and men under their command, for their gallantry and good conduct in d feating the combined British and Indian forces under Major General Proctor, on the Thames, i Upper Canada, on the fifth day of October, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, capturin the British army, with their baggage, camp equipage, and artillery; and that the President the United States be requested to cause two gold medals to be struck, emblematical of this tr umph, and presented to General Harrison, and Isaac Shelby, late Governor of Kentucky.

H. CLAY, *Speaker of the House of Representatives.*
JOHN GAILLARD, *President of the Senate pro tem.*

April 4, 1818.—Approved: JAMES MONROE.

Governor Shelby to Mr. Madison, May 18, 1814, says:

"I feel no hesitation to declare to you that *I believe General Harrison to be one of the fir military characters I ever knew.*"

Colonel Richard M. Johnson to General Harrison, July 4, 1813, says:

"*We did not want to serve under cowards or traitors, but under one* [HARRISON] *who ha prov d himself to be wise, prudent, and brave.*"

Commodore Perry to General Harrison, August 18, 1817, says:

"The prompt change made by you in the order of battle on discovering the position of th enemy, I always appeared to me to have evinced a HIGH DEGREE OF MILITARY TALENT. concur with the venerable Shelby in his general approbation of your conduct in that campaign.

The opinions of the honorable LANGDON CHEVES, of the *importance* of the vic tory of the *Thames*, and the bravery of General WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

"*The victory of Harrison was such as would have secured to a Roman general, in the be days of the republic, the honors of a triumph! He put an end to the war in the uppermo Canada.*"

Sentiments of the hero of Fort Stephenson, Colonel Croghan, now of the Wa Department.

"I desire no plaudits which are bestowed upon me at the expense of General Harrison.

"I have felt the warmest attachment for him as a man, and my confidence in him as an ab commander remains unshaken. I feel every assurance that he will at all times do me amp justice; and nothing could give me more pain than to see his enemies seize upon this occasion deal out their unfriendly feelings and acrimonious dislike; and as long as he continues (as in m humble opinion he has hitherto done) to make the wisest arrangements and the most judicio disposition which the forces under his command will justify, I shall not hesitate to unite with t army in bestowing upon him *that confidence which he so richly merits*, and which has on occasion been withheld."

The Richmond Enquirer said:

"General Harrison's letter tells us every thing that we wish to know about the officers, exc himself. He does justice to every one but *Harrison*—and the world must therefore do justice the man who was too modest to be just to himself."