

H. Taylor to Col. McKeane

40835-6

15<sup>th</sup> November 1806.

Dear Sir,

I wrote you a few days ago with a Statement for the information of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, and trusting H.R.H.'s gracious interference: I enclosed it in a packet, addressed to Mr. Freeling of the Post Office.

In addition to what I then stated, it is extremely essential to observe;

That the real situation of the Opera concern is this; That by the Deeds which re-established the Opera in the Haymarket (in an essential degree under the auspices of H.R.H.) whereby a Trust was created, for the security of Proprietors & other persons interested against the expense of an improvident management, and to guard the Subscribers from an unnecessary call of further subscription arising from the same cause; whereby the annual Expenditure (which for the 4 years preceding the fire had not passed £18000, including every charge whatever) was restricted to a limit not exceeding £24000, whilst the Income has reached £30000: The Surplus liable to no more than £1950, & of that sum £1500 is for a short term of years; with an increasing Resource, arising from the re-letting of the boxes of the old Subscribers as they become vacant, and for which about 100<sup>g</sup>. each could be obtained, constituting at last a Fund of about £7000 a year. The Deeds themselves may be seen incontrovertibly to establish this Statement.

But

But Mr. Gould I know will say, that £24000 was insuffi-  
cient, and that he was obliged to expend more, and in  
his justification he must say; My answer however is, not  
only that the Deed, are possible on this point, and admit of  
no discretion beyond it, but that from my own experience  
I know that that Fund is amply adequate; if it is asked who  
obliged Mr. Gould ~~to engage~~ to engage two Singers at  
such an enormous expence for a single duty, I can answer  
certainly not Myself, whose consent was necessary to constitute  
legally any Engagement, for on the very contrary I protested  
against it as a ruinous proceeding; not the Subscribers, for  
they were not consulted; but I am confident, had it been  
fairly put to them, whether they would have thow Two great  
Singers at such an Expence, as was to lead to a call upon  
their pockets of 10 Gt. a piece more of Subscription, or be  
content with such other Singers as the old rate of subscrip-  
tion could support, the Subscribers in general would have  
dispensed with the Amusement, at the expence of such a  
consequence, resulting from the performance of Mr. Bellington  
and Madame Grassini. — Besides, I have frequently offered  
to Mr. Gould, if he would withdraw, to undertake the business  
and make arrangements to carry it within the £24000;  
but, no; Mr. Gould's ambition is to be Manager of the Opera  
of the business of which he himself has shewn enough to  
prove that he knows nothing, — and his vanity is to be  
thought Manager without controul or interference, and to  
this folly may be attributed all the bad consequences which  
have resulted. He chose to engage the Performers without

my

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my consent, tho' contrary to a solemn agreement, for fear  
of lowering his conscience with them, by my being a party.  
He preferred to let the vacant boxes stand off a piece  
than could have been obtained for them, rather than that the  
Nobility should know that my sanction was necessary, in both  
instances sacrificing the real interests of the Establishment, &  
and that too in so essential a degree as obviously to lead  
to what has now actually happened, not only an exposure,  
but the absolute necessity of an Investigation of his powers  
and his exercise of them.

I have sent my Counter Statement to Mr. Ogilvie  
in order to lay it before the Committee who have signed the  
Report, & who on seeing the Error they have been too  
no doubt will feel it incumbent to withdraw  
their sanction from such an attempt, as you draw  
calculated to bring Mr. Good to his senses.

At the same time I hope His Royal Highness The  
Duke of Water will have the good will to enforce the necessity  
of Investigation for the satisfaction as well as the Interest  
of all Parties, and that His R. H. can the more insist upon  
by having himself been a Party to the Arrangement of the Estab-  
lishment, under which all parties are secured, by the Terms  
and Provisions of which all parties are likewise bound. If  
Mr. Good is justified in what he has done, he has nothing to fear  
from such an Enquiry; and if he is wrong, it is surely the  
better for himself the sooner he is put right in a business of  
so much consequence.

I remain, Dear Sir,  
faithfully yr<sup>s</sup>

H. Taylor.

Col. McKeane

Col. M. C. Mahon  
Charles Hub, St. James's Square  
or Carlton House  
London

London  
1814

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