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## **The naval history of Great Britain**

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British and french fleets. [1796.]

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## BRITISH AND FRENCH FLEETS.

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THE abstract of the British navy for the commencement of this year\* differs so slightly, in its more important totals, from that of the preceding year, as to require few if any additional observations. The first commission-column, shows an increase of 14 ships of the line, and of 50 ships altogether; a sufficient proof that the dock-yards had not slackened in their exertions. The number of ships and vessels added to the British, from the French navy, since the date of the last abstract, amounts to 28, exclusive of five from the Dutch navy,† and two captured Dutch East India company's vessels, which we have considered as privateers. The 15 purchased vessels in the abstract, or the greater part of them, had been in the English merchant-service. The loss sustained by the British navy, during the year 1795, amounted to 12 ships,‡ including four of the line; two of which, under circumstances that have been related, were captured by the French.

Of the 11 ships which, at the date of the last, or third year's abstract, remained on hand out of the 20 that were building at the date of the first, one ship only, the *Ville-de-Paris*, had been launched. Although the largest vessel hitherto built in an English dock-yard, this 110-gun ship was rather exceeded, in length, by each of the French 80-gun ships captured by Lord Howe. For instance:

	ft.	in.
<i>Ville-de-Paris</i> . . . . . length of lower deck,	190	2
<i>Sans-Pareil</i> . . . . . „	193	0
<i>Juste</i> . . . . . „	193	4

Not, however, to be outdone by the French in the size of the 74-gun ship, the Admiralty had ordered ten to be laid down, nine

\* See Appendix, Annual Abstract No. 3.

† See Appendix, Nos. 18 and 19.

‡ Ibid. No. 20.

of which, with the two 24-pounder 74s already on the stocks, averaged 1914 tons.

The old 50-gun ship, it will be seen, has been displaced from the head of the under-line division, to make room for two new classes, composed of ships purchased from the East-India company. These ships are described in a note subjoined to the abstract:\* it may therefore suffice to say of them, that they proved, on trial, to be far fitter for their old than their new occupation. The 14 newly-built 18-gun brig-sloops at Y and Z, with another, the Despatch, referred to in a note in that abstract,† were the first British men of war constructed of fir since the year 1757.‡

Carronades were rapidly spreading through the navy. Scarcely a ship was now without them. A tier of 32-pounders was mounted upon the second-deck of the nine purchased ships at R and S; and there were individuals in several classes, whose armament was principally if not wholly composed of them. The 32-pounder had been assigned as the main battery of a whole class,§ which, otherwise, would have had only 6-pounder long guns. A new use had been found for the smaller calibers: every ship in the navy, down to the 18-gun brig inclusive, was ordered to be supplied with a carronade for her launch;|| to assist in carrying into execution the desperate service of cutting out vessels, an employment in which British seamen have so often distinguished themselves.

The number of commissioned officers and masters, belonging to the British navy, at the commencement of this year, was,

Admirals . . . . .	29
Vice-admirals . . . . .	40
Rear-admirals . . . . .	36
” superannuated	31
Post-captains . . . . .	466
” superannuated	26
Commanders, or sloop-captains . . . . .	241
Lieutenants . . . . .	1878
” superannuated	29
Masters . . . . .	404

and the number of seamen and marines, voted for the year 1796, was 110,000.¶

Towards the latter end of the year 1795, after having been long torn by domestic factions of the usual sanguinary charac-

\* See note R\* to Annual Abstract No. 4.

† See note Y\* *ibid*.

‡ See p. 28.

§ See note Y\* to Annual Abstract No. 4.

|| First-rates, as well as 80s and 76s (or 24-pdr. 74s), were allowed 24-pounders; 98s, 90s, 74s, and 64s, 18-pounders; and, from 50s (or 56s) to large sloops inclusive, 12-pounders. Order dated August 28, 1795.

¶ See Appendix, No. 21.

ter, France effected a change in her constitution. Instead of a national convention, the ruling power in the republic was vested in an executive directory of five members, and a legislative body composed of two chambers, namely, a council of ancients consisting of 250 members, and a "council of five hundred;" one third of each to be annually renewed. This, in a great degree, restored peace at home, but produced no such beneficial effects abroad. France, indeed, having no internal commotions to suppress, could now devote her sole attention to her favourite pastime, that of attacking overrunning, and oppressing the nations around her. With most of these she succeeded; but there was one nation, whose humiliation would have gratified her more than that of all the others, which still opposed her with success. Against England a blow was at length to be struck, that, all good republicans hoped, and many expected, would number her eventually among the conquests of France.

Although the summer and autumn passed, without the Brest fleet's making any attempt to put to sea, yet the English government knew that an expedition upon a very extensive scale, was maturing in the port. The destination of that armament, however, much to the credit of the French government, was kept a profound secret. The British were left to conjecture, whether it was Ireland, Portugal, or Gibraltar; the latter was considered as by far the most likely. To be prepared for either case, the Channel fleet had been divided into three squadrons: one, under Rear-admiral Sir Roger Curtis, in the Formidable 98, was ordered to cruise to the westward; another, under Rear-admiral Thompson, in the London 98, was stationed off Brest: and the third, under Admiral Lord Bridport, in the Royal-George 100, remained at Spithead, to be despatched wherever the intelligence received by government might lead. On the 29th of October Vice-admiral Colpoys in the Niger frigate, joined the squadron off Brest, and exchanged ships with Rear-admiral Thompson; who immediately departed for England, leaving the vice-admiral with ten sail of the line. On the 7th of November, Sir John having then 12 sail, was joined by Rear-admiral Sir Roger Curtis with seven; but the latter shortly afterwards parted company, and on the 17th anchored with his squadron at St. Helen's.

The expedition, so long preparing at Brest, did certainly sail in this year; but as it was quite at the latter end of it, we shall postpone our account of its proceedings until the next year's events arrive in order of detail.

On the morning of the 23d of February, during the temporary absence of the British squadron from before the Texel, a Dutch squadron, consisting of two 64, and two 54 gun ships, and several frigates and sloops, escaped to sea; not unobserved, however, by the British 16-gun brig-sloop *Espiègle*, Captain Benjamin Roberts, and a cutter, both of which had been detached

by the British admiral purposely to reconnoitre the port. The Dutch ships steered to the northward, with the wind fresh at north-east, and, while the cutter hastened home with the intelligence, were followed by the *Espiègle*, until the succeeding day, the 24th; when, being 40 leagues to the north-eastward of Yarmouth, Captain Roberts quitted them. In a day or two afterwards this squadron fell in with the 54-gun ship *Glatton*, Captain Henry Trollope, and three or four smaller vessels, belonging to Rear-admiral Pringle's division. The Dutch formed in line, but did not follow the *Glatton* on her making sail to get off. In a short time afterwards Admiral Duncan resumed his cruising-ground, and prevented any other Dutch squadron from quitting the Texel during the remainder of the year.

At the commencement of the present year the fleet, under Sir John Jervis, who, it will be recollected, had, at the close of the last, succeeded Admiral Hotham in the chief command upon the Mediterranean station, amounted to 18 sail of the line, exclusive of a very numerous train of frigates and sloops. The fleet in Toulon, now, we believe, under the command of Rear-admiral Eustache Brueys, amounted to 15 sail of the line, exclusive of three ships building; one, an 80, nearly ready to be launched, and the remaining two, an 80 and a 74, in a very forward state. There was, at anchor in the port of Carthage, a squadron of seven sail of the line, which, in the present equivocal state of Spanish politics, required also to have its motions occasionally watched.

In the latter end of February, or beginning of March, Sir John Jervis detached Vice-admiral the Honourable William Waldegrave, with the *Barfleur* 98, and four 74s, on a "particular mission" to Tunis; or, in plain words, to bring out, either by fair means or by foul, the late British 28-gun frigate *Nemesis*, and one of her captors, the French ship-corvette *Sardine*, which, with the French brig-corvette *Postillon*, had taken refuge in the harbour. On the night of the 9th of March the service was executed, with scarcely any opposition and no loss, by the boats of the squadron placed under the orders of Captain John Sutton of the *Egmont*, and covered in their approach by that ship and the *Bombay-Castle*. On the next day the vice-admiral quitted Tunis, and in a few days afterwards rejoined the commander-in-chief off Toulon.

