CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

APRIL 19.

Mr. VARNUM, Mr. Speaker, it will be recollected by the House, that early in the session, that part of the message to the President of the 4th of the 3rd of December last, which related to the revolutionary pensioners of the militia, and to the consequence of our last forces, was referred to the consideration of a select committee. Several other subjects relative to the general strength of the militia, have subsequently to that time, been referred to a committee. They have, however, their consideration of these several subjects referred to them, and have reported to the House, the result of their deliberations on each of them. The subjects of the report on the subject of our last forces to this time, has necessarily been recent and fresh in the memory of the members. That subject was submitted to the committee in the message of the 4th of December last—"Where, it will be necessary to augment our land forces, it will be proper to do it in such a manner as to give the course of our session." If we are to be guided by the calamitous events of this time, with a view that it might be made consistent with the existing state of our country, at the close of the session, in conformity with the principles which the committee have submitted,

But, sir, at a time when the great powers of Europe are engaged in war, devastation and bloodshed, & at a period when there are such cases of difference existing between the U. S. & several of the belligerent powers, it may not be inappropriate to state the feeling, the calmness of the physical strength of the country, which may be drawn into operation, in case of an invasion or an foreign attack, which view of the subject has induced the committee to make the present report to the House, sir, in order to exhibit in its true point of light, the present strength of the U. S. it may not be inappropriate to take a short view of the situation of the U. S. at the commencement of the revolutionary war with G. Britain, and the important crisis arising, which, at that time, made against the strong arm of G. Britain. I will then, sir, to you, in a concise manner, the present period means of defence within the power of the U. S. I will then, sir, exhibit the view the contrast, between our situation for defence at that time, and at the present time.

At the commencement of that war, the population of the U. S. was subjects of G. Britain, they were in a state of unorganization. Congress, at that time, was