

'To the Honourable the Committee at Lincoln: These.'

'Lincolnshire,' 3rd May, 1643.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

I must needs be hardly thought on; because I am still the messenger of unhappy tidings and delays concerning you-though I know my heart is to assist you with all expedition!

My Lord Grey hath now again failed me of the rendezvous at Stamford,- notwithstanding that both he and I received Letters from his Excellency, commanding us both to meet, and, together with Sir John Gell and the Nottingham forces, to join with you. My Lord Grey sent Sir Edward Hartop to me, To let me know he could not meet me at Stamford according to our agreement; fearing the exposing of Leicester to the forces of Mr. Hastings and some other Troops drawing that way.

Believe it, it were better, in my poor opinion, Leicester were not, than that there should not be found an immediate taking of the field by our forces to accomplish the common ends. Wherein I shall deal as freely with him, when I meet him, as you can desire. I perceive Ashby-de-la-Zouch sticks much with him. I have offered him now another place of meeting; to come to which I suppose he will not deny me; and that to be tomorrow. If you shall therefore think fit to send one over unto us to be with us at night-you do not know how far we may prevail with him: To draw speedily to a head, with Sir John Gell and the other forces, where we may all meet at a general rendezvous, to the end you know of. And then you shall receive full satisfaction concerning my integrity;- and if no man shall help you, yet will not I be wanting to do my duty, God assisting me.

If we could unite those forces 'of theirs;' and with them speedily make Grantham the general rendezvous, both of yours and ours, I think it would do well. I shall bend my endeavours that way. Your concurrence by some able instrument to solicit this, might probably exceedingly hasten it; especially having so good a foundation to work upon as my Lord General's commands. Our Norfolk forces, which will not prove so many as you may imagine by six or seven hundred men, will lie conveniently at Spalding; and, I am confident, be ready to meet at Grantham at the general rendezvous.

I have no more to trouble you; but begging of God to take away the impediments that hinder our conjunction, and to prosper our designs, take leave.

Your faithful servant,
OLIVER CROMWELL.