Among the separate squadrons employed by Sir John Jervis, was one under Commodore Nelson, consisting of the *Agamemnon* and *Diadem* 64s, the latter commanded by Captain George Henry Towry, the 32-gun frigate *Meleager*, Captain George Cockburn, and ship-sloop *Peterel*, Captain John Temple, detached on the 23d of April, when the fleet was cruising off Vado, with orders to the commodore to harass the coast of Genoa, and blockade the port. On the 25th, in the afternoon,

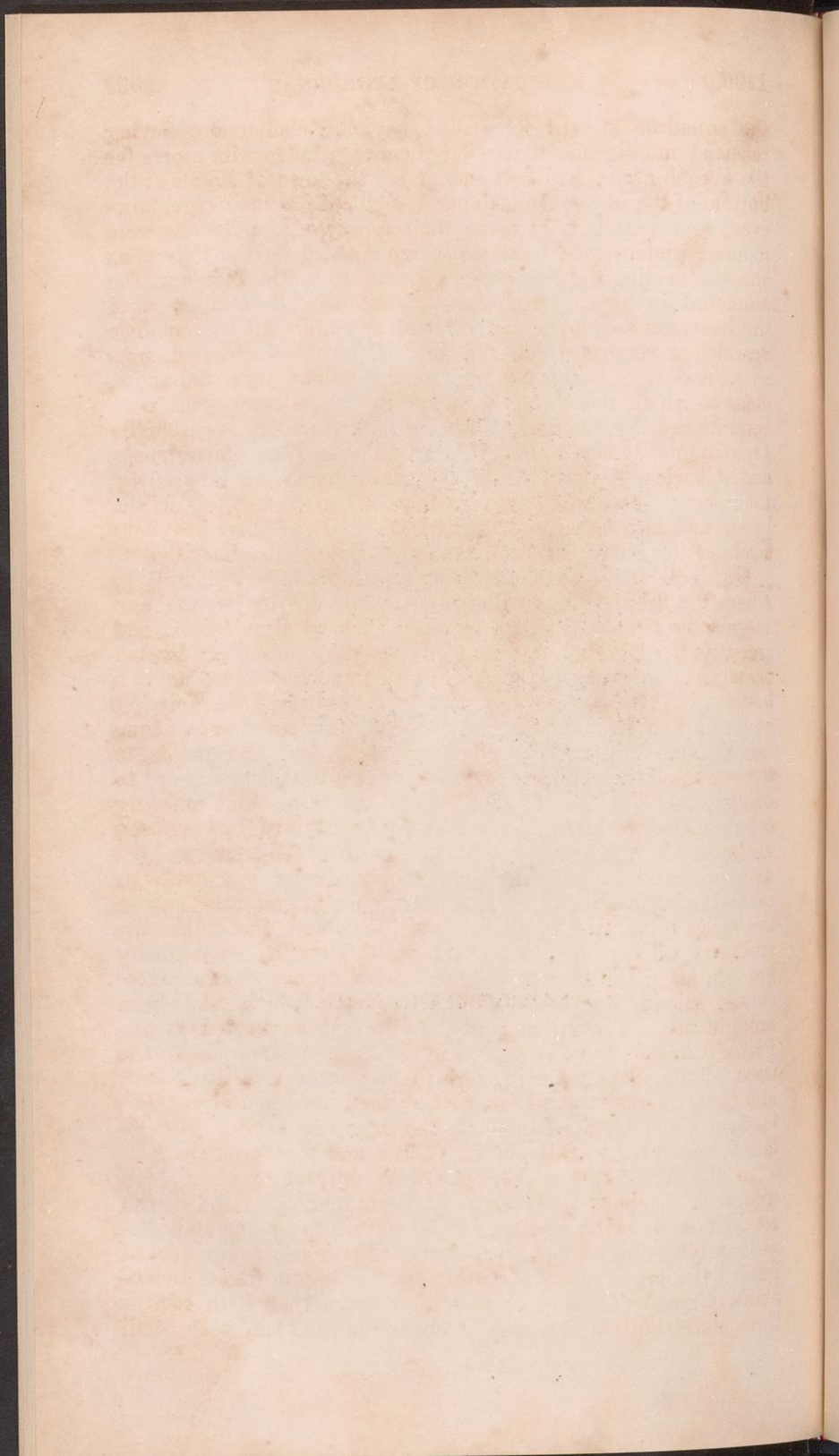


THE RIGHT HON<sup>BLE</sup> ADMIRAL VISCOUNT DUNCAN.

FROM A PAINTING BY H. P. DANLOUX.

*Engraved by W. Gratcheck.*

London, Richard Bentley, 1836.



the squadron steered for Laöna bay, the commodore having received intelligence that a large convoy, laden with stores for the French army, had cast anchor off the town of Finale at the bottom of the bay. On arriving in sight of the anchorage, however, four vessels only made their appearance, and these were moored under some batteries which opened on the Peterel as she was leading the boats of the squadron to the attack. The animated fire kept up from the ships in return effectually secured the boats, as they advanced to board and bring off the enemy's vessels; a service which the British gallantly executed, notwithstanding a heavy fire opened upon them from the shore, close to which the vessels were lying. The detachments were commanded by Lieutenant Maurice W. Suckling, assisted by Lieutenants James Noble, Henry Compton, John Culverhouse, and Charles Ryder; all of whom distinguished themselves. Lieutenant Noble was badly wounded by a musket-ball in the head, and two seamen of the Meleager, one of them the cockswain of her barge, were also wounded, but not dangerously.

On the 31st the commodore, then with his little squadron, to which the 32-gun frigate *Blanche*, Captain d'Arcy Preston, and 16-gun brig-sloop *Speedy*, Captain Thomas Elphinstone, had recently been added, cruising off Oneglia, chased six French vessels running along shore, until they anchored close under a battery. At 3 p.m. the *Agamemnon*, preceded by the *Meleager* and followed by the *Peterel* and *Speedy*, anchored in less than four fathoms' water. The *Diadem* and *Blanche*, meanwhile, to the regret of their officers and crews, were too far to leeward to co-operate. The smart cannonade of the three ships and brig soon silenced the batteries; whereupon the boats of the squadron, in the face of the fire still kept up from three 18-pounders in a national ketch, the *Génie*, and one 18-pounder in a gun-boat, carried both vessels. The four transports in company had, in the mean time, run on shore; but these, notwithstanding the musketry of the crews stationed on the beach, were finally brought off. The transports were laden with cannon, ordnance-stores, intrenching tools, and provisions; which had been brought from Toulon, and were to have been landed at St.-Pierre d'Acæne, to be employed in the siege of Mantua. To the want of the artillery on board these vessels was attributed, in a great degree, the failure of the attack upon that city. The loss sustained by the British, in the important service just detailed, amounted to only one man killed and three wounded.

In the latter end of June the near approach of the French troops to Leghorn rendered the speedy removal of the British residents and their property, as well as of the stores and provisions lying there for the use of the British fleet, an object of immediate importance. Accordingly, the 36-gun frigate *Inconstant*, Captain Thomas Francis Fremantle, then with two or three store-ships in company at anchor in the road, succeeded,

on the morning of the 27th, in bringing away the English and emigrants, or such of them as were desirous to quit Tuscany; also 23 merchant ships and brigs, and 14 tartans, lying in the mole; the chief part of the valuable effects in the warehouses, and 240 oxen which had been purchased for the use of Sir John Jervis's fleet. At noon the French entered the town; and at 1 P. M. the batteries opened on the *Inconstant*, who immediately got under way, and with the only vessel that remained, a brig laden with ship-timber, escaped without any damage or loss. Commodore Nelson, in the 74-gun ship *Captain*, to which he had just been promoted, anchored off the *Malora*, to be ready to stop any ships that might be uninformed of the change that had taken place. The remainder of the British squadron in this quarter, under the orders of Captain Lord Garlies, in the 32-gun frigate *Lively*, proceeded, with the merchants and emigrants, to San-Fiorenzo bay, where the British fleet was then lying.

It being well understood that one of the objects of France, in taking forcible possession of the neutral city of Leghorn, was to afford her the additional means of recovering possession of Corsica, no doubt could exist as to her intentions upon the neutral fortress of Porto-Ferrajo, in the isle of Elba, also belonging to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. To frustrate the attempt Sir Gilbert Elliot, the viceroy of Corsica, in conjunction with Sir John Jervis, made proposals to the governor of the town; and on the 10th of July, in the morning, Commodore Nelson, with the *Captain* 74 and a small frigate-squadron, on board of which was Major Duncan of the engineers, with a detachment of troops, took quiet possession of Porto-Ferrajo, a place mounted with 100 pieces of cannon, and garrisoned by 400 regulars, exclusive of militia. Every preparation had been made to storm the town, had the governor refused the terms offered, among which was an assurance that the Tuscans should receive no injury whatever in their persons or property.

On the 19th of August a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between France and Spain, was signed at Madrid; in one of the articles of which it was stipulated, that, within the space of three months, reckoning from the moment of the requisition, the power called on should hold in readiness, and place at the disposal of the power calling, 15 sail of the line and 10 heavy frigates and corvettes, properly manned, armed, and victualled. It might easily have been guessed which would be the "calling" power; and France did not even wait until the negotiation had produced its result ere she demanded a Spanish fleet to escort the squadron of M. Richery clear of that of Rear-admiral Mann, which was supposed to be hovering off Cadiz to intercept it.

On the 4th of August the French squadron in question, consisting of the 80-gun ship *Victoire*, and 74s *Barras*, *Berwick*,

Censeur, Duquesne, Jupiter, and Révolution, with the frigate Embuscade, Félicité, and Friponne, sailed from the bay of Cadiz, under the protection of a Spanish fleet of 20 ships of the line and 14 frigates and corvettes, commanded by Admiral Don Juan de Langara; a service which M. Richery might have performed alone, as Rear-admiral Mann, with his seven sail of the line, had quitted the bay since the 29th of the preceding month. Almost as soon as the Spanish fleet had got out to sea, Admiral Langara detached Rear-admiral Solano, with 10 sail of the line and six frigates, to escort M. Richery to a spot distant 100 leagues to the westward. Having complied with his orders, the Spanish rear-admiral put about on his return, and the French rear-admiral, in pursuance of the instructions he had received, continued his route towards the coast of North America.

This treaty between France and Spain was ratified at Paris on the 12th of September; and in three days afterwards, which was immediately on the receipt of the intelligence, England laid an embargo on all Spanish ships at anchor in her ports. Next followed, bearing date the 5th of October, a declaration of war by Spain against England. In this declaration, as is customary, the most plausible story is told to justify the resort to arms; but the real origin of the war was to be found in the mean subserviency of Spain to France, which country was now straining every nerve to overwhelm a power that would neither be corrupted by intrigue nor intimidated by threats.

