



# The London Gazette

## EXTRAORDINARY.

Published by Authority.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1812.

*Foreign-Office, November 11, 1812.*

**A** DISPATCH, of which the following is a copy, has been this day received from His Excellency General Viscount Cathcart, His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at the Court of Saint Petersburg, addressed to Lord Viscount Castlereagh, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.

MY LORD. *St. Petersburg, Oct. 27, 1812.*

**I** HAVE the pleasure to acquaint your Lordship that the guns are now firing, and Te Deum is to be sung to-morrow in the cathedral, for a most brilliant affair on the 18th between the advanced guards of the French and Russian armies near Moscow in which the former, under Murat, were defeated with great loss; and for the deliverance of Moscow by General Winzingerode on the 22d October.

The bulletin is not yet published, but I have the honour to enclose a copy of the note I have this morning received, by the Emperor's command.

I have also enclosed a translation of the official account of the defeat of Marshal St. Cyr by Count Wittgenstein, and of the storming of Polotzk on the 20th October, as also that of the repulse of Marshal Macdonald's corps by General Steinheil.

Lieutenant-General Count Wittgenstein has been promoted to the rank of General of cavalry, and Te Deum for his victory was sung yesterday.

It appears that Prince Schwartzenberg has retired to the westward, leaving some corps which have been cut off; that the province of Volhynia is entirely cleared of the enemy; and that Admiral

Tchichagoff may probably have reached Minsk about or soon after the 21st October.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) CATHCART.

(Translation of First Enclosure.)

*St. Petersburg, October 27, 1812.*

ON the 18th October Marshal Kutusoff having learnt that the corps of Victor had quitted Smolensk to reinforce the Grand Army, resolved to attack the advanced-guard, under the orders of Murat, being 45,000 strong, in face of our troops, in order to defeat the same before the junction of Victor, and before Napoleon could support him with the main body of his army. The attack completely succeeded: thirty eight pieces of cannon fell into our hands, as well as a standard of honour belonging to the first regiment of cuirassiers. We have made 1500 prisoners, amongst whom is a General. Two thousand men were left on the field of battle. Our loss is inconsiderable.

On the 22d, the corps of General Winzingerode entered Moscow, and obliged the garrison which the enemy had left in it, to evacuate that capital in such haste, that the French hospitals remained in our power.

(Second Enclosure.)

*Extract from the Report of General Count Wittgenstein to His Imperial Majesty, dated Polotzk, the 20th October 1812.*

AFTER a hard engagement for two days with the enemy, thanks to the Almighty, Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr is on the other side of the Dwina, and I am in Polotzk, with the corps entrusted to my command.

On the 6th instant, I directed Lieutenant-General Prince Jaschevil to attack with his detachment the enemy on the side of the village Guravitchne, whilst Lieutenant-General Count Steinheil continued his march this way on the left bank of the Dwina.

The enemy's advanced guard received me at the village Guravitchne, from whence it was driven into the lines. The engagement was most bloody, it began at six in the morning and lasted till night. I kept my ground, and compelled the enemy to retreat within his intrenchments, whence he kept up a very heavy cannonade in all directions. The following morning, the 7th, I did not undertake any thing, because I waited for the attack of Lieutenant-General Count Steinheil on the other side of the Dwina, which took place accordingly. He drove the enemy from the village Bolonia, and pursued him towards Polotzk. I received this intelligence a little before dark, and, in order to profit of the situation in which the enemy found himself, I attacked, on the evening of the 7th, at five o'clock, and drove him out of his strong entrenchments, to which success Lieutenant-General Count Steinheil's movement greatly contributed.

The enemy then threw himself into the town, which is surrounded by a double pallisade, where he maintained himself nearly the whole night, keeping up a constant fire of musketry on all sides from behind the pallisades, as well as out of the houses. I gave orders for my ordnance to fire upon them with round and grape, and at last directed my advanced guard to storm the place in two divisions, the first under the command of Major-Generals Platoff and Diëbitch, and the other under the command of Colonel Riediger, of the Grodno regiment of hussars. Lieutenant-General Casanove, as soon as he perceived that his troops were close before Polotzk, threw himself also upon the enemy, and was the first who marched with them into the town. In this manner, at three in the morning of the 8th, the place was carried.

The loss of the enemy must be extraordinarily great, for all the places of action are covered with dead bodies; and according to the report of the inhabitants, he was employed the whole of the preceding day in carrying wounded men to the other side. Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr is himself wounded in the leg.

We have taken prisoners forty-five Staff and superior officers, and two thousand rank and file: among the former there are two colonels. We have also taken one piece of cannon, and a considerable quantity of provisions in the magazine, which the enemy had not time to destroy.

The enemy's loss would have been much greater if the Lieutenant-General Count Steinheil had been able to follow him to Polotzk, but to his great mortification he was stopped by the intervention of superior force five versts from the town. Our loss is not inconsiderable; of the generals, are wounded Major-General Balk in the head, Prince Libirgkoi and Harman, who have slight contusions. Colonel Rôte of the 26th Jägers severely wounded in the leg, and the gentleman of the Bedchamber, Mordvino, a commander in the first Petersburg Militia, has lost his leg by a cannon shot.

I can say nothing further of your Imperial Majesty's troops, than that they have fought with the greatest possible valour; that the 1st Petersburg militia, upon its arrival in my camp, was distributed in the different regiments, and to the delight of every body these warriors have fought with such good will and courage, that they could not be exceeded by their comrades, the old soldiers, and they have distinguished themselves in a particular manner in columns, with the bayonet, under the direction of their brave leader Senator Bibikoff. We have few killed, but many wounded, and the more from its having been almost impossible to keep the men back in column, from their eagerness to throw themselves into the enemy's batteries and lines.

There is also a report of the 21st October, by Lieut.-General Count Steinheil, detailing the particulars of his engagement with the corps of Macdonald on the left bank of the Dwina, having fallen in with the enemy on the 7th near the river Utchatch. He drove them, in concert with Count Wittgenstein, within four versts of Polotzk, at the same time that Count Wittgenstein stormed that place. The extreme darkness of the night prevented further proceedings. Without counting killed and wounded, General Steinheil made one colonel, one staff officer, thirty-seven other officers, and five hundred non-commissioned officers and privates, prisoners. The Lieutenant-General speaks in the highest terms of commendation of the assistance he derived from the able exertions of Major-General Pbox.

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