

(No. 22.)



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T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

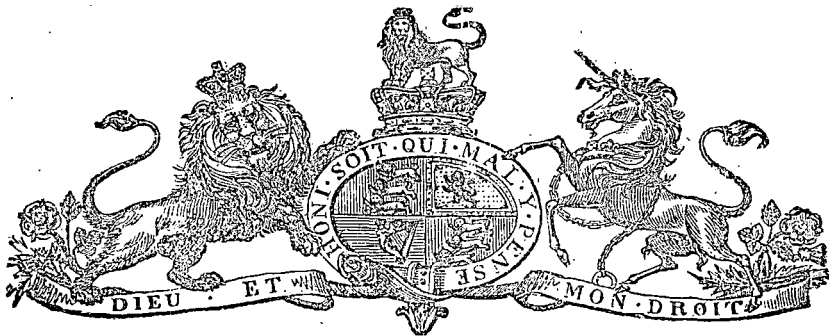
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**ARTILLERY FORCE IN TASMANIA.**

DESPATCH FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE, WITH  
COLONIAL SECRETARY'S MEMO.

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Laid upon the Table by Mr. Whyte; and ordered by the Council to be printed,  
July 31, 1866.



TASMANIA.  
No. 17.

*Downing-street, 26th February, 1866.*

SIR,

ADVERTING to my Despatch, No. 28, of the 20th of May last, I have the honor to inform you that I have been in further communication with the Secretary of State for War respecting the wish expressed by your Government, in common with other Australian Governments, to be allowed a quota of Garrison Artillery instead of the Detachment of Troops of the Line (Three Companies) which you were informed by my predecessor's Despatch of 26th June, 1863, that it was proposed to allot for service in Tasmania.

I now enclose, for your information, a copy of a letter which has been received from the War Office; conveying the decision which Earl de Grey has arrived at on this important question, and the reasons which prevent a compliance with this request.

You will perceive, however, that Lord de Grey would be willing to take measures for supplying competent Instructors for training a local Artillery Force; and I would strongly urge upon your Government the importance of organising such a Force for the protection of the Harbours of the Colony.

My Despatch of the 14th of December last will have apprized you that directions have been given for the return of the Troops which had been sent from Tasmania to New Zealand; and I trust that nothing will occur to prevent a prompt compliance with these instructions, in conformity with my predecessor's Despatch of the 26th June, 1863, above referred to:

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

EDWARD CARDWELL.

Governor GORE BROWNE, C.B.

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*Sir EDWARD LUGARD to Sir FREDERIC ROGERS.*

(Copy.)

*War Office, 24th January, 1866.*

SIR,

WITH reference to your letters of the 30th September and 18th November last, I am desired to inform you that Lord de Grey has very fully considered the question of the description of Force to be provided for the Australian Colonies.

It appears, from the correspondence which has at various times been forwarded from the Colonial Office to this Department, that an opinion is prevalent in most of those Colonies that the best Garrison for them, so far as Regular Troops are concerned, would be composed exclusively of Garrison Artillery, who would work the Guns of permanent Batteries which it is in contemplation to establish, and who would look for such Infantry support as they might require to such local Forces of Militia or Volunteers as may be from time to time in existence in the Colonies.

Lord de Grey, after giving this subject his most attentive consideration, and consulting upon it the Military Authorities at the Horse Guards, and other Military Officers of ability and experience,

is unable to concur with the local Authorities of the Australian Colonies in thinking that a small Garrison of Regular Troops, composed exclusively of Garrison Artillery, would be the best or safest Force which could be supplied by this Country for the defence of those Dependencies; and it appears to him, therefore, to be his duty to state his views upon this subject, clearly and fully, for the information of Mr. Cardwell, and to request that they may be communicated to the Governors of the several Colonies concerned for the consideration of the Colonial Administrations.

I am therefore desired to make known to you in detail the grounds upon which Lord de Grey has arrived at the conclusion above stated.