About a week before the Spanish manifesto issued from Madrid, a fleet of 19 sail of the line and 10 frigates and corvettes, under the command of Admiral Don Juan de Langara, put to sea from Cadiz, bound through the Straits. On the 1st of October, at sunset, Cape de Gata bearing west by north distant three or four leagues, the squadron of Rear-admiral Mann, then lying nearly becalmed on its way from San-Fiorenzo bay to England with three transports and a brig under convoy, discovered the Spanish fleet in the south-east quarter. At 11 P. M., on a breeze springing up from the eastward, the Spaniards bore up in chase, and on the morning of the 3d captured the merchant brig and one of the transports; but the squadron and remaining transports succeeded, the same evening, in reaching the anchorage in Rosia bay near the mole of Gibraltar.

Foiled in his principal object, Admiral Langara stood back to the eastward, and calling off Carthagena, was joined by seven line-of-battle ships out of that port; which made his whole force 26 sail of the line besides frigates. With this formidable fleet, the Spanish admiral cruised as far up the Mediterranean as Cape Corse: in the neighbourhood of which he was seen on the 15th by some of the cruisers of Sir John Jervis, then, with his fleet numbering only 14 sail of the line (the *Ca-Ira* having been burnt by accident, the *Princess-Royal* and *Agamemnon*

sent to England, and the Captain detached off Bastia, lying at anchor in Mortella bay. Notwithstanding the opportunity thus afforded him, of striking a decisive blow against the British naval power in the Mediterranean, Admiral Langara steered for the road of Toulon; where, on or about the 26th of the month, he anchored, in company with 12 French sail of the line and several frigates ready for sea; forming in the aggregate, a force of 38 sail of the line and 18 or 20 frigates, the largest fleet of men-of-war, we believe, ever seen in that port.

The rapid and extraordinary successes of General Buonaparte in Italy had greatly reduced the weight and influence of England along the northern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean. The King of Sardinia, since the 15th of May, had been compelled to sign a treaty with France, by which he yielded up Savoy, the patrimony of his ancestors for many ages, together with the city and territory of Nice, and a large tract of land, which the conquerors entitled the Department of the Maritime Alps. The King of the Two Sicilies, being also unable to stand against the victorious army of Buonaparte, solicited and obtained, on the 5th of June, a cessation of hostilities, and on the 10th of November signed with France a treaty of peace equally humiliating. With these powers as neutrals, or vassals rather, and with Spain as an ally in the war, France was on the eve of attaining what had long been her wish, the sole dominion of the Mediterranean sea.

One island, however, that had only a year or two before belonged to the republic, was still in the hands of the English. Precarious, indeed, was the tenure of the latter. The report of the continual victories of their countrymen had encouraged the Franco-Corsicans to renew their endeavours to undermine the interest of the British. Discontent soon prevailed all over the island, and a communication was established between the exiles at Leghorn and elsewhere with their partisans in Corsica. It soon became manifest to the viceroy, that an insurrection was preparing, of such a magnitude, that the comparatively small British force on the island would be insufficient to put it down. On becoming acquainted with this state of things, and actuated, also, by the daily expected rupture with Spain, the British government sent out orders for Corsica to be evacuated, and the troops and stores removed to Porto-Ferrajo. Just as this measure was beginning to be carried into effect, the island was invaded, and the departure of the British, to say no worse of it, rather prematurely urged.

No English detailed account of the evacuation of Corsica having, that we know of, been published, not even in a contemporary work, written chiefly to blazon the deeds of the admiral who superintended the operations, we must either pass over the subject as beneath our comprehension, or trust to the French accounts for particulars. In doing the latter we shall keep our

discrimination to its duty, and not admit a fact but such as circumstances may seem to warrant.

Leghorn, after its possession by the French, became, as Buonaparte had intended it should be, the chief seat of preparation for the invasion of Corsica. General Gentili, a countryman of Buonaparte's, was placed at the head of the enterprise. Not having vessels enough to transport the whole of his troops at once, General Gentili detached General Casalta, another Corsican, with a small division, which, having embarked on board 14 feluccas and other small craft, sailed out of the port of Leghorn, and on the 19th of October landed on the island; unobserved, we believe, by a single British cruiser, although a contemporary informs us, that, at this very time, "Cockburn in the *Minerve* blockaded Leghorn."\*

Casalta was soon joined by a considerable number of patriotic Corsicans, and, thus reinforced, marched against Bastia, near which he arrived on the 21st. Master of the heights that command the city, and certain of the support of the inhabitants, the general summoned the garrison of Bastia to surrender in an hour. "The English troops amounted to very near 3000 men."† Here we must be allowed to express a doubt; and yet we have no means of showing how the fact really was. In the port lay the *Captain* and *Egmont* 74s, with some other vessels, and on board of these, it appears, under the personal direction of Commodore Nelson, the British troops embarked.

The following is an English account, which describes in very creditable, and, we have no doubt, in very just terms, the exertions of the British officers in performing this important service. "The great body of Corsicans were perfectly satisfied, as they had good reason to be, with the British government, sensible of its advantages, and attached to it; but when they found that the English intended to evacuate the island, they naturally and necessarily sent to make their peace with the French. The partisans of France found none to oppose them. A committee of thirty took upon themselves the government of Bastia, and sequestered all the British property; armed Corsicans mounted guard at every place, and a plan was laid for seizing the viceroy. Commodore Nelson, who was appointed to superintend the evacuation, frustrated these projects. On the 14th of October, 1796, he sent word to the committee, that, if the slightest opposition was made to the embarkation and removal of British property, he would batter the town down. A privateer, moored across the mole head, pointed her guns at the officer who carried this message, and muskets were levelled against him from the shore. Hereupon Captain Sutton, pulling out his watch, gave them a quarter of an hour to deliberate upon their answer. In

\* Brenton, vol. ii., p. 130.

† *Victoires et Conquêtes*, tome vii., p. 158.

five minutes after the expiration of that time, the ships, he said, would open their fire. Upon this the very sentinels scampered off, and every vessel came out of the mole. During the five following days, the work of embarkation was carried on: the property of individuals and public stores to the amount of 200,000*l.* was saved.\*

On the 22d, after having, as the French accounts say, taken the British rear-guard, consisting of 700 or 800 men of Dillon's regiment, prisoners, General Casalta quitted Bastia for the town of San-Fiorenzo. He found the gorges of San-Germano strongly guarded; but, after a smart brush, his troops forced the passage. The republicans then marched on towards the town, and, in the face of a constant and very destructive discharge of grape from two British 74s moored off the beach, made themselves masters of it, taking prisoners a part of the garrison. On the 22d, in the evening, Bonifacio was occupied by the French, and the garrison also, as it appears, made prisoners. In the mean while General Gentili, like General Casalta, had found the means, with the remainder of his troops, to get across from the "blockaded" port, and immediately marched upon Ajaccio, the birthplace of Buonaparte; the capture of which port restored the whole island to the dominion of the republic.

On the 2d of November, having completed, as far as was deemed practicable, the evacuation of Corsica, and ascertained that the fleet of Admiral Langara had come to an anchor in Toulon, Sir John Jervis set sail from Mortella bay, with a fleet of 15 ships of the line and some frigates, having on board the troops and stores embarked at Bastia, and under his convoy 10 or 12 merchant vessels, which his cruisers had brought down from Smyrna. On the 11th of December the whole of this fleet anchored in safety in Rosia bay; and thus was the Mediterranean left without a single British line-of-battle ship cruising upon its waters.

On the day preceding that on which Sir John arrived at Gibraltar, the Spanish fleet, accompanied by the French Rear-admiral Villeneuve, with the 80-gun ship *Formidable*, the *Jean-Jacques*, *Jemmappes*, *Mont-Blanc*, and *Tyrannicide* 74s, and the *Alceste*, *Diana*, and *Vestale* frigates, put to sea from Toulon. On the 5th or 6th of December the Spanish admiral, with his fleet numbering, as already mentioned, 26 sail of the line, besides 12 or 13 frigates, entered the port of Carthage; leaving *M. Villeneuve*, with his five sail of the line and three frigates, to make the best of his way to Brest unattended. On the 10th, in the afternoon, the French admiral passed the rock of Gibraltar, and was of course seen by a part of the fleet at anchor in the bay; but a heavy gale of wind from the east-south-east, while it drove the French rapidly through the gut, rendered it im-

\* Marshall, vol. i., p. 255.

practicable for the British to make any movement in pursuit, any, at all events, that was likely to succeed. Supposing the destination of this squadron to be the West Indies, Sir John Jervis, on the following day, the 11th, despatched a sloop of war with the intelligence to the commanders in chief at Barbadoes and Jamaica.

Figurative language, however much to be admired in poetry, ill suits the sober page of history: it is, indeed, so foreign to the subject, that the reader is apt to overlook the hyperbole, and either to treasure up in his memory the literal meaning, or wholly to reject it as too extravagant for his credence. A contemporary, feeling himself called upon to explain why Sir John Jervis quitted the Mediterranean with his fleet, says thus: "We now begin to perceive the full force of our mistaken lenity to the Toulonese, whose half-burnt fleet was, in conjunction with that of Spain, driving before them the most intrepid admiral and the bravest captains Britain had ever seen: Jervis, Nelson, Troubridge, Hood, Hallowell, and many others, were compelled to fly before the united forces of France and Spain."\*

Can this allude to Sir John Jervis's voyage from Corsica to Gibraltar? Who was "driving" him? Surely not Don Juan de Langara, who did not quit Toulon until the British admiral had been a month on his passage; nay, not until he was in the very act of sheltering himself under the guns of an impregnable fortress? It appears to us, that the writer would have better served the cause of his patron, by endeavouring to reconcile Sir John's proceedings to the pledge which, within a fortnight of the commencement of his retreat, he gave to the King of the two Sicilies, in the following words, part of a letter copied at full length into the same writer's work: "The gracious condescension your majesty has been pleased to show to me, in deprecating under your royal hand the dreadful effect which the retreat of the fleet of the king, my master, from these seas, would have on your majesty's dominions, and upon all Italy in the present crisis, has prompted me to exert every nerve to give all the support in my power to the cause of religion and humanity in which we are engaged; and I have, in consequence thereof, and conformably to the instructions I have recently received, concerted with the Viceroy of Corsica to take post in the island of Elba, and to face the enemy as long as the subsistence of the fleet and the army will admit."\*

The gale of wind, which came so opportunely for M. Ville-neuve's passage through the straits of Gibraltar, fell heavily, and in one instance fatally, upon the British ships at anchor in the bay. The 74-gun ship *Courageux*, commanded by Lieutenant John Burrows, in the absence of Captain Benjamin Hallowell, who was on shore attending a court-martial, parted from

\* Brenton, vol. ii., p. 138.

