

ON THE WANT OF MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE ARMY.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE FEBRUARY 25, 1836.

ANDOVER, *Massachusetts*, February 17, 1836.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 9th instant. Accept my thanks for the prompt and obliging manner in which you have complied with my request.

As it is to be expected that those who have long been connected with the army and have experienced the evils which result from a deprivation of the ordinary means of grace should be able to suggest facts and reasons in favor of making provision by law for the religious and moral wants of the army, I take the liberty to present the following:

1. Provision is made by law for the religious and moral wants of the navy, at an expense of ten or twelve thousand dollars annually

2. A chaplain is supported by government at West Point.

3. Chaplains are provided for both houses of Congress. So that the principle of sustaining religious teachers by government is established.

4. Of the thousands of public servants in the civil departments, scarcely any are so situated as to be shut out from religious privileges. The army in this respect stands alone.

5. The estimate put on the means of religion is shown by the fact that almost every community sustains a religious teacher. What would be thought of a proposition to depose every minister of the gospel and close every church in the land? And yet in such an event the community would be in precisely the situation of the greater part of the army.

6. Nowhere more than in the army are the fruits of religion needed: fidelity, temperance, and cheerful obedience are the sinews of its efficiency. At a military post in the north, where a faithful minister was employed, scarcely a man was confined for a military offence for upwards of a year. One hundred instances of confinement, among the same number of men within the same period, have I known at other posts. If fifty temperate and faithful men would be as efficient as sixty, one-third of whom were more or less intemperate, and the temperance and fidelity of the former resulted from Christian principle diffused by the labors of a faithful chaplain, then would the employment of such chaplains at our several military posts be equivalent to increasing the army by more than a thousand men. I state these proportions merely to illustrate the importance of religious influence on the efficiency of the army, and the true economy of

