

MY LORD, Halle, October 15, 1813.

THE accounts transmitted in my dispatch of the 14th instant, founded on the information then received of six divisions of the enemy's young guards having debouched from Wittenberg, as also troops from Torgau on the right bank of the Elbe, likewise his having taken possession of Dessau, may cause a momentary anxiety in the public mind, I am anxious therefore as early as possible to remove it, and I now have the honour to inform your Lordship, that, according to later intelligence received, the enemy is recalling his troops from the direction of Wittenberg, and the Lower Mulda, and seems to be assembling them in the neighbourhood of Leipsig, Taucha, and Eulenberg. This intelligence is in part derived from a Lieutenant-Colonel of the French Staff, taken prisoner, on whom was found a letter addressed to Marshal Marmont, enjoining him to put himself in march for Leipsig, and to place himself under the orders of Murat.

The enemy's forces that have been manoeuvring on the right bank of the Mulda, and that crossed the Elbe, are commanded by Marshals Ney and Marmont; and they have so studiously concealed their movements by marches and counter-marches, and the country is so enclosed and difficult near the conflux of those rivers, that the information is not precise. The intelligence, however, from the grand army is positive as to the enemy's assemblage in the neighbourhood of Leipsig. On the 14th he retired from Zerbst, and withdrew from Acken, where he had shewn himself; having destroyed our tête-de-pont at Rosslau he abandoned it, and the Cossacks of General Wintzingerode's corps of the Prince Royal's army drove him from Dessau, which was re-occupied. These different events confirmed the other intelligence, and appearances denoted the movement from Wittenberg to have been undertaken with a view of alluring the northern army to repass the Elbe. Upon general military principles, to have crossed that river without possessing Wittenberg may be, by many, a doubtful, if not an injudicious undertaking; but on the other hand must be balanced the advantages derived from the union of about three hundred thousand men, surrounding the enemy on all points, the state of demoralization in his army, their distress for provisions, which, hemmed in as they are, must necessarily increase; and lastly, the advantage of resorting at once to immediate and vigorous offensive operation in all quarters.

The Prince Royal of Sweden had detached on the 14th, a division of his army under the orders of the Prince of Hesse Homburg, to re-establish his communication at Acken, and to ensure the passage of the river and the town (which is strong), by strengthening it as far as possible; General Hirschfeld had, however, secured this point before the reinforcement arrived. The garrison of Magdeburg made attempts upon the post of Bernburg on the Saale, a point of infinite importance for the passage of that river, in case of need; they were, however, here again checked by another detachment of Cossacks of General Wintzingerode's corps, and two

battalions and some guns were placed here in garrison. The Prince Royal's army extended this day with its right in the direction of the mountain of Petersberg, a point which forms a principal feature in this country, from its abrupt rise; his left towards Cöthen and Elsdorf, while his advanced guard was pushed into the villages on the left bank of the Mulda.

The Silesian army were in position near Halle, with their advanced guard at Merseberg and Sken-ditz.

By intelligence from the grand army, General Wittgenstein made a general reconnoissance from Borna on the 13th, and marched to his left, occupied Pegau with the greatest part of his corps on the 14th, establishing his communications on the left with the Austrian corps of Generals Guilay and Prince Maurice Lichtenstein, posted at Weissenfels by Naumbourg, and joined with Generals Thielmann and Platoff, towards Lutzen, and on the right with the corps of General Kleinau, who marched to Borna, and was to detach to Grimma and Colditz. The Russian grenadiers and cuirassiers were at Altenburg. The main body of the grand army, viz. the corps of General Meerveld, the Austrian army of reserve, the Russian and Prussian guards, took post at Zeitz, the corps of Coloredo at Chemnitz and Penig, and detached towards Rockfitz. General Boningsen had orders to make himself master of the roads leading on Nossen and Meissen, and to push on with all possible expedition.

In this general position the armies are to pass on, hemming in the enemy until they are enabled to make an attack on all sides. It would appear, under these circumstances, if the enemy forces his passage against any one of the corps, the others, united, will fall on the point attacked. This operation becomes the more easy, in proportion as the communication between the different armies is established, and the circle round the enemy is narrowed. In the event of a retreat, the left bank of the Saale affords a very strong line on the one side, and the positions of Lutzen, Weissenfels, and Altenburg on the other.

I have also to acquaint your Lordship, that the Bavarian corps of General Wrede, and the Austrian corps of Prince Reuss, are moving by forced marches on Bamberg.

I feel naturally anxious to keep your Lordship in possession of the most constant intelligence; in doing so I am well aware (as information varies every hour) that I may run the risk of inaccuracy, but I must hope in this case for your indulgence.

All the corps of the grand army have moved forward this day. General Blücher has moved to Gros Kügel and Skenditz, and pushed his advance towards Leipsig; and the Prince Royal has his right in front of Petersberg and his left at Zörbig, with the Swedes near Wettin, and the advance at Brehna.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES STEWART.