† Ibid p. 135.

her anchors, and drove nearly under the Spanish batteries on the opposite side of the bay before she could be brought up. It being necessary to retire from this dangerous situation, the *Courageux* weighed, and, under close-reefed topsails, stood over towards the Barbary coast, Lieutenant Burrows feeling averse, as it has since appeared, to run through the gut, lest he should fall in with M. Villeneuve's squadron.\* Towards evening the wind increased to a perfect hurricane, and the weather became very thick. The rain, also, poured down in torrents, and there came on a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning. Soon after 8 P. M. the crew, who had been harassed the whole day, were suffered to go to dinner, and the officers, except a lieutenant of the watch, also retired below to take some refreshment. At 9 P. M., while stretching across under her courses, to get well to windward of her port, the *Courageux* struck on the rocks at the foot of Ape's hill (Mons Abyla), on the coast of Barbary, and in a very few minutes was a complete wreck. Of about 593 officers and men that were on board, 129 only effected their escape; five by means of the launch that was towing astern, and the remainder by passing along the fallen mainmast to the rugged shore. Many perished in the attempt, and those who did reach the shore were compelled to undergo very severe privations ere they got back to Gibraltar.†

The same gale of wind in which the *Courageux* was lost nearly proved fatal to the 80-gun ship *Gibraltar*, Captain John Pakenham, and the *Culloden* 74, Captain Thomas Troubridge. The latter drove from her anchors, and narrowly escaped being cast

\* Captain Brenton (vol. ii., p. 139) says, "the combined fleet," not knowing, seemingly, that Admiral Langara had stopped at Carthagen.

† In the first edition, the date of this melancholy accident was stated to be the 17th. Steel makes it the 18th, and Marshall (*Royal Nav. Biog.*, vol. i., p. 468) the 19th; but it really happened on the night of the 10th. Captain Brenton enumerates the number saved from the wreck, "by jumping from the side of the ship to the shore," at 160. That the account, as we have stated it, is correct, will appear by the following abstract taken from the ship's pay-book at the Navy-office:

Established complement, exclusive of widows' men . . . . .	633
In the barge with Captain Hallowell . . . . .	12
In the pinnace with Lieut. Tucker, assisting } a transport under the Spanish batteries . . . . . }	9
At work in Gibraltar dock-yard . . . . .	4
In prizes at Porto-Ferrajo . . . . .	9
On board the <i>Utile</i> sloop of war . . . . .	5
Absent . . . . .	39
Saved { in the launch . . . . . 5 from the wreck . . . . . 124	129
	<hr/> 168
Number that perished, admitting the ship to have been fully manned . . . . .	465

away on the Pearl rock; and the former was obliged to cut from her anchors, and struck several times on the bank off Cabrita point. The critical situation of the Gibraltar merits being recorded. On cutting her cable, which she did at 9 P. M., the ship set her foresail and staysails, and at 9 h. 30 m. P. M., in order to haul up clear of Cabrita point, her mainsail and main topsail. The latter sail split almost as soon as it was set. At 10 P. M., owing to the increased violence of the gale, the Gibraltar carried away her fore topmast, and split her foresail, mainsail, maintopmast staysail, and mizen staysail. At 10 h. 30 m. P. M. the ship, thus deprived of the means of clearing the land, struck several times on a bank off Cabrita point, but in five minutes drove over it, and, being a remarkably strong ship, made no water. At midnight the Gibraltar hove to, and at noon on the 11th let go her only remaining anchor in Tangier bay.

This is the substance of what is noted down in the Gibraltar's log; but an account somewhat different appears at p. 140, vol. ii. of Captain Brenton's work. "Driven by the violence of the gale down upon Cabrito point, the topgallant yard stowed in, the main rigging caught the lee-clew of the mainsail, and prevented their setting that sail, in consequence of which she caught upon the Pearl rock, which lies about three quarters of a mile from the shore off the western point of the bay: here in a dark night, with a tremendous sea breaking over her, the crew assembled on the deck, and testified by their screams and actions every symptom of despair, and madly proposed as a last resource cutting away the masts and saving themselves on the wreck. The axes were brought, and preparations made for this purpose, but strongly opposed by the first lieutenant, who, moving the wheel, assured the captain that the rudder was free and uninjured; a wave at the same time struck the ship forward with such force as to upset a fore-castle gun, and the shock carried away the fore topmast; the next sea lifted her off the rock: being fortunately one of the strongest built ships in the service she made no water. Sufficient sail was set to enable her to weather Cabrito point, and in the morning she got into Tangier bay, and soon after rejoined the fleet; she was however considered to have sustained so much injury, that it was judged necessary to send her to England in order to have her taken into dock: here it was discovered that a very large fragment of the rock had pierced her bottom and remained there—had it disengaged itself the consequence might have been fatal to all on board."

Now, the log states, that the mainsail *was* set, and shows clearly that the ship struck on the bank, rock, or whatever it may be, in consequence of the loss of her fore topmast (half on hour before) and the splitting of nearly all her sails. These manifest inaccuracies in the account lead us to hope that there is equal untruth in the alleged behaviour of the crew, behaviour more characteristic of timid females than of hardy British seamen.

The Pearl rock lies about a mile and a half due south, and Cape Malabata, the north-east point of Tangier bay (on the opposite side of the strait), about 22 miles south-west, of Cabrita point: how then, with the wind at east-south-east, could the Gibraltar want "to weather Cabrito point" to get into Tangier bay?

The Gibraltar did not sail for England until five weeks after the accident; but, when taken into dock at Plymouth, in March 1797, a large piece of rock was undoubtedly found sticking in her bottom. Had the Gibraltar, on her way home, encountered a resolute enemy, the concussion of a few broadsides might have dislodged the rock and proved fatal to the ship. Of such a circumstance, too, the enemy would have taken due advantage, and have declared, with some show of reason, that he had sunk his opponent.

Having intrusted the command of the naval force at Porto-Ferrajo to commodore Nelson, who forthwith shifted his broad pendant from the Captain to the Minerve frigate, Sir John Jervis, on the 16th of December, got under way with his fleet and steered for the Tagus, where he expected to be joined by a reinforcement from England. Very soon after his departure, the Zealous struck on a sunken rock in Tangier bay, and, although she presently got off, was greatly damaged. On the 21st Sir John entered the river of Lisbon; and here another sad accident befel his fleet. The Bombay-Castle 74, Captain Thomas Sotheby, having put her helm a-port to avoid running foul of the Camel store-ship, was swept from her course by the tide, and obliged to let go an anchor. Before, however, the ship could swing, she struck on the sand-bank at the river's mouth. Here the Bombay-Castle remained beating from the 21st until 8 h. 30 m. P. M. on the 28th, when every officer and man of her crew was safe out of her. In the first instance some delay occurred in the arrival of boats to her assistance; and afterwards the increased violence of the weather rendered unavailing all the efforts that were made to get the ship afloat. The Camel also grounded on the bar, but got off without any material damage.

This last accident reduced Sir John Jervis's fleet in force, but not in number, as the St.-Albans 64, bearing the flag of Vice-admiral Vandeput, was lying in the Tagus when the admiral arrived: consequently, the latter had still under his command 14 sail of the line, including one ship, however, the Zealous, not in a condition for immediate service. A contemporary states, that Sir John sailed from Gibraltar with only ten, and had now but nine sail of the line "to contend against the French and Spanish fleets."\* As a proof that our account is correct, here follow the names of the ships: Victory, Britannia, Barfleur, Blenheim, St.-George, Gibraltar, Captain, Culloden, Egmont, Excellent, Goliath, Zealous, Diadem, and St.-Albans. As to the danger of

\* Brenton, vol. ii., p. 141.

a contention with the French and Spanish fleets, that was surely over-rated, when one lay at Toulon, the other at Carthagena, and neither had evinced the least disposition to act on the offensive.

#### LIGHT SQUADRONS AND SINGLE SHIPS.

Captain Sir William Sidney Smith, of the 38-gun frigate *Diamond*, having sounded the entrance to the port of Herqui, near Cape Fréhel on the coast of France, determined notwithstanding its narrowness and intricacy, to make an attempt upon a French corvette and six smaller vessels, which had previously been chased into it. Accordingly, on the 18th of March, at noon, the *Diamond*, accompanied by the 14-gun brig *Liberty*, Lieutenant George M'Kinley, and hired lugger *Aristocrat*, Lieutenant Abraham Gossett, stood for the port; the entrance to which was defended by two batteries, one of one, the other of two 24-pounders, erected on a high and rocky promontory, and, on this occasion, by a fourth gun mounted on a commanding point. This gun opened upon the *Diamond* as she passed, but, in eleven minutes was completely silenced. On rounding the point, the *Diamond* became exposed to a very galling fire from the three guns on the height, the only practicable way of silencing these guns being to storm them, Lieutenant Horace Pine, first of the *Diamond*, and Lieutenant Edmund Carter of the marines, were sent with a detachment of men, to effect that object.

