

To the Honourable William Lenthall, Esquire, Speaker of the Parliament of England: These.

Leith, 4th Augustust, 1651.

SIR,

In pursuance of the Providence of God, and that blessing lately given to your forces in Fife; and finding that the Enemy being masters of the Pass at Stirling, could not be gotten out there except by hindering his provisions at St. Johnston,-we, by general advice, thought fit to attempt St. Johnston; knowing that that would necessitate him to quit his Pass. Wherefore, leaving with Major-General Harrison about three-thousand horse and dragoons, besides those which are with Colonel Rich, Colonel Saunders, and Colonel Barton, upon the Borders, we marched to St. Johnston; and lying one day before it, we had it surrendered to us.

During which time we had some intelligence of the Enemy's marching southward; though with some contradictions, as if it had not been so. But doubting it might be true, we (leaving a Garrison in St. Johnston, and sending Lieutenant-General Monk with about Five or Six thousand to Stirling to reduce that place, and by it to put your affairs into a good posture in Scotland), marched, with all possible expedition, back again; and have passed our foot and many of our horse over the Frith this day; resolving to make what speed we can up to the Enemy;-who, in his desperation and fear, and out of inevitable necessity, is run to try what he can do this way.

I do apprehend that if he goes for England, being some few days march before us, it will trouble some men's thoughts; and may occasion some inconveniences;-which I hope we are as deeply sensible of, and have been, and I trust shall be, as diligent to prevent, as any. And indeed this is our comfort, That in simplicity of heart as towards God, we have done to the best of our judgments; knowing that if some issue were not put to this Business, it would occasion another Winter's war: to the ruin of your soldiery, for whom the Scots are too hard in respect of enduring the Winter's difficulties of this country; and to the endless expense of the treasure of England in prosecuting this War. It may be supposed we might have kept the Enemy from this, by interposing between him and England. Which truly I believe we might: but how to remove him out of this place, without doing what we have done, unless we had a commanding Army on both sides of the River Forth, is not clear to us; or how to answer the inconveniences aforementioned, we understand not.

We pray therefore that (seeing there is a possibility for the Enemy to put you to some trouble) you would, with the same courage, grounded upon a confidence in God, wherein you have been supported to the great things God hath used you in hitherto,-improve, the best you can, such forces as you have in readiness, or 'as' may on the sudden be gathered together, To give the Enemy some check, until we shall be able to reach up to him; which we trust in the Lord we shall do our utmost endeavour in. And indeed we have this comfortable experience from the Lord, That this Enemy is heart-smitten by

God; and whenever the Lord shall bring us up to them, we believe the Lord will make the desperateness of this council of theirs to appear, and the folly of it also. When England was much more unsteady than now; and when a much more considerable Army of theirs, unfoiled, invaded you; and we had but a weak force to make resistance at Preston,-upon deliberate advice, we chose rather to put ourselves between their Army and Scotland: and how God succeeded that, is not well to be forgotten! This 'present movement' is not out of choice on our part, but by some kind of necessity; and, it is to be hoped, will have the like issue. Together with a hopeful end of your work;-in which it's good to wait upon the Lord, upon the earnest of former experiences, and hope of His presence, which only is the life of your Cause.

Major-General Harrison, with the horse and dragoons under him, and Colonel Rich and the rest in those parts, shall attend the motion of the Enemy; and endeavour the keeping of them together, as also to impede his march. And will be ready to be in conjunction with what forces shall gather together for this service:-to whom orders have been speeded to that purpose; as this enclosed to Major-General Harrison will show. Major-General Lambert, this day marched with a very considerable body of horse, up towards the Enemy's rear. With the rest of the horse, and nine regiments of foot, most of them of your old foot and horse, I am hasting up; and shall, by the Lord's help, use utmost diligence. I hope I have left a commanding force under Lieutenant-General Monk in Scotland.

This account I thought my duty to speed to you; and rest,

Your most humble servant,
OLIVER CROMWELL.