

To the Honourable William Lenthall, Esquire, Speaker of the House of Commons: These.

'Warrington,' 20th August, 1648.

SIR,

I have sent up this Gentleman to give you an account of the great and good hand of God towards you, in the late victory obtained against the Enemy in these parts.

After the conjunction of that Party which I brought with me out of Wales with the Northern Forces about Knaresborough and Wetherby, -hearing that the Enemy was advanced with their Army into Lancashire, we marched the next day, being the 13th of this instant August, to Otley (having cast off our Train, and sent it to Knaresborough, because of the difficulty of marching therewith through Craven, and to the end we might with more expedition attend the Enemy's motion): and on the 14th to Skipton; the 15th to Gisburne; the 16th to Hodder Bridge over Ribble; where we held a council of war. At which we had in consideration, Whether we should march to Whalley that night, and so on, to interpose between the Enemy and his further progress into Lancashire and so southward, -which we had some advertisement the Enemy intended, and 'we are' since confirmed that they intended for London itself: Or whether to march immediately over the said Bridge, there being no other betwixt that and Preston, and there engage the Enemy, -who we did believe would stand his ground, because we had information that the Irish Forces under Monro lately come out of Ireland, which consisted of twelve-hundred horse and fifteen-hundred foot, were on their march towards Lancashire to join them.

It was thought that to engage the Enemy to fight was our business; and the reason aforesaid giving us hopes that our marching on the North side of Ribble would effect it, it was resolved we should march over the Bridge; which accordingly we did; and that night quartered the whole Army in the field by Stonyhurst Hall being Mr. Sherburn's house, a place nine miles distant from Preston. Very early the next morning we marched towards Preston: having intelligence that the Enemy was drawing together thereabouts from all his out-quarters, we drew out a Forlorn of about two hundred horse and four hundred foot, the horse commanded by Major Smithson, the foot by Major Pownel. Our Forlorn of horse marched, within a mile, 'to' where the Enemy was drawn up, -in the enclosed grounds by Preston, on that side next us; and there, upon a Moor, about half a mile distant from the Enemy's Army, met with their Scouts and Outguard; and did behave themselves with that valour and courage as made their Guards (which consisted both of horse and foot) to quit their ground; and took divers prisoners; holding this dispute with them until our Forlorn of foot came up for their justification; and by these we had opportunity to bring up our whole Army.

So soon as our foot and horse were come up, we resolved that night to engage them if we could; and, therefore, advancing with our Forlorn, and putting the rest of our Army into as good a posture as the ground would bear,

(which was totally inconvenient for our horse, being all enclosure and miry ground), we pressed upon them. The regiments of foot were ordered as followeth. There being a Lane, very deep and ill, up to the Enemy's Army, and leading to the Town, we commanded two regiments of horse, the first whereof was Colonel Harrison's and next was my own, to charge up that Lane; and on either side of them advanced the 'Main'-battle, -which were Lieutenant-Colonel Reade's, Colonel Dean's and Colonel Pride's on the right; Colonel Bright's and my Lord General's on the left; and Colonel Ashton with the Lancashire regiments in reserve. We ordered Colonel Thornhaugh's and Colonel Twistleton's regiments of horse on the right; and one regiment in reserve for the Lane; and the remaining horse on the left;-so that, at last, we came to a Hedge-dispute; the greatest of the impression from the Enemy being upon our left wing, and upon the 'Main'-battle on both sides the Lane, and upon our horse in the Lane: in all which places the Enemy were forced from their ground, after four hours dispute;-until we came to the Town; into which four troops of my own regiment first entered, and, being well seconded by Colonel Harrison's regiment, charged the Enemy in the Town, and cleared the streets.