The French troops from the batteries having in the mean time, formed on the beach, checked by their fire the approach of the boats; whereupon Lieutenant Pine, proceeding to a spot, pointed out by Sir Sidney, landed in front of the guns; then, climbing the steep precipice, reached the heights before the troops from below could regain them. After spiking the guns, the lieutenant and his party descended the hill, and re-embarked, with the loss of only one wounded; but that one was Lieutenant Carter, mortally. The *Diamond*, *Liberty*, and *Aristocrat*, then proceeded, without further annoyance from the shore, to attack the corvette and the other armed vessels lying near her. Lieutenant M'Kinley, profiting by the *Liberty's* light draught of water, followed the corvette closely, and engaged her in a very gallant and judicious manner.

Finally, in spite of the fire kept up, as well from the vessels, as from the troops that had mustered on the beach and rock to protect them, the *Etourdie* corvette, of sixteen 12 (as represented, but more probably 8) pounders on the main deck, four brigs, two sloops, and one out of the two armed luggers, were set on fire and effectually destroyed. At 10 P. M., the wind and tide suiting, the little squadron weighed and repassed the point of Herqui, receiving a few shots from a gun which the enemy had succeeded in restoring to use. The loss of the British in

these several attacks amounted to two seamen killed, Lieutenants Pine and Carter, the latter mortally as already stated, and five seamen wounded.

On the 20th of March, at 6 A. M., *Bec du Raz* bearing north by east distant four miles, a squadron under Sir John Borlase Warren, composed of the 44-gun frigate *Anson*, Captain Philip Charles Durham, 40-gun frigate *Pomone*, Captain Sir John Borlase Warren, 38-gun frigate *Artois*, Captain Sir Edmund Nagle, and 32-gun frigate *Galatea*, Captain Richard Goodwin Keats, having just tacked from the *Saintes* with the wind at east by south, discovered five strange sail in the south-south-east. The squadron immediately gave chase; and at 8 A. M., 39 sail of French vessels appeared in sight. At 10 A. M. the two leewardmost, two merchant brigs, were brought to by the *Pomone* and *Artois*; as, in about half an hour afterwards, were a ship and a brig. The enemy's vessels of war were now drawn up in line to leeward of their convoy, counted at 60 sail, and about three miles to windward of the British squadron; and which vessels of war consisted of the

Gun-frigate			
40	Proserpine.....	Commodore Franç.-Hen.-Eugène Daugier,	
	Unité.....	Captain Ch.-Alex.-Léon Durand-Linois,	
36	Coquille.....	„ Pierre-Paul Gourrage,	
	Tamise.....	„ Jean-Bap.-Alexis Fradin,	
Gun-corvette			
20	Cigogne.....	„ Lieutenant Louis-Gabriel Pillet,	

together with the armed store-ship *Etoile*, Lieutenant Mathurin-Théodore Berthelin, and gun-brig *Mouche*.

At 45 minutes past noon, having formed his four frigates in line on the larboard tack, Sir John made sail in chase, leaving the *Valiant* lugger in charge of the four prizes to leeward. At 3 P. M., the British having gained so much in the chase as to point toward the rear of the French, the latter's van-ships bore down to support their rear, and the two squadrons except the corvette, which remained on the starboard tack to windward, engaged as they passed on opposite tacks. The *Galatea*, who was the rearmost as well as smallest of the British frigates, bore the brunt of this encounter. She had her rigging a good deal cut, and one maindeck gun dismantled; also a midshipman (Mr. Evans) killed, and four seamen wounded. The *Artois* who was next ahead of her, had her maintopmast stay and some of her rigging cut away, but sustained no loss. At 3 h. 50 m. P. M. the British squadron tacked, and again at 4 h. 20 m. P. M.; when a battery on shore fired two shots, but neither of which reached.

By making short boards, the British ships had now got to windward of their adversaries; and at 4 h. 45 m. P. M. the *Galatea* was hailed by the commodore, and directed to lead through the enemy's line. At 5 P. M., by which time all the

British ships had put about, the *Galatea* bore down, followed by her companions in line of battle; and the French squadron, thus determinedly pursued, made all sail towards the entrance of the passage du Raz. At 5 h. 30 m. P. M. the rearmost French ship, the *Etoile* store-ship, of 28 long 8-pounders and 159 men, after exchanging a few shots with the *Galatea*, struck her colours. Night coming on, the four French frigates and ship-corvette effected their escape through the narrow and intricate passage which they had entered. Meanwhile the bulk of the convoy, left under the charge of the *Mouche*, two other gun-brigs, and a lugger, had taken shelter among the Penmarck rocks, and were protected also by batteries to the eastward.

One seaman killed, and an acting lieutenant (Henry Burke) and one seaman wounded, on board the *Galatea*, making her total loss two killed and six wounded, was the only additional loss sustained by the British. It does not appear that the *Etoile* sustained any loss; nor could the casualties, if any, on board the remaining French ships be ascertained.

It is not worth while, in this slight skirmish, to make any display of the comparative force of the parties. It is clear, however, that the British, with two very powerful 24-pounder and two 18-pounder frigates, to oppose to one French 18-pounder and three 12-pounder frigates, a corvette and an armed store-ship, had the odds greatly in their favour. This is as the fact really was, and not according to the statement of force at the foot of Sir John Warren's letter. There the *Unité* and *Coquille* are described as 18-pounder frigates, and the *Etoile* as mounting 30, and the *Cigogne* 22, long 12-pounders. The complements of the frigates are even more exaggerated than their guns. The *Proserpine* is assigned 500 men, although, when captured three months afterwards, she had only 346; and the *Unité* and *Coquille* 400 each, although the first, at her capture in less than a month afterwards, had only 255.

On the 13th of April, at 4 P. M., a squadron under the command of Captain Sir Edward Pellew in the 44-gun frigate *Indefatigable*, consisting, besides that ship, of the 44-gun ship *Argo*, Captain Richard Rundell Burgess, 38-gun frigate *Révolutionnaire*, Captain Francis Cole, and 36-gun frigates *Amazon* and *Concorde*, Captains Robert Carthew Reynolds and Anthony Hunt, while cruising off Ushant, discovered and chased an enemy's frigate at some distance to windward. The *Révolutionnaire*, being the nearest to the stranger, was directed to tack and endeavour to cut her off from the land. Just as it grew dark, the *Révolutionnaire* compelled the French frigate to go about, but, owing to the haze and darkness of the night, lost sight of her until 9 P. M.; when, being discovered in the act of bearing up, she was followed under all sail. At 11 h. 30 m. the *Révolutionnaire* closed with the stranger; and Captain Cole, very much to his credit, hailed, and endeavoured to persuade the French com-

mander to surrender his ship to the powerful force then coming up.

This being refused, the Révolutionnaire was compelled to open her fire; which the French frigate feebly returned with her stern-chase guns. After the discharge of the second broadside, and just as the Révolutionnaire, then going 10 knots an hour and fast nearing the land, had put her helm a-port, in order to run her opponent on board, the crew of the latter called out that they surrendered. The prize proved to be the French 36-gun frigate *Unité*, armed precisely as the *Engageante*, Captain (de vais.) Charles-Alexandre-Léon Durand-Linois, from Lorient bound to Rochefort. The Révolutionnaire, who appears to have mounted eight 32-pounder carronades in addition to her 38 long guns, had not a man of her 287 hurt. The *Unité*, on the other hand, out of a complement, as sworn to by her officers, and stated in Captain Cole's letter, of 255, had nine men killed, and 11 wounded.

COMPARATIVE FORCE OF THE COMBATANTS.

		REVOLUTIONNAIRE.	UNITE.
Broadside-guns . . . . .	} No.	23	19
	} lbs.	425	240
Crew . . . . .	No.	287	255
Size . . . . .	tons.	1148	893

Here are two "38-gun frigates;" and yet, in broadside weight of metal, one of them is almost twice the force of the other. Even had she met the Révolutionnaire single-handed, the *Unité* would have engaged with scarcely a chance of success. As a man of war, too, the ship of Captain Linois was not a little incommoded by the presence of Madame le Large, wife to the governor of Rochefort, with the whole of her family and domestics. These, including the lady's son, an officer belonging to the ship, Captain Pellew, very considerably, allowed to proceed to Brest in a neutral vessel; taking the young man's parole not to serve again during the war until exchanged. The *Unité* was a fine little frigate, about seven years old, and became added to the British navy as a 12-pounder 36.

On the 17th of April, in the morning, the 38-gun frigate *Diamond*, Captain Sir William Sidney Smith, then cruising alone, came to an anchor in the outer road of Havre, and immediately discovered, at anchor in the inner road, ready for sea, a French armed lugger, known, from the recapture of one of her prizes, to be the *Vengeur*, of ten 3-pounders and 45 men, an exceedingly swift-sailing privateer, that had been several times chased in vain, and whose commander was a very enterprising and experienced seaman. Conceiving it an object to stop the career of such a pest to commerce, Sir Sidney resolved to attempt cutting her out.

The expedition for that purpose, when all was ready, consisted of the Diamond's launch, armed with an 18-pounder carronade and muskets, and four other boats, one of which was a two-oared wherry, armed with muskets only. In the boats were embarked nine officers (six of them from 12 to 16 years of age), three servants, and 40 seamen; total 52. As is rather unusual on such occasions, the captain himself took the command of the boats. Circumstanced as the Diamond then was, there appears to have been no alternative. Her first lieutenant had been sent to England with despatches, the second lieutenant was sick in his cot, and the third so indisposed as to be unequal to any exertion. There was also an acting lieutenant, but, although possessed of all the requisite courage, he was too young to have the entire charge of such an enterprise; and the services of the master, who was an excellent pilot for the French coast, were wanted on board the frigate.

At 10 P. M. Sir Sidney, having embarked in the two-oared wherry, pushed off from the Diamond at the head of his boats. On arriving within sight of the lugger, the boats lay upon their oars to reconnoitre her position, and to receive from their commanding officer his definitive orders. This done, the boats took a broad sheer between the Vengeur and the shore, in order to assume the appearance of fishing-boats coming out of the harbour, and thereby protract the moment of alarm. The plan appeared to succeed, and the boats, unsuspected if not unobserved, pulled straight towards the object of attack; intending to reserve their fire until the lugger herself should open upon them. This the latter did as soon as they arrived within half pistol-shot. The boats instantly returned the fire, and in less than ten minutes, without the slightest casualty, were in possession of the Vengeur.

Now it was that the British discovered the difficulties of their situation. During the short struggle between them and the privateer's men, the latter, very wisely, had cut the cable of their vessel; which, in consequence, had been, and still was, drifting with the tide towards the shore. Search was in vain made for an anchor heavy enough to hold the vessel against the strength of a rapid tide that rushed into the Seine. All the boats were sent ahead to tow, and every sail was set on the lugger, but all was in vain. After these fruitless efforts, a small kedge was let go, with scarcely a hope of its holding. The vessel dragged it a long way, but at length brought up nearly abreast of Harfleur, on the northern shore of the river.

Sir Sidney now quitted the prize in his boat, to proceed to the Diamond; but observing, as daylight approached, several vessels coming out of Havre to attempt her recapture, he returned to the lugger, with the determination of defending her till the north-east tide made, or a propitious breeze sprang up, by which his brave companions in arms might be extricated from their perilous

situation; perilous, indeed, for the lugger was at an anchor nearly two miles higher up the river than the town of Havre.

Every preparation was now made for an obstinate resistance, as far as the scanty means possessed by the vessel would allow. There was not a round of grape-shot on board, and the match was so bad that it would with difficulty fire the powder. Almost the first step taken by Sir Sidney on his return to the lugger, was to discharge his prisoners, by sending them upon their parole to Honfleur, on the southern bank of the river. The launch that carried them, and another boat, it is believed, then pulled towards and reached the Diamond, still at anchor in the outer road of Havre, and anxiously awaiting the return of her commander.

While the prisoners were embarking in the boats, several shot from the shore reached the *Vengeur*; and shortly afterwards a large armed lugger advanced to attack her. To receive the latter to the best advantage, the *Vengeur* got under way, and eventually beat her off, but not without sustaining a loss of several men wounded, including a young midshipman, Charles Beecroft. A variety of small-craft, filled with troops, now surrounded the *Vengeur*; and a furious action commenced chiefly with musketry. No breeze springing up, and the force opposed to him every moment increasing, Sir Sidney was compelled to surrender, with a loss of four of his party killed and seven wounded.

The prisoners thus made, consisting, in consequence of the return of some of the boats, of not more than 20 or 30 officers and men, were landed at Havre, and marched thence to Rouen; where they were imprisoned. On the 21st Sir Sidney Smith and midshipman John Westley Wright quitted Rouen under an escort, and arrived the next day at Paris. Here, upon a principle that would equally apply to any zealous and enterprising officer belonging to the navy of any belligerent nation, Sir Sidney Smith and Mr. Wright were considered not as prisoners of war, but as prisoners of state. Under the scandalous *régime secret*, they, on the 3d of July, were removed to the tower of the temple at Paris, and there confined in separate cells. At the end of two years, however, Sir Sidney and his young friend effected their escape (by the connivance, as is thought, of the French government), and arrived in London in the month of May, 1798.

On the 20th of April, in the morning, as Sir Edward Pellew, having despatched home the *Révolutionnaire* and her prize, was lying to, while the latter weathered the *Lizard*, a suspicious sail appeared coming in from the seaward. Her not answering the private signal, when she tacked from the squadron, marked her out as an enemy; and Sir Edward, having ordered the *Argo* to Plymouth, made all sail in chase, accompanied by the frigates *Amazon* and *Concorde*.

After a chase of 15 hours, and a run of 168 miles, the In-

defatigable, from her superior sailing, was enabled to come up with the strange frigate; whom the wind had prevented from steering for Ushant, otherwise she must have escaped. At a little past midnight the action commenced, and continued, at close quarters, both ships under a crowd of sail, during one hour and 45 minutes. The French frigate, by this time, had lost her mizenmast and main topmast, and was otherwise greatly crippled; nor was the Indefatigable much less disabled, having lost her gaff and mizen topmast, as well as the use of her main top-sail, both leech-ropes having been shot away.

Having no after-sail to back, the Indefatigable unavoidably shot past her opponent; and, owing to the latter's masterly manœuvres, had some difficulty, in this dilemma, to avoid being raked. While the Indefatigable lay ahead, reeving new braces, in order to come to the wind and renew the action, the Concorde (the Amazon not far behind) got up, and took a commanding position under the stern of the French ship. Whereupon the latter, having four feet water in the hold, and being greatly damaged in hull, masts, and rigging, fired a lee-gun and struck her light, as a signal of surrender.

The prize proved to be the French 40-gun frigate *Virginie*, Captain Jacques Bergeret, a remarkably fine ship, and armed precisely according to the establishment of her class. The Indefatigable was a cut-down 64-gun ship, and mounted 26 long 24-pounders on the main deck, and two long 12-pounders and 18 42-pounder carronades on the quarterdeck and forecastle, total 46 guns, with a complement of 330 men and boys. Of these the Indefatigable, like the *Artoise* in the last action, did not lose a man. The *Virginie*, on the contrary, out of her crew of 339 men and boys, as deposed to by her officers, had only one less than is stated in Captain Pellew's letter, lost 14 or 15 men killed and 27 wounded, 10 of them badly.

COMPARATIVE FORCE OF THE COMBATANTS.

		INDEFATIGABLE.	VIRGINIE.
Broadside-guns .....	{ No.	23	22
	{ lbs.	702	342
Crew .....	No.	327	339
Size.....	tons	1384	1066

This statement shows that the French frigate, except in number of men, was greatly inferior to the ship with which she fought; yet Captain Bergeret did not surrender until a second frigate was preparing to rake him, and a third approaching under all sail to join in the action. No one was more ready than Sir Edward Pellew himself, to do justice to his enemy on this occasion.

The *Virginie*, as we have already stated, was a remarkably fine frigate, and became, in consequence, a valuable acquisition to the class of British 38s. Sir Edward, however, had been misinformed when in his official letter he stated, that the *Virginie*

was "158 feet long and 43 broad." On the contrary, the *Virginie* measured but 151 feet  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches on the lower deck, and her extreme breadth was only 39 feet 10 inches. In fact, she was a ship considerably shorter and narrower than the *Indefatigable*, and was exceeded in size by several of the French 40-gun frigates which had previously been captured.

On the 27th of April the British 12-pounder 32-gun frigate *Niger*, Captain Edward James Foot, was detached by Vice-admiral Colpoys, cruising with his fleet off Brest, in pursuit of a large French armed lugger, which, at sunset, anchored for shelter among the rocks off the Penmarcks. Having approached as near as the depth of water would allow, the *Niger* anchored, with a spring on her cable, and kept up a brisk, but, owing to the distance, ineffectual fire on the lugger, until 9 p. m.; when Captain Foote despatched the barge and cutters, with the *Niger's* first and third lieutenants, George Long and Thomas Thompson, master's mate, Jeremiah Morgan, and midshipman James Patton, with a party of seamen and six marines, to bring away or destroy the vessel.

The tide having ebbed considerably, it was not without great difficulty that the boats got alongside the object of attack. After an obstinate resistance on the part of the French, in which many of them were killed and wounded, the national lugger *Ecureuil*, of eighteen 4-pounders and 105 men, commanded by Lieutenant Jean-Baptiste-Augustin Rousseau, who with the survivors of his crew excepting 28 taken prisoners, escaped to the shore, was set on fire and destroyed; with the loss, on the part of the British, of Lieutenant Long, wounded severely on the head and hand, and one midshipman (Mr. Patton), three seamen, and two marines, wounded slightly.

On the 4th of May, at noon, latitude  $28^{\circ}$  north, and longitude  $69^{\circ}$  west, the British ship-sloop *Spencer*, of fourteen 12-pounder carronades and two long fours, with 80 men and boys, Captain Andrew Fitzherbert Evans, after a long chase came up with the French gun-brig *Volcan*, of twelve 4-pounders, and between 80 and 90 men. A close action ensued, which, owing to the upsetting of three of the *Spencer's* carronades on the side engaged, was protracted to an hour and a quarter; at the end of which time the *Volcan*, having had both topmasts shot away, and her standing and running rigging cut to pieces, hauled down her colours.

The *Spencer* had her mizenmast badly wounded, and some of her running rigging rendered useless, but sustained no greater loss than one seaman killed and one wounded. The loss on board the *Volcan* was known to be considerable, but could not be ascertained, and arose in a great degree from the explosion of some powder-flasks and combustibles which the crew had prepared to assist them in boarding the British vessel. Several of the Frenchmen, to avoid the effects of the explosion, leaped over-

board and were drowned, and others were miserably burnt; of which latter number some died shortly after their removal. Notwithstanding these losses, the surviving prisoners are stated to have far exceeded in number the crew of the Spencer, who probably had not her full compliment on board. Captain Evans speaks in the highest terms of his officers and ship's company, and names among the former Lieutenant Joseph Lenox and Mr. Harriden the master.

Intelligence having reached Admiral Duncan, the British commander-in-chief in the North Sea, and then cruising off the Texel with a squadron of nine sail of the line, besides 50-gun ships, frigates, and sloops, that the Dutch 36-gun frigate *Argo* and three national brigs were on their way from Flickerve in Norway to the first-named port, Captain Lawrence William Halsted, in the 36-gun frigate *Phoenix*, accompanied by the 50-gun ship *Leopard*, 28-gun frigate *Pegasus*, and brig-sloop *Sylph*, was despatched to intercept them.

On the 12th of May, at 5 A. M., just as these ships, in pursuance of their orders, had made sail from the squadron, with the wind at west-north-west, the *Argo*, the three brigs, and a cutter, all standing upon a wind on the starboard tack, hove in sight in the south-east. Chase was immediately given, both by the detached ships, and by the squadron in the rear. At the approach of the former, the three brigs bore up, and were pursued by the *Pegasus* and *Sylph*; while the *Phoenix* and *Leopard*, the latter far astern, directed their attention to the *Argo*.

As if undetermined whether to go large or keep by the wind, the latter frequently changed her position, but, at length, kept with the wind a-beam. At 8 A. M., the *Phoenix* having got close to her weather quarter, the *Argo* hoisted Dutch colours; whereupon the former fired a shot across her. A few minutes placed the *Phoenix* alongside of her opponent to windward, and a smart action commenced on both sides, which continued for about 20 minutes; when, having sustained some damage in her masts, rigging, and sails, and seeing no prospect of escaping from the numerous foes surrounding her, the *Argo* struck her flag.

The *Phoenix* appears to have mounted eight 32-pounder caronades beyond her establishment as an 18-pounder 36, or 44 guns in all, with a net complement of 271 men and boys. The only damage she sustained was in her rigging and sails, and her only loss was one man killed and three wounded; while the *Argo*, whose armament was precisely the same as that of the *Alliance*,\* with a crew of 237 men and boys, lost six men killed and 28 wounded: a proof that her officers and crew were not deterred from doing their duty by the superiority of the force opposed to them.

\* See p. 292.

On the 27th of May, early in the morning, the *Lizard* bearing north-north-east distant 15 leagues, the British 14-gun brig-sloop *Suffisante*, Captain Nicholas Tomlinson, discovered a strange sail about six miles to windward. After a chase of 11 hours, the *Suffisante* came up with the French brig-corvette *Revanche*, of 12 long 4-pounders and 85 men, commanded by Lieutenant George-Henri Draveman, an old and experienced seaman, and who was now endeavouring to escape into Brest by the Passage du Four. After a close engagement of half an hour, amidst the rocks between the island of Ushant and the main, the *Revanche* struck her colours, having sustained a loss of two men killed and seven wounded, and inflicted no greater loss upon the *Suffisante* than one seaman wounded.

The action having been fought close upon a lee-shore, the greatest exertions were required, as well to avoid the numerous rocks by which the British brig was surrounded, as to prevent the French brig from effecting her escape by her better acquaintance with the intricate navigation of this part of the coast. Captain Tomlinson, however, had previously distinguished himself by his skill and activity in operations upon the French coast, and, we believe, was made a commander, chiefly on account of his praiseworthy conduct in the *Pelter* gun-brig, when, in the summer and autumn of 1795, that vessel formed a part of Sir John Warren's unfortunate expedition to Quiberon.

On the 8th of June, at 2 A. M., Scilly bearing east half-south distant 17 leagues, the British 18-pounder 32-gun frigate *Unicorn*, Captain Thomas Williams, and 12-pounder 36-gun frigate *Santa-Margarita*, Captain Thomas Byam Martin, discovered, about three miles on their lee beam, three strange ships of war; which, on being neared in chase, were ascertained to be two frigates and a ship-corvette. They were, in fact, the French 36-gun frigates *Tribune*, Commodore Jean Moulston, and *Tamise* (late British *Thames*\*), Captain Jean-Baptiste-Alexis Fradin, and 18-gun corvette *Légère*, Lieutenant Jean-Martin-Michel Carpentier. These ships had sailed from Brest on the 4th, in company with the 40-gun frigate *Proserpine*, Captain Etienne Pevrieux, who had since parted from them in a fog.

At 9 A. M. the three French ships formed in a close bow and quarter line, and continued to run from the two British frigates in that position, the *Tribune* keeping under easy sail for the support of the others. The *Légère*, as the two British frigates approached, hauled out to windward, passing the latter at long gun-shot; but she afterwards continued the same course as her two companions, apparently to be in readiness to lend her aid to the one that should most need it. At 1 P. M. the *Tribune* and *Tamise*, having hoisted French colours, and the former a broad pendant, commenced with their stern-chasers a quick and

\* See p. 107.

well-directed fire; and which from its destructive effects on the sails and rigging of the Unicorn and Santa-Margarita, greatly retarded their progress.

At 4 P. M. the Tamise bore round up, both to avoid the fire of the Unicorn, and to pour a broadside into the bow of the Santa-Margarita; but the latter judiciously evaded the salute, by laying herself close alongside her opponent. This pair of combatants now went off by themselves, engaging with great spirit during 20 minutes; at the end of which the Tamise, having sustained considerable damage in hull, sails, and rigging, struck her colours.

The Santa-Margarita, whose force was 40 guns, including four 32-pounder carronades, with a complement of 237 men and boys, had only two seamen killed, and her boatswain and two seamen wounded. The Tamise was armed precisely as No. 5 in the table at p. 54, with two additional brass 36-pounder carronades for her maindeck bow-ports, and is represented to have lost, out of a complement of 306 men and boys, 32 killed and 19 wounded, several of them mortally, and the rest badly.

COMPARATIVE FORCE OF THE COMBATANTS.

		SANTA-MARGARITA.	TAMISE.
Broadside-guns . . . . .	{ No.	20	20
	{ lbs.	250	279
Crew . . . . .	No.	237	306
Size . . . . .	tons.	993	656

Were it not for the preponderance in the size of the two ships, an undisturbed meeting between the Santa-Margarita and Tamise would have fallen within the line of well-matched cases. Nothing appears that can in any way reflect on the professional character of Captain Fradin and the officers and crew of the French frigate.

As a proof of the modesty with which the captain of the Santa-Margarita communicated the account of his action, the prize is described as "mounting 36 guns," Captain Martin, apparently, deeming it unfair to enumerate the Tamise's carronades, and omit those of the Santa-Margarita. In every prize-list of the time the mounted force of the Tamise is stated at "36 guns." We are therefore happy in having it in our power to correct a mistake, that must, in every way, enhance the merit of the officer by whose skill and gallantry the Tamise was captured. In addition to the assistance which he derived from his first lieutenant, Mr. George Harison, Captain Martin speaks highly of the services of Captain Joseph Bullen, a volunteer on board the frigate; and who, shortly afterwards, was promoted to post-rank, as was Lieutenant Harison to the rank of commander.

During the 20 months she had belonged to the French, the Tamise had been a very active cruiser. The *Moniteur* of the

month preceding her capture boasted, that she had sent into Brest and the neighbouring ports upwards of 20 prizes, many of them valuable. The recapture of the *Tamise*, therefore, was a fortunate occurrence. She was reinstated, under her English name, as a 12-pounder 32 in the British navy.

Seeing the fate of her companion, the *Tribune* crowded sail to effect her escape. The parity of sailing in the British and French frigates, aided by the judgment of Commodore Moulston (represented as a native of the United States of America), kept the two ships in a running fight for ten hours; during which the *Unicorn* suffered greatly in her sails and rigging, and was at one time deprived of the use of her main topsail. But the wind falling soon after dark, the British frigate was enabled to use her light sails, and by that means gradually approached so near to the *Tribune's* weather quarter as to take the wind out of her sails; when, at 10 h. 30 m. P. M., after having run in the pursuit 210 miles, the *Unicorn* ranged up alongside of her antagonist.

The British crew instantly gave three cheers, and a close action commenced, which continued, each ship being in the same position, with great spirit, for 35 minutes; when, on the smoke's clearing away, the *Tribune* was observed to have dropped in the rear, and to be attempting, close hauled, to cross the *Unicorn's* stern and gain the wind of her. To frustrate this manœuvre, the sails of the *Unicorn*, in the most masterly manner, were thrown aback: she then dropped astern, passed the *Tribune's* weather bow, regained her station, and renewed the attack. A few well-directed broadsides brought down the fore and main masts and mizen topmast of the *Tribune*, and not only put an end to all further manœuvring on the part of the French frigate, but silenced her fire and compelled her to surrender. The corvette, which was the *Légère* of 18 long 6-pounders, had long since disappeared.

The *Unicorn*, besides her 32 long 18 and 6 pounders, mounted six 32-pounder carronades, or 38 guns in all. Although the *Unicorn's* established complement was 251 men and boys, Captain Williams mentions that his third lieutenant, two master's mates, and some of his best seamen, had, on the evening previous to the action, been put on board a prize. The absentees could not well have been fewer than 11; making the crew of the *Unicorn*, when she commenced the action, amount to 240. Of this number the *Unicorn*, like the *Révolutionnaire* and *Indefatigable*, had not a man hurt. The *Tribune* mounted, in all, 44 guns (six more 6-pounders than the *Tamise*, and two brass 36-pounder carronades), and is represented to have lost, out of a complement of 339 men and boys, 37 men killed, and her commander and 14 men wounded.

