

Gen. Sir H. Clinton to G. H. R. H.

38760-1

October 27th 1792

Sir

I have always considered it as the Height of Presumption to form even an Opinion, much more to offer one to your Royal Highness respecting Operation of the Combined Armies; but having once received your R. H.'s Command to write to you, on that subject, I intend your Permission that I may once more give an humble one, on a subject become a very disagreeable one. Owing to the Mystery which hung over Operation from the 21st to the 29th Sep^r, I had I confess given into an Opinion, somewhat prevalent, that the King finding himself deceived by the too sanguine Devices, seeing the little probability there was from appearances of His Success? in His principal object; Had, at the moment when it was least expected, determined on Retreat; under certain Terms however respecting the R. H.'s offer; but I had conceived it possible, that owing to the Disobedience of His Army, wishing perhaps for a good pretext for Retreat; a willing Doubt might arise, whether consistent with the manifestos, and

Declarations (implying that the Combined armies would not
interfere in the formation of a Constitution) after Dumourier
had announced to him the Decision of the Staff (con:
(that Royalty was abolished) His Majesty should think
himself at liberty to proceed. If there is any Foundation
for any of these Opinions, Time will show it; but I
have since I had the honour of writing last, looked over
my notes, on the different Reports from ^{both} Armies; I fear
Sir, that I can alas, find in them cause sufficient for
Retreat of that of the Combined Forces. That seems to have
become necessary, to save a fine Army reduced almost
to incapacity by adverse Elements &c. An Enemy Sir,
as I have often experienced, most to be dreaded, tho' seldom
thought off in Military Calculations. I am inclined to
think Sir that the R. of D. Plan, after the disgracefull
Delight of Wood before 1500. (Dumourier's own words) was
to have proceeded directly towards Paris; but not judging
it prudent, to pursue, to leave Dumourier with so considerable
a force behind him, he determined to move towards
him, in the hope, that, if he could once put such an
Army in motion, he might bring it to action; which in such a
Country.

Gen. Sir H. Clinton to H. R. H.

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(Stationed as the detached corps of the R. Army were,
must have been very decisive. H. M. finding Du Romain's
first position between the river and Dampierre behind
one of the branches of that River in attackable, he cannonaded
him out of it, took it himself, and afterwards quitted it
for one between Hain and Suispe; of the position which
Du Romain took afterwards with his right to St. Marbode's
in which he had formed his Magazine, was deemed
inexpugnable, and that notwithstanding he had lost his
communications with Hain, (see quitting Dampierre) he
could subsist longer, than the R. Army could, without had H. M.
to do, but what he did do; repairs the river; perhaps with
intention having shortened his communications, of preparing
again, the means of a forward operation, by Khetel and
Rhemis; or, of Retreat as circumstances should determine;
The D. de Troschen's Retreat from before Hain, which seems
to have been rather unexpected; unpleasant rain, and bad weather,
badness of Roads, Want of Supply, but above all an incredible
number of sick; obliged him to retire to the Meuse; The removal
of that last above 10000, and of the Cannon, seem to account for
the slowness of the Retreat, and the improving manner in
which it was made, prove, that it was not done under
the Pressure of a Siege; who tho' he might be superior in Number
was greatly inferior in Discipline. Nov. 1792. I had written