There came no band of your foot to fight that day but did it with incredible valour and resolution; among which Colonel Bright's, my Lord General's, Lieutenant-Colonel Reade's and Colonel Ashton's had the greatest work; they often coming to push of pike and to close firing, and always making the Enemy to recoil. And, indeed, I must needs say, God was as much seen in the valour of the officers and soldiers of these before-mentioned as in any action that hath been performed; the Enemy making, though he was still worsted, very stiff and sturdy resistance. Colonel Dean's and Colonel Pride's, outwinging the Enemy, could not come to so much share of the action; the Enemy shogging down towards the Bridge; and keeping almost all in reserve that so he might bring fresh hands often to fight. Which we not knowing, and lest we should be outwinged, 'we' placed those two regiments to enlarge our right wing; this was the cause they had not at that time so great a share in that action.

At last the Enemy was put into disorder; many men slain, many prisoners taken; the Duke, with most of the Scots horse and foot, retreated over the Bridge; where,-after a very hot dispute betwixt the Lancashire regiments, part of my Lord General's, and them, being often at push of pike,-they were beaten from the Bridge; and our horse and foot, following them, killed many and took divers prisoners; and we possessed the Bridge over Darwen 'also,' and a few houses there; the Enemy being driven up within musket-shot of us where we lay that night,-we not being able to attempt farther upon the Enemy, the night preventing us. In this posture did the Enemy and we lie most part of that night. Upon entering the Town, many of the Enemy's horse fled towards Lancaster; in the chase of whom went divers of our horse, who pursued them near ten miles, and had execution of them, and took about five hundred horse and many prisoners. We possessed in this Fight very much of the Enemy's ammunition; I believe they lost four or five thousand arms. The number of slain we judge to be about a thousand; the prisoners we took were about four thousand.

In the night the Duke was drawing off his Army towards Wigan; we were so wearied with the dispute that we did not so well attend the Enemy's going off as might have been; by means whereof the Enemy was gotten at least three miles with his rear, before ours got to them. I ordered Colonel Thornhaugh to command two or three regiments of horse to follow the Enemy, if it were possible to make him stand still we could bring up the Army. The Enemy marched away seven or eight thousand foot and about four thousand horse; we followed him with about three thousand foot and two thousand five hundred horse and dragoons; and, in this prosecution, that worthy gentleman, Colonel Thornhaugh, pressing too boldly, was slain, being run into the body and thigh and head by the Enemy's lancers. And give me leave to say, he was a man as faithful and gallant in your service as any; and one who often heretofore lost blood in your quarrel, and now his last. He hath left some behind him to inherit a Father's honour; and a sad Widow;-both now the interest of the Commonwealth.

Our horse still prosecuted the Enemy; killing and taking divers all the way. At last the Enemy drew up within three miles of Wigan; and by that time our Army was come up, they drew off again, and recovered Wigan before we could attempt any thing upon them. We lay that night in the field close by the Enemy; being very dirty and weary, and having marched twelve miles of such ground as I never rode in all my life, the day being very wet. We had some skirmishing, that night, with the Enemy, near the Town; where we took General Van Druske and a Colonel, and killed some principal Officers, and took about a hundred prisoners; where I also received a Letter from Duke Hamilton, for civil usage towards his kinsman Colonel Hamilton, whom he left wounded there. We took also Colonel Hurry and Lieutenant-Colonel Innes, sometimes in your service. The next morning the Enemy marched towards Warrington, and we at the heels of them. The Town of Wigan, a great and poor Town, and very Malignant, were plundered almost to their skins by them.

We could not engage the Enemy until we came within three miles of Warrington; and there the Enemy made a stand, at a place near Winwick. We held them in some dispute till our Army came up; they maintaining the Pass with resolution for many hours; ours and theirs coming to push of pike and very close charges,-which forced us to give ground; but our men, by the blessing of God, quickly recovered it, and charging very home upon them, beat them from their standing; where we killed about a thousand of them, and took, as we believe, about two thousand prisoners; and prosecuted them home to Warrington Town; where they possessed the Bridge, which had a strong barricado and a work upon it, formerly made very defensive. As soon as we came thither, I received a message from General Baillie, desiring some capitulation. To which I yielded. Considering the strength of the Pass, and that I could not go over the River 'Mersey' within ten miles of Warrington with the Army, I gave him these terms: That he should surrender himself and all his officers and soldiers prisoners of war, with all his arms and ammunition and horses, to me; I giving quarter for life, and promising civil usage. Which accordingly is done: and the Commissioners deputed by me have received, and are receiving, all the arms and ammunition; which will be, as they tell me,

about Four thousand complete arms; and as many prisoners: and thus you have their Infantry totally ruined. What Colonels and Officers are with General Baillie, I have not yet received the list.