The Garrison Artillery, to which it appears to be desired to confine the Regular Force to be employed in Australia, although among the finest Troops in Her Majesty's Service, are not intended to be employed upon the many varied duties for which Infantry are available, and are not armed in such a manner as to enable them properly to discharge such duties.

Their special object, for which they receive a lengthened training, is to work heavy Guns in fixed Batteries; and the small arms with which they are supplied are only calculated to enable them to defend their guns against desultory attack, but would be altogether insufficient to meet a real attack by Infantry.

The Batteries to which Artillery in the Australian Colonies would generally be attached are for the most part intended for Coast defence, and would no doubt, if properly conducted and manned, be effectual against the attacks of Privateers or Single Vessels; but if an enemy were to throw upon the Coast a Force of Infantry, even of one or two Battalions, such Batteries would be turned, and could not be effectually defended by Artillery unsupported by an Infantry Force.

Lord de Grey is aware that the Militia and Volunteer Forces in many of the Colonies have attained a highly creditable degree of efficiency, and he has no doubt that in time of war they would, like the Militia and Volunteers of the Mother Country, be found valuable auxiliaries to the Regular Troops. But the duties which such Forces would be least suited to perform without the support of any Force of Regular Infantry would be those connected with active operations in the Field; and it appears to Lord de Grey, that if there were any real necessity for composing the Garrison of any distant Colony exclusively of one description of Regular Troops, it would be the best arrangement, and the one most conducive to Military efficiency, that the Regular Force should be composed of Infantry, and that the Garrison Artillery should be supplied by Militia or Volunteers.

If this system were adopted the Members of the local Force, being constantly trained to the use of the same Guns in the same Batteries, would soon, with the intelligence for which Volunteers are generally remarkable, acquire a thorough knowledge of their weapon and of the locality, which in time of danger they would be called upon to defend, while the Regular Troops, being of necessity more moveable and more accustomed to the changing circumstances of active warfare, would be prepared to meet and repulse any Infantry Force which the enemy might land, and to secure the Batteries manned by the local Forces from the danger of being taken in reverse.

If local corps of Artillery, Militia, or Volunteers should be raised in any Colony, Lord de Grey would be prepared to consider in what manner properly qualified Instructors could be furnished for them from the Regular Army, and it would be his wish to afford them as much assistance of that kind as the particular circumstances of each case would justify.

On these grounds it appears to Lord de Grey that a small Force, consisting exclusively of Garrison Artillery, is not a safe or desirable Garrison for a Colony either in time of peace or in time of war.

In his judgment such a Garrison is not well calculated satisfactorily to fulfil the objects which the Colonial Governments have in view; while he hesitates on behalf of the Imperial Government to consent to the establishment of small isolated Garrisons in distant parts of the world, composed of Royal Artillery alone, unsupported by any Force of Regular Infantry.

It would appear from your letter of the 30th September, 1865, as if Garrison Artillery were considered to be cheap and effectual, and a mixed force to be ineffectual and expensive. I have already explained the ground upon which Lord de Grey does not consider a Force of Artillery alone to be an effectual Garrison; while, with regard to the cost, I am to point out that, as the training of an Artilleryman is necessarily longer and more expensive, and his pay higher, than that of an Infantry Soldier, the sum required to cover the cost of the former description of Force is greater than that required for the latter.

But this is not the only consideration connected with expense. A limited amount of Infantry would, it is probable, always be supplied for the Australian Colonies without necessitating any increase for purposes of relief of the General Infantry Force of the Country. But the Garrison Artillery of the Army, in spite of the increase of strength which it has received of late years, is barely sufficient to enable the established proportion of 5 years at home to 10 years abroad to be maintained with its present distribution; and any increase of that Force, with a view to meet the wishes of particular Colonies, would consequently entail a further addition at home of one-third of the Force furnished to the Colonies for the purpose of keeping up a proper system of relief.

