

Duke of Wellington to Sir H. Taylor

36067-8 London April 3 1833

My dear General

You will see with what a narrow Majority the Mutiny Bill escaped last night from being Carried.

I know the Army well; its' Virtues and its' faults; The Services which it renders to the State in the Country state of its Discipline; and the mischief and ruin which must follow the deterioration of its' Quality. I have no interest in the Question which is not that of every good Subject in the Kingdom. I don't suppose it will ever happen to me again to exercise personally any Command over General Sir Herbert Taylor RMB
Rover.

Ms. A. 9. 2. 11. 11

But I cannot in tranquillity see and
^{in prospect}
them, as must be the consequence of
the proposed Alteration of the Meeting
Hall without consulting persons who have
knowledge and who possess Power and
Influence to make an Effect in the
proper Quarter to prevent this mischief.

This subject has long been under
discussion. And Mr. Pitt last year called upon
me to give him my opinion upon it
which I did in a Memorandum which
I sent him in March 1832 from Rushford
Sage. He laid a copy of this paper before
Mr. John Lubbock; who I understood was
quite

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Satisfied with it.

I intend you to read the Paper.
 It shows first the difference between the
 original Constitution of the British Army
 and that of these Armies in which several
 punishments has been discontinued, whose
 example is the Principal Argument of
 those who urge this Alteration.

It shows secondly what the description of
 the Man is of whom the Army is formed;
 the necessity which exists on account of the
 Nature and the Severity of the Duty in which
 he must be employed to render him the
 best Soldier that can be formed to Court;
 and above all to prevent those Irregularities
 and Excesses but too common in all Armies

but I wish the British Army would be
peculiarly disposed in favour of the
Description of Man entitled to serve,
and that in such instances he will be found
to have enlisted properly for the
satisfaction of these very views and purposes,
the same which he must by Discipline
be bound.

Thirdly This paper shews that there is
no other punishment by which and where
can be kept in order by the Corporal
Punishment. It shews the Effect of the
Power of inflicting Corporal Punishment, in
enabling our Officers to maintain
Discipline by the use of regulation and
minor Punishments. In fact if this Power is

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taken away no other punishment can be
 inflicted, no regulation enforced.
 Soldiers particularly those in the British
 Army always desire the discharge
 from the Service. This desire proceeds not
 from their being insensible of the benefits
 of the situation in which they are placed.
 But they do not like the severity of their duty;
 the restraints the regularity and order
 in which it is necessary to keep them, in
 order that they may be capable of performing
 the duty required from them, and may not
 be a nuisance instead of a benefit to the

Public.
 Let any Man consider for a Moment
 what would be the case in his own Family

if he could not dismiss his Servants.
He has no other Power over them to
keep them in order.

This is the State in which every Comd^r
Officer of a Battalion will be placed
after he will be deprived of the Power
of inflicting Corporal Punishments.
He cannot give every Soldier his Discharge
who is guilty of a breach of Discipline.

If he could ^{the being of} that Power would be a
premium instead of a punishment; and
would be to be considered and acted upon;
and yet if the punishments in the power
of a Comd^r Officer as stated in my Paper
are considered it will be seen that in fact

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none of them can be carried into execution unless some higher and effectual sanction is within the power of the Community Officer if the more moderate one should be resisted.

I believe that a great deal of mischief has been done & Discipline already by the Officers on this subject and the Army what some unofficers of Regts have thought it proper in consequence to take. If inquiry is made I believe that it will be found that in case of the Battalions of Guards in this Army, there are now twice the number of Men "biked up" the Battalions being about 600 strong that used to be punished when

The Battalions were 1200 strong.
I must say that all the attempts to
discover a punishment substitute
for Corporal Punishment have hitherto
failed. Consider what passed lately
at Boston! Here are the Men
of ungentle the Soldiers of hard Labour
the Teachers of Discipline, in company with
the Thieves and Pickpockets of the Liberties
of the Metropolis. But the Soldiers muti-
nied; and it was necessary to fire them
down and to send them whole in
the head Mill! Did any Man ever
hear of a Mutiny on account of Corporal
Punishment.

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But in other Goals of the Kingdom, there
 are no Means, ^{of} enforcing a Sentence of
 hard Labour; and I understand the
 Soldiers are pressed for breaches of Discipline
 are either employed at their Trades; or
 being generally very hardy trustworthy
 fellows become the Servants of the Soldiers
 or the Turnkeys of the Prison! This is the
 Punishment by means of which the Officers
 of the British Army are exhorted to
 maintain its Discipline its efficiency;
 and indeed I must add its Honour ^{prop.}
 for I tell you fairly that as a friend to the
 King and his Authority and safety

I infinitely prefer for him to have no
Army at all & having one which shall
not be in a state of Discipline and
order & be rather upon.

It was the intention and I will
not enter into a Description of the Services
which the Army has been called upon
to perform in the last two years even in
Great Britain; but I must say that I
see no reason to believe that it will not
be called upon again to perform similar
Services.

I cannot however avoid to call your
attention particularly to the Army in
Ireland.

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It is very easy to ascertain the number
of our Bishops generally Roman Catholics
serving in each of the Kingdoms in Ireland.
Considering the state of Party always
existing in Ireland, and the influence
and Power exercised by the Bishops
and Priest over every description of the
Lower orders of the Irish people, it has
long been matter of astonishment to
Persons who do not know what the
Discipline of the Army is that we have
continued to exhibit but too plain
in the Kingdoms in Ireland, notwithstanding
the system of influence and intrigue
constantly

came on to debase them from their
Duty.

Such Practices will not in fact
have any Effect upon the Mass of
the Men. Our discipline is too strong
for them. Here and there an Individual
maybe prone to neglect his Duty;
to let his hours or punctuations or to
desert from the Service instigated by those
who become an influence over his Mind
and conduct. But the Mass of Soldiers
cannot be affected. The influence of the
Officers and of Discipline; and of Punish-
ment is too strong for the rebellious influence

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of the Senoyogue and the Priest. But
 deprive the said Officer of the Rest
 of the Power of inflicting Corporal
 Punishment, and not only will all Power
 and Reference ^{of the said Officer} cease in a Rest in Debent
 as it will in a Rest in Regent
 or any where else, but it will in fact be
 in the hands of the Senoyogue and the
 Priest.

There will be the Power upon whose good
 pleasure will depend whether the said
 Officer of the Rest shall or shall not exercise
 Authority, until it will come to their
 Turn and it will be their Duty to

administer the Regular Gov^t of the
Country. They will then find that an
Army which there is not the power of
keeping in order and of governing,
can be used only as the instrument of
subversion and mischief, even by those
who will have corrupted its fidelity
and will have thus employed its power.

Let any Man reflect for a Moment
what will be the consequence in Ireland,
if the principles ^{and fidelity} of only a small portion
of the ^{Army} are shaken by these Measures. Yet
I declare my firm conviction that neither
can be maintained if any Officers of

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Key^s are deprived of the power of
inflicting Corporal Punishment.

I am going out of town and have
written you in a great hurry. Liberal
ammunition mean!

I don't think I will
rely upon any good result. I refer you
to a Paper in which I think that I
have stated the case fairly; and I
wrote you to use your influence to
prevent these Misfortunes from
happening to the Army through the
degradation of our Letters to Generals
Professors. Believe me ever yours
most sincerely Wellington

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Duke of Wellington

April 3. 1833

Received of J. James's Place

at 5. h. m. same day

On Military Expenses
and Emoluments

Proby

