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Lord Grey to Sir H. Taylor

36037 - 8

Downing Street July 21/32.

Private

Dear Sir Herbert

I have received your letter of yesterday, in which I beg you will accept my best thanks.

Nobody can be more ready than I am to do ample justice to the Duke of York's administration of the Army. It certainly was distinguished in all cases by a spirit of impartiality & attention to the Claims of the Service. But it was not always that he could succeed in carrying his good intentions into effect; & I could cite several instances, though fewer under him than any former Commander

Ever
Sir Herbert Taylor G.C.H.

commander in Chief, in which, both in giving & withholding appointments, political & personal motives, certainly against his will, appear to interfere. I must do the same justice to the Duke of Wellington. I will remember the case of Sir George Anson, & it certainly did the Duke the highest credit.

There certainly is a very strong feeling that the Home Guards is not favourable to the Government. I do not say that this is felt with regard to Lord Hill himself, but on account of the people about him, whose influence is thought to be greater than, perhaps, it is. This creates a good deal of jealousy, but at least I wish to ground upon this is a claim, that where there are fair merits of service a proper degree of favour should be shown to the friends of the Government. In what I said of Lord Dalhousie I did not mean to

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Lord Grey to Sir H. Taylor

intimate any ~~other~~ intention of opposing Lord Hill's recommendation, if he should be the object of it; though I should have been glad if it could have fallen, with equal claims of service, on a less obnoxious person. But there is a claim, but in for this government which, I think, must be considered before it is given away. Lord Melbourne has received a letter from the Earl of Mar stating that, prior to the attainder of his ancestor, this government was always held by the head of that family, in virtue of an hereditary right. All his rights, privileges & freeminiers having been restored by the reversal of the attainder, he now claims this government on the ground which I have mentioned. He is a strange man & was, I believe, lately in Britain for shooting at a clergyman, & there probably is nothing in this but, as it is a claim of right, it seems

seems to require some investigation.

I have not had time to examine the statement respecting the Sinking Fund, but it seems to me to be what is vulgarly called a Bares hoot. The Impeaching of a Sinking Fund, when Mr. Pitt's plan, was, I think, proved to demonstration by Dr. Hamilton.

You will have seen that we had a very near division in the House of Lords last night, which was brought on by nobody's stepping out of the D. of Cleveland's above opinion has become more violent & warlenty than ever. There really was not the least ground for the postponement which H. M. & Ministry. It could only be for the sake of delay; whether for the purpose of vexation only, or of merely wearing out the Bill I know not, but it obliges me to be at the attendance of all the Peers who can be brought up, at the expense, I fear, & great inconvenience to many of them.

J.P.

If there are any at Windsor, who authorised, pray desire them to attend on Monday or the 2d. reading, & more particularly for the committee, which is intended to be on Monday, when Proxies cannot be given.

I have had a long conversation with Sir Robert Peel, who is come to town, on account of an illness, who is dying. His account of the state of Ireland, & of the power now possessed by the government to control the turbulent, is, when he which very satisfactory. But he represents the subject of Party & Religious animosity, excited by the Orangemen on the one hand & the O'Connellites, on the other, as the great bane of that country, which is, even in spite of this malignant spirit, proceeding to the

greatest

greatest degree. He states the arrangement to be undisguisedly actuated by a desire to provoke a collision, from which they hope to re-establish their complete ascendency.

I am with great regard
Dear Sir Herbert
Yours most faithfully
Grey.

Sir H. Taylor

Earl Grey to ~~Lord Hill~~

July 21. 1832.

Respecting Appointments in the Army.

I had expressed my disapprobation at the time, from those who made it —

I have left the question respecting the disposal of the Government of Londonderry open for some time, but it should be settled. In recommending Sir John Byng, whose claims of service cannot be disputed, I feel only claimed a right which the former Ministers have exercised, & that I proposed was supported by the practice. In the list of Governments I do not find one, of any value, which is not held by a General Officer, nay, at the same time, a Regiment. Many of them by men of great talent, & some by Officers with claims of service very inferior to those of Sir John Byng. I do not claim

for

to the administration, any influence in the distribution of the patronage of the Army, which would be derogatory from the situation of the Commander in Chief, or inconsistent with the good of the Service. That nobody can know better than you that even in the time of the Duke of York, the Minister was allowed a voice in a case such as that now before us, & it is some time since I was desired to represent to his Majesty, that to this extent (& I believe I am secure against the imputation of arbitrarily putting a subject to a hard claim) it is absolutely necessary that the Government should not appear to be excluded from an influence, without which its strength would be impaired. What is passing every day shows

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that we require all the assistance which Foreign Governments have received.

I am not disposed to contend that, as a rule, of not giving Governments to Officers already Regiments, might not be a good one. But such a rule has not been acted upon, when it is seen that Lord Hereford, Lord Combermere, the Duke of Wellington, Sir William Nicholl, the Duke of Gordon, & Lord Hill have all, all held Governments, some of them with the best Regiments in the Service, & with large Favorite Corps, the objection made to Sir John Byng, would inevitably be considered as proceeding from a disposition to wish. Lord

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from the present Ministers, that has been, I believe almost invariably, granted to their predecessors, that a new rule is now, for the first time to be acted upon, which produces this effect - I say for the first time, as I cannot consider the case of General Hawker - or general Hay, to stand at all upon the same ground, as that of Sir John Byng.

It is for them to be considered, if this new rule is now to be promulgated, whether it will not bring up the other governments, to which I have alluded, under the disappointment, with a view to their abolition or reduction, which has been proposed, or at all events to their separation from the command of Regiments.

Having stated this there is no

one

one to whose decision I would most willingly
leave the matter himself. I have had no
object but to do justice to a deserving officer,
who has strong claims upon me personally,
who had been promised a government by the
Duke of York, & who has attached to nothing
which others, with no better pretensions,
have not obtained. But if it is thought
that such a rule ought now to be adopted
for the good of the service, with an assurance
that it is to be invariably & compulsorily
acted upon, I do not wish to make any
bother of the matter — all I have to
desire in that case, will be, that the two Govern-
ments (Londonderry & Shibden Castle) which
will then be vacant, may not be disposed
of without my being consulted: as was done
(to Lord Goderich & myself) by the

Duke

Duke of Wellington, when he (Lord G.) was at the head of the Treasury —

This letter has run into greater length than I intended, & I ought to apologise for it. But I do not require a detailed answer, & shall be perfectly satisfied with whatever his Majesty may decide, being confident that he never can be unmindful of what is due to the character & just & useful influence of those whom he has honoured with his confidence —

I hope the Queen has not suffered in her health from the fatigue & vexation which she has lately undergone —

I am, dear Sir Herbert,
yours most faithfully
Grey.