

The London Gazette.

Published by Authority.

From Thursday February 10. to Monday February 14. 1703.

Numb. 3992 N.S.

Letters from Italy have brought us the following Particulars of the late Expedition of the Imperial Forces in Italy under the Command of General Starckberg; His Excellency, after having made several Movements to amuse the Duke of Vendome, and oblige him to divide his Forces, passed over the River Sesia on the 26th of the last Month, and directed his March through the Countries of Parma and Placentia. He divided his Army into three Bodies, which were so disposed, that they could with all imaginable Facility and Expedition have joined together, if there had been occasion; The young Prince of Piedmont commanded the first, General Vaubonne the second, and the third, which formed the Rear-Guard, was commanded by General Starckberg in Person. Their Numbers amounted to about 16000; and they had with them 4 Pieces of heavy Cannon, 16 Field-Pieces, and 200 Wagons laden with Provisions and Ammunition. The Duke of Parma supplied them with Provisions and Forage in their Passage through his Territories, where they did not commit the least Disorder. On the 2d Instant their Van-Guard, consisting of 2000 Foot, and 1500 Horse, came within two Miles of Stradella, and turned on the left up the Hill, and so down to Brolo, and fell upon a Detachment of 400 Horse, and 50 Granadiers, of the Forces of Milan, which was posted there, and was entirely cut to pieces, except a Lieutenant and 22 private Men, who were made Prisoners. The 3d they met not far from Brolo with 200 French Horse, whom they attacked, and either killed, or took Prisoners, except 43, who escaped to Tortona, and most of them very much wounded; the rest were all killed on the spot. The same day the Van-Guard of our Army advanced to Voghera; and continuing their March the next morning, came on the 5th to Caffelnuovo di Scava and Piovra, within a small distance of Alessandria. They had taken with them from Voghera some Wagons drawn by 100 Oxen, having obliged the Magistrates of that Place to supply them therewith. There was also one Carlo Arnaldi, who had been very active in giving Intelligence to the French, and assisting them to intercept General Visconti, when he was marching with a Detachment of Imperial Horse to join the Duke of Savoy, and was actually present in the Engagement which the Enemy had with that General near Serravalle. This Man lived at Voghera, and abominated upon the Approach of our Troops, but the young Prince of Piedmont obliged the Magistrates of that Place to find him out, and carried him away Prisoner. In the mean time the second Body of the Imperial Army came on the 3d before some Intrenchments which had been cast up by the Enemy at Stradella, and were defended by General Santirana, who had with him 400 Spanish Foot, and some Militia, commanded by about 80 French Officers; but after our Cannon had plaid upon these Intrenchments a very short time, our Troops forced them with Sword in hand, and some of the French Officers, with many of the Spaniards, were slain: The Militia threw down their Arms, and had quarter given them, and Liberty to return home. General Santirana retired with the rest of his Men into the Tower of Stradella, where he held out from two in the afternoon till 8 at night; notwithstanding the Germans kept continually firing upon him with their Cannon; and then he surrendered at Disarma-

tion; and he and all those who were with him remained Prisoners of War. The 4th, early in the morning, Monsieur de Monroy marching with a Party of 500 French Horse towards Brolo, was surrounded by the German Forces, and a very small number of the Enemy made their Escape to Pavia, the rest being either killed or taken Prisoners. The same day the Rear-guard of the Imperial Army marched through Stradella, and till they were all passed by, a Party of 130 Dragoons remained in the Intrenchments at Stradella, to amuse the Duke of Vendome, who was following our Troops close at the heels with 5000 Foot and 1500 Horse; and to make him believe that they designed to make good that Post. The Duke of Vendome with this Detachment, which was followed by a greater number of his Troops, came the 3d to Sarmato, and from thence to Castello San Giovanni, where being informed of our Troops having forced the Intrenchments at Stradella, he hastened thither, and our Dragoons remained in them long enough to give the Enemy several Discharges of their small Arms, and then retired, halting, Spoiled the Roads behind them, cut down many great Trees, and done what they could to hinder the French in their March. The Imperial Forces being all rejoined at Voghera, marched from thence the 6th, and on the 9th arrived on the Banks of the River Borriola, which they found very much swelled by the late Rains; And it was expected that the Marshal de Tressé, in pursuance of the Orders which the Duke of Vendome had sent him, would have met them there with a Body of Troops from the Milanese to hinder their Passage, while the Duke should attack their Rear; but their Diligence prevented the Enemy. The Marshal was not yet come up with his Detachment; and the Duke having been obliged to halt at Voghera, as well to refresh those Troops he had with him, as to give time to the rest to come up, the Germans would have passed this River also without any opposition, and accomplished their Design without any considerable Loss, if the Bridge they had built for that purpose had not unfortunately broke on the 10th, when about 3000 of them were yet behind, who were commanded by the Prince of Lichtenstein and General Solari. All possible Diligence was used to repair the Bridge, but before that could be done, a Body of the French Troops came up, and our Generals being too eager to engage the Enemy, quitted the Intrenchment which had been cast up to secure the Bridge, and were both killed: In the mean time our Forces on the other side of the River plaid upon the Enemy with 7 Pieces of Cannon, and 4 Regiments of Horse swam over the River to support our Men who by their Assistance repulsed the Enemy, and took from them 4 Pieces of Cannon. Our Loss in this Action (besides the Misfortune of the Death of the two Generals above-named) does not amount to above 250 Men; and of the Enemy 200 were killed, and 400 were taken Prisoners. The Bridge being repaired, our Troops passed over the River, without any opposition; and General Starckberg hoped in a day or two to join with the Duke of Savoy, who was marching with a Body of 3500 Horse, and 8000 Foot, in order to meet him. The Germans throughout their March observed a very exact Discipline; but the French, on the contrary, committed great Disorders; and, among other Places, plundered the Town of Voghera, upon pretence that the Inhabitants had assisted the Imperialists.