

President Lincoln's Letter to Gov. Magoffin

WASHINGTON. AUGUST 24.

*To his Excellency B. MAGOFFIN,
Governor of the State of Kentucky*

SIR: Your letter of the 19th instant, in which you 'urge the removal from the limits of Kentucky of the military force now organized and in camp within that State; is received.

I may not possess full and precisely accurate knowledge upon this subject; but I believe it is true that there is a military force in camp within Kentucky, acting by authority of the United States, which force is not very large, and is not now being augmented.

I also believe that some arms have been furnished to this force by the United States.

I also believe this force consists exclusively of Kentuckians, having their camp in the immediate vicinity of their own homes, and not assailing or menacing any of the good people of Kentucky.

In all I have done in the premises, I have acted upon the urgent solicitation of many Kentuckians, and in accordance with what I believed, and still believe, to be the wish of a majority of all the Union-loving people of Kentucky.

While I have conversed on this subject with many of the eminent men of Kentucky, including a large majority of her members of Congress, I do not remember that anyone of them, or any other person except your Excellency and the bearers of your Excellency's letter, has urged me to remove the military force from Kentucky, or to disband it. One very worthy citizen of Kentucky did solicit me to have the augmenting of the force suspended for a time.

Taking all the means within my reach to form a judgment, I do not believe it is the popular wish of Kentucky that this force shall be removed beyond her limits; and, with this impression, I must respectfully decline to so remove it. I most cordially sympathize with your Excellency in the wish to preserve the peace of my own native State, Kentucky. It is with regret I search for, and can not find, in your not very short letter, any declaration or intimation that you entertain any desire for the preservation of the Federal Union.

Your obedient servant,

A. LINCOLN