The Duke is marching with his remaining Horse, which are about three thousand, towards Nantwich; where the Gentlemen of the Country have taken about five hundred of them; of which they sent me word this day. The country will scarce suffer any of my men to pass, except they have my hand-'writing;' telling them, They are Scots. They bring in and kill divers of them, as they light upon them. Most of the Nobility of Scotland are with the Duke. If I had a thousand horse that could but trot thirty miles, I should not doubt but to give a very good account of them: but truly we are so harassed and haggled out in this business, that we are not able to do more than walk 'at' an easy pace after them.-I have sent post to my Lord Grey, to Sir Henry Cholmely and Sir Edward Rhodes to gather all together, with speed, for their prosecution; as likewise to acquaint the Governor of Stafford therewith.

I hear Monro is about Cumberland with the horse that ran away, and his 'own' Irish horse and foot, which are a considerable body. I have left Colonel Ashton's three regiments of foot, with seven troops of horse (six of Lancashire and one of Cumberland), at Preston; and ordered Colonel Scroop with five troops of horse and two troops of dragoons, 'and' with two regiments of foot (Colonel Lascelles's and Colonel Wastell's), to embody with them; and have ordered them to put their prisoners to the sword if the Scots shall presume to advance upon them, because they cannot bring them off with security.

Thus you have a Narrative of the particulars of the success which God hath given you: which I could hardly at this time have done, considering the multiplicity of business; but truly, when I was once engaged in it, I could hardly tell how to say less, there being so much of God in it; and I am not willing to say more, lest there should seem to be any of man. Only give me leave to add one word, shewing the disparity of forces on both sides; that so you may see, and all the world acknowledge, the great hand of God in this business. The Scots Army could not be less than twelve thousand effective foot, well armed, and five thousand horse: Langdale not less than two thousand five hundred foot, and fifteen hundred horse: in all Twenty-one Thousand and truly very few of their foot but were as well armed if not better than yours, and at divers disputes did fight two or three hours before they would quit their ground. Yours were about two thousand five hundred horse and dragoons of your old Army; about four thousand foot of your old Army; also about sixteen hundred Lancashire foot, and about five hundred Lancashire horse: in all, about Eight thousand Six hundred. You see by computation about two thousand of the Enemy slain; betwixt eight and nine thousand prisoners; besides what are lurking in hedges and private places, which the Country daily bring in or destroy. Where Langdale and his broken forces are, I know not; but they are exceedingly shattered.

Surely, Sir, this is nothing but the hand of God; and wherever anything in this world is exalted, or exalts itself, God will pull it down; for this is the day wherein He alone will be exalted. It is not fit for me to give advice, nor to say

a word what use you should make of this; more than to pray you, and all that acknowledge God, That they would exalt Him,-and not hate His people, who are as the apple of His eye, and for whom even Kings shall be reprov'd; and that you would take courage to do the work of the Lord, in fulfilling the end of your Magistracy, in seeking the peace and welfare of this Land,-that all that will live peaceably may have countenance from you, and they that are incapable and will not leave troubling the Land may speedily be destroyed out of the Land. And if you take courage in this, God will bless you; and good men will stand by you; and God will have glory, and the Land will have happiness by you in despite of all your enemies. Which shall be the prayer of,

Your most humble and faithful servant,
OLIVER CROMWELL.

Postscript. We have not, in all this, lost a considerable Officer but Colonel Thornhaugh; and not many soldiers, considering the service: but many are wounded, and our horse much wearied. I humbly crave that some course may be taken to dispose of the Prisoners. The trouble, and extreme charge of the Country where they lie, is more than the danger of their escape. I think they would not go home if they might, without a convoy; they are so fearful of the Country, from whom they have deserved so ill. Ten men will keep a thousand from running away.