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Duke of Richmond to Sir H. Taylor

London March 29th
1833

My Dear Sir Herbert

I have just received your letter dated half past eight o'clock. Before this you will have received my short note from the House of Lords which will I trust have been satisfactory to His Majesty. My opinion respecting punishment in the Army has never varied, I have ever been of opinion that the power of inflicting corporal punishment could not be given

up without danger to the discipline of the Army, & that it was necessary to prevent some of the very bad men who are enlisted into our Ranks from disgracing those who deserve so much from their Country – But at the same time ~~that~~ I have always thought that every care should be taken by frequent returns & to the Non-commd officers, that this punishment should not be had recourse to unless necessary – I believe that the attention of the Commander in Chief has been for many years

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directed to this point, & that there is no instance of the commanding officer & Regimental Courts martial assuming the power. It appears to me that a strong case was shown the other day of the absolute necessity of having a strong power over the Soldier, I saw in the Police Report that between 30 & 40 of the Guards who were confined in one of the Prisons in London refused to go upon the Great Hill, & only were induced afterwards to do so, by a large party of the Police & who had been sent for. If these men had been with their Regiments & had

been ordered to drill, & had refused
& if corporal punishment had been
abolished, you must have tried
the Ringleader who must either
have been shot or transported.
~~Notwithstanding of this~~ I quite agree
with you that it would be very
dangerous to permit the Soldier
to be subject to one Code of Laws
in England & another abroad, & I am quite
certain that there is no Officer
who ever served with the Army
in a Campaign who must not
remember some instance of the
beneficial effect of a Drum Head
Court Martial & Two Dozen Lashes
inflicted on the Culprit within
five minutes of the commission of

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the Crime, but I do not think it fair upon you to take up your time, as I agree with every sentiment expressed in your Letter of yesterday's date, & I must say in reference that no change of this importance in the Mutiny Bill could have taken place without its having been submitted to His Majesty –

I have read the Paper you gave me, & I must say you have made the case quite clear.* In a few days I hope to be able to send you some strong facts respecting the Military Rewards

*See Lord Ellenborough's Paper & Proposed Speech of General Scott to Lord Grey.

Believe me
My dear Sir Herbert
Yours sincerely
Melbourne

Sir Herbert Taylor

Z – a –

Duke of Richmond

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Respecting Alteration in the Skating Act which he I Sir Robert wished to have introduced. —