So that, if the whole cost to the Mother Country is to be defrayed by the Colony, it would be necessary to charge the Local Government with the expenses incurred on account of the relieving Force, as well as on account of that actually present in the Colony.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD LUGARD.

Sir FREDERIC ROGERS, *Bart.*

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#### MEMORANDUM.

IN returning to His Excellency the Governor Mr. Secretary Cardwell's Despatch, No. 17, of the 26th February, 1866, together with the enclosed letter from Sir E. Lugard, of the War Office, to Sir F. Rogers upon the subject of supplying Artillery in lieu of Infantry for the Defence of the Australian Colonies, the Colonial Secretary would beg most respectfully to record his dissent, and that of his colleagues, to the views expressed by the Authorities at the War Office so far as relates to Tasmania.

Sir E. Lugard observes, when speaking of the Artillery, that "their special object, for which they receive a lengthened training, is to work heavy guns in fixed batteries; and the small arms with which they are supplied are only calculated to enable them to defend their guns against desultory attack, but would be altogether insufficient to meet a real attack by Infantry."

This "special object" is precisely that for which your responsible Advisers so earnestly desire the presence of a Battery of Her Majesty's Royal Artillery; and it is because of the "lengthened training" necessary to render the service of "heavy Guns in fixed Batteries" efficient that they are impressed with the importance of obtaining the services of the Royal Artillery to work them.

Any attack upon this Colony must necessarily be by Ships of War, which, unless the Guns in the Batteries are efficiently worked, would be in a position to lay the Town under contribution or destroy it by bombardment. While therefore the first and most important, as well as the most difficult duty,—that requiring "lengthened training,"—is, by Sir E. Lugard's letter, to be entrusted to Volunteers, the secondary, and indeed only contingent, duty of repelling Infantry when landed he proposes to confide to Her Majesty's Regular Troops.

It is evident that if any Foreign Power were "to throw upon the Coast a Force of Infantry even of one or two Battalions," the number of Regular Troops detailed for service in Tasmania (namely, 260) could not hope effectually to repel the attack, even though assisted by such Rifle Volunteers as the Colony might hope to raise in addition to the Artillery Force necessary in the first instance to man the Batteries.

Should, however, one or two Cruisers attempt the bombardment or capture of Hobart Town, the fire of the heavy, rifled, and other guns now in position or ordered from England would render the result very doubtful, provided the Guns were served by competent and well-trained Artillerists; while, in the event of the Commanders of such Ships endeavouring to effect their object by landing a body of Sailors and Marines, the Rifle Volunteers would be admirably adapted to repel the attacking Force.

The 100 Artillerymen which this Government have applied for in lieu of the three Companies of Infantry would be aided in the Batteries by a body of Artillery Volunteers, of whom the Military Authorities have reported very favorably, and to whom, with the assistance of the enrolled Rifle Companies, the repulsion of any desultory attack by land might be entrusted.

With regard to the expense, the Colonial Secretary would observe that it would cost the Imperial Government considerably less to maintain 100 Artillerymen than 260 Infantry; and, as regards the provision for "reliefs," it would hardly be equitable to call upon the Colonies to contribute to the maintenance of "reliefs" who during their term of service "at home" would be available for garrison and other duties.

The Colonial Secretary, in thus addressing His Excellency, acknowledges the inutility of any further application to the Secretary of State, in the face of Sir E. Lugard's communication; but strongly impressed, as he and his colleagues are, with the conviction that the decision arrived at is based upon erroneous impressions as to the most important contingent of Her Majesty's Forces for the defence of this Colony, he feels it to be his duty to state that conviction in the clearest terms, so that, should any unfortunate contingencies arise, this Government may be absolved from the imputation of neglecting their duty and the safety of the Colony.

JAMES WHYTE,  
*Colonial Secretary's Office,*  
11th May, 1866.

*His Excellency the GOVERNOR.*