

For the Right Honourable the Committee of Lords and Commons sitting at Derby House: These present.

Knottingley, near Pontefract, 15th November, 1648.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

So soon as I came into these parts, I met with an earnest desire from the Committee of this County to take upon me the charge here, for the reducing of the Garrison of Pontefract. I received also commands from my Lord General, to the same effect.-I have had sight of a Letter to the House of Commons; wherein things are so represented, as if the Siege were at such a pass that the prize were already gained. In consideration whereof, I thought fit to let you know what the true state of this Garrison is; as also the condition of the country, that so you may not think demands for such things as would be necessary, unreasonable.

My lords, the Castle hath been victualled with Two-hundred and twenty or forty cattle within these three weeks; and they have also gotten in, as I am credibly informed, salt enough for them and more. So that I apprehend they are victualled for a twelvemonth. The men within are resolved to endure to the utmost extremity; expecting no mercy, as indeed they deserve none. The place is very well known to be one of the strongest inland Garrisons in the Kingdom; well watered; situated upon a rock in every part of it, and therefore difficult to mine. The walls very thick and high, with strong towers; and if battered, very difficult to access, by reason of the depth and steepness of the graft. The County is exceedingly impoverished; not able to bear free-quarter; nor well able to furnish provisions, if we had moneys. The work is like to be long, if materials be not furnish answerable. I therefore think it my duty to represent unto you as followeth: viz.-

That moneys be provided for Three complete regiments of Foot and Two of Horse;-and indeed that money be provided for all contingencies which are in view, too many to enumerate. That Five-hundred Barrels of powder, 'and' Six good Battering-guns, with Three-hundred shot to each Gun, be speedily sent down to Hull:-we desire none may be sent less than demi-cannons. We desire also some match and bullet. And if it may be, we should be glad that two or three of the biggest Mortar-pieces with shells may likewise be sent.

And although the desires of such proportions may seem costly, yet I hope you will judge it good thrift; especially if you consider that this place hath cost the Kingdom some hundred thousands of pounds already. And for aught I know, it may cost you one more, if it be trifled withal; besides the dishonour of it, and what other danger may be emergent, by its being in such hands. It's true, here are some two or three great Guns in Hull, and hereabouts; but they are unserviceable: and your Garrisons in Yorkshire are very much unsupplied at this time.

I have not as yet drawn any of our Foot to this place; only I make use of Colonel Fairfax's and Colonel Malevrier's Foot regiments; and keep the rest of

the guards with the Horse; purposing to bring-on some of our Foot tomorrow. The rest,-these parts being not well able to bear them,-are a little dispersed in Lincoln and Nottingham Shires, for some refreshment; which after so much duty they need, and a little expect.

And indeed I would not satisfy myself nor my duty to you and them, To put the poor men, at this season of the year, to lie in the field: before we be furnished with shoes, stockings and clothes, for them to cover their nakedness,-which we hear are in preparation and would be speeded:-and until we have deal-boards to make them courts-of-guard, and tools to cast up works to secure them.

These things I have humbly represented to you; and waiting for your resolution and command, I rest,

Your most humble servant,
OLIVER CROMWELL.