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DOWNING-STREET, September 16.

A dispatch, of which the following is a copy, was this morning received from Lieutenant-General Sir RALPH ABERCROMBY, K. B. at the Office of the Right Hon. HENRY DUNDAS; one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.

SIR, Head-quarters, Schager Brug, Sept. 11 1799.

Having fully considered the position which the British troops had occupied on the 1st inst. and having in view the certainty of speedy and powerful reinforcements, I determined to remain until then on the defensive.

From the information which we had received, we were apprized of the enemy's intention to attack us, and we were daily improving the advantages of our situation.

Yesterday morning at day-break the enemy commenced an attack on our centre and right, from St Martin's to Petten, in three columns, and apparently with their whole force.

The column on the right, composed of Dutch troops, and under the command of General Dandaels, directed its attack on the village of St Martin's.

The centre column of the enemy, under the orders of General de Morceau, likewise composed of Dutch troops, marched on to Crabbendam and Zyper Sluys.

The left column of the enemy, composed of French, directed itself on the position occupied by Major-General Burrard, commanding the second brigade of guards.

The enemy advanced, particularly on their left and centre, with great intrepidity, and penetrated with the heads of their columns to within a hundred yards of the post occupied by the British troops. They were, however, every where repulsed, owing to the strength of our position, and the determined courage of the troops. About ten o'clock the enemy retired towards Alkmaar, leaving behind them many dead and some wounded

men, with one piece of cannon; a number of waggons, pontoons, and portable bridges. Colonel M'Donald with the reserve pursued them for some time, and quickened their retreat.

It is impossible for me to do full justice to the good conduct of the troops.

Colonel Spencer, who commanded in the village of St Martin's, defended his post with great spirit and judgment.

Major-General Moore, who commanded on his right, and who was wounded, though I am happy to say slightly, was no less judicious in the management of the troops under his command.

The two battalions of the 20th regiment, posted opposite to Crabbendam and Zyper Sluys, did credit to the high reputation which that regiment has always borne. Lieutenant-Colonel Smyth of that corps, who had the particular charge of that post, received a severe wound in his leg, which will deprive us for a time of his services.

The two brigades of guards repulsed with great vigour the column of French which had advanced to attack them, and where the slaughter of the enemy was great.

I continue to receive every mark of zeal and intelligence from the officers composing the Staff of this army.

It is difficult to state with any precision the loss of the enemy, but it cannot be computed at less than eight hundred or one thousand men; and on our side it does not exceed, in killed, wounded, and missing, two hundred men. Exact returns shall be transmitted herewith.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) R. ABERCROMBY.

Right Hon. Henry Dundas, &c.

(R.)

[Price 6d.]