## COMPARATIVE FORCE OF THE COMBATANTS.

		UNICORN.	TRIBUNE.
Broadside-guns .....	{ No.	19	22
	{ lbs.	348	260
Crew .....	No.	240	339
Size .....	tons	791	916

That the Unicorn should have captured the Tribune must now appear far less extraordinary, than that the latter should have expended her powder and shot so uselessly, as, in a running fight of several hours and a close combat of more than half an hour, not to have shed one drop of blood on board the former. Commodore Moulston, notwithstanding, fought his ship most bravely, and manœuvred her to admiration. The Santa-Margarita, although nominally superior to the Unicorn, would have been a more suitable match for the Tribune, whose broadside weight of metal, be it observed, even without computing the pair of 36-pounder carronades in the bow-ports, is a trifle inferior to that of the Tamise.

Soon after the Unicorn's return into port, Captain Williams received the honour of knighthood; and the frigates first lieutenant, Thomas Palmer, was promoted to the rank of commander. The Tribune, also, was added to the British navy as a 12-pounder 36, under the name by which she had been captured.

A contemporary says, that Captain Williams obtained his reward because he had captured a ship "of superior force."\* This mistake, in all probability, arose from the writer's unacquaintance with the real force of the Unicorn. Nor is the force of the Tribune very explicitly stated in the official letter; for, notwithstanding she is described as "mounting 44 guns, though pierced for 48," the details of her force make the guns but 42, the number (twenty-six 12s, eight 6s, and eight 32-pounder carronades) afterwards established upon the Tribune in the British service, and quite as many as the ship could mount with effect. Although, perhaps, rather too much stress has been laid upon the superiority of force against the Unicorn and Santa-Margarita, in having opposed to them two French 12-pounder frigates, besides an 18-gun corvette which abandoned her consorts before a shot was fired, the whole affair, in its successful result, reflects great credit upon the officers and crews of the British frigates.

On the 13th of June, at 1 A. M., Cape Clear bearing west by north distant 12 leagues, the British 18-pounder 36-gun frigate Dryad, Captain Lord Amelius Beauclerk, standing close hauled on the starboard tack, with the wind a fresh breeze from north-west by west, discovered a sail in the south-west by west, or right ahead, standing towards her; but which, on nearing the Dryad, hauled her wind, and then tacked. This was the French frigate Proserpine, in search of her consorts, and who, now that

\* Brenton, vol. i., p. 398.

she had discovered the ship approaching to be an enemy, was endeavouring to effect her escape.

Chase was immediately given by the Dryad, both ships on a wind upon the starboard tack. At 8 p. m. the Proserpine hoisted her colours; and immediately afterwards the Dryad did the same. The Proserpine then fired her stern-chasers, several of the shot from which went through the Dryad's sails and cut away her rigging. At 9 p. m., having reached her opponent's lee or larboard quarter, the Dryad commenced a close action, and maintained it with so much spirit and effect that, at 9 h. 45 m. p. m., the Proserpine hauled down the French ensign.

The Dryad, whose guns, 44 in number, were the same as those of the Phœnix, with a complement of 251 men and boys, had two seamen killed and seven wounded. The Proserpine was armed the same as the 40-gun frigate in the table at p. 54, except in having two 18-pounders less (although pierced for them) on the main deck, making her total number of guns 42; with a complement, as deposed to by her officers, of 348 men and boys: of whom she is represented to have lost 30 killed and 45 wounded.

Neither frigate lost a spar. The Dryad's fore topsail was much cut, as well as the greater part of her running, and some of her standing rigging, and her jib and peak halliards were shot away, but her colours, which had fallen with the gaff, were quickly rehoisted at the mizen topgallantmast head. The Proserpine suffered even less in her rigging and sails than the Dryad; but her hull, on the larboard or engaged side especially, showed clearly where the Dryad's shot had been directed.

COMPARATIVE FORCE OF THE COMBATANTS.

		DRYAD.	PROSERPINE.
Broadside-guns .....	{ No.	22	21
	{ lbs.	407	366
Crew .....	No.	254	346
Size .....	tons	924	1059

Were it not for the slight preponderance occasioned by the Dryad's carronades, the British frigate would have been inferior in guns, as well as in crew and size, to the French frigate. But, as what little the latter wanted in broadside weight of metal was amply made up to her in number of men, the action of the Dryad and Proserpine may be pronounced at least an equal match. Captain Pevrieux appears to have thought otherwise. Hence, the Proserpine fled, and by flying, not only sustained a very serious loss, but was unable to bring guns enough to bear upon her antagonist, to do any more injury to her than a single shot has often inflicted.

Had the French captain, instead of trying to escape, brought his frigate to, he might have manœuvred her to some advantage, and even, if eventually compelled to yield, would have surren-

dered without discredit. As it was, after capturing the *Proserpine*, the *Dryad*, owing solely to her opponent's forbearance, was able to fight another frigate of the same force; and, could he have secured his prisoners without diminishing his crew, the *Dryad's* captain would no doubt have rejoiced at such an opportunity. Lord Amelius, in his official letter, speaks highly of his first lieutenant, Mr. Edward Durnford King, and the latter, most deservedly, was promoted to the rank of commander.

The only remaining ship of Commodore Moulston's squadron, the *Légère*, was captured, on the 22d, in latitude  $48^{\circ} 30'$  north, and longitude  $8^{\circ} 28'$  west, after the exchange of a few shot, by the British frigates *Apollo* and *Doris*, Captains John Manley and the Honourable Charles Jones.

The *Proserpine*, under the name of *Amelia* (a *Proserpine* being already in the service), was admitted into the British navy as a cruising frigate, and, from her size and sailing properties, became a valuable acquisition to her class. The distinction between a British 38 and 36, as remarked elsewhere, is simply in the latter's having a pair of ports less on the main deck. The late *Proserpine's* two foremost ports (vacant when captured) were considered to be sufficiently aft to admit two guns; hence, the *Amelia* fell into the class of 38-gun frigates. The *Légère*, a frigate-built corvette of 453 tons, capable of carrying eighteen 6-pounders, with six 18-pounder carronades on the quarterdeck, was also added to the British navy under the same name.

On the 9th of June, about noon, while the British Mediterranean fleet was cruising before Toulon, a French corvette was descried working up towards the road of Hyères, situated within the islands so named. Sir John Jervis immediately called on board the *Victory*, by signal, Captain James Macnamara of the 12-pounder 32-gun frigate *Southampton*; and, pointing out the object of his wishes, said, "Bring out the enemy's ship if you can. I'll give you no written order; but I direct you to take care of the king's ship under your command."\* Captain Macnamara, hastening back to his ship, reached her about 5 h. 30 m. P. M.; and the *Southampton* was presently under all sail steering for the *Grande Passe*, or passage between the islands of *Porquerolles* and *Porteros*. At 6 P. M. the *Southampton* discovered the corvette to the northward, at no great distance from the shore; and hauling up, under easy sail, close under the batteries on the north-east side of *Porquerolles*, was apparently mistaken, as had been hoped would be the case, for either a French or a neutral frigate.

Profiting by her stratagem, the *Southampton* stood boldly across Hyères road, and at 8 h. 30 m. P. M. got within pistol-shot of the French ship-corvette *Utile*, of 24-guns (eighteen 6-

\* Marshall, vol. i., p. 686.

pounders and six pieces of smaller caliber), with a crew of 130 men, commanded by Lieutenant de vaisseau François Vega, 14 days from Toulon on a cruise. Captain Macnamara, taking the trumpet, cautioned the French commander not to make a fruitless resistance; but the latter instantly snapped his pistol at the speaker, and the *Utile* fired her broadside at the *Southampton*. The frigate, backing her main topsail, promptly returned the salute. At the end of the third broadside, the *Southampton*, finding herself very near to the heavy battery of Fort Bregançon, hauled athwart the bows of the *Utile*, and lashed the corvette's bowsprit to her main rigging. Lieutenant Charles Lydiard, at the head of a party of seamen, then sprang on board, and, after a ten minutes' spirited resistance, during which the French captain gallantly fell at his post, carried the corvette. This dashing service was executed with the trifling loss to the *Southampton* of only one marine killed by a pistol-shot while standing near the captain upon the quarterdeck; but the loss sustained by the *Utile* was of far greater amount, being eight officers and men killed and 17 wounded.

Captain Macnamara's next difficulty was to get clear of the batteries on the coast, particularly of Fort Bregançon, which immediately opened a fire upon the *Southampton* and her prize. At 10 P.M. the lashings that had held the two ships together were cut away, and they made all sail on a wind. At 10 h. 30 m. P.M. the *Southampton* was obliged to take the *Utile* in tow, and succeeded after a while in getting out of range of the batteries, without any loss, or any greater damage than a shot through the centre of her mizenmast. The state of the wind and intricacy of the navigation, however, made it 1 h. 30 m. A.M. on the 10th, before the two ships could clear the passage and effect their junction with Sir John Jervis's fleet. The *Utile* was immediately commissioned as a British sloop of war, and Lieutenant Lydiard, with the necessary step in his rank, became her commander.

In the year 1795 the British government purchased nine East India ships, measuring from 1165 to 1434 tons, and armed them with 28 (some of the smaller with 26) long 18-pounders on the first, and 28 carronades, 32-pounders, on the second and only remaining deck. Subsequently the *Glatton*, of 1256 tons, at the suggestion of Captain Henry Trollope, appointed to command her, was fitted on the lower deck with 28 carronades of his favourite caliber, the 68-pounder;\* making her total of guns 56.

These 56 guns were more, by six at least, than the *Glatton*, although pierced for that number, could advantageously mount; her ports, as was the case, more or less, with all the other purchased Indiamen, being too small to allow even a long 18-pounder properly to traverse. With respect, also, to the 68-pounder carronade, its muzzle was almost of equal diameter

\* See p. 37.

with the port: hence it could scarcely be pointed in any other direction than right a-beam. Moreover, as these carronades were all fixed guns, the *Glatton* was without a bