

LADY IRWIN to the EARL OF MORTON.

1745, December 3rd, London. — “England is now become the seat of war, and tho' 'tis att present more than 100 miles distant from the Capitol, the whole country is in a consternation which I never remember: stocks are low, credit is much hurt, many people break; and this effects allmost all ranks of people, besides hardly any person is without a very near relation in actual service, which at this time of year and the idea we have conceived of the Highlanders makes everybody tremble; they are now in Lancashire, dispersed in bodies from Preston to Manchester: the Government is yet ignorant of their numbers, no care having been taken for proper intelligence. The whole body is judged about 7,000, an army of 10,000 is assembled att Lichfield, and this day begins their march from thence to meet the rebels, the Duke commands Sir J. Lignoier and Anstruther under him, my dear Colonel belongs to this army ; another army of equal strength is marching from Newcastle cross Yorkshire by Leeds, Hallifax

and so over Blackstone Edge in Lancashire in order to cut off the retreat of the rebels. Marshal Wade commands this body. My brother Howard is with him. If the rebels will venture a battle, the Duke is determined to engage 'em. We are now upon the eve of that great event, and tho' I make no doubt of the success in general, yet particulars maybe infinitely unhappy. England may be safe and I a most miserable woman..... You did not apprehend how this affair woud be treated, for it has been carefully nourished by those in power; totall neglect, discredit of facts, and misconduct in millitary appointments has brought to the head it now has, and should success attend it, 'tis the King's friends and not his enemies that have produced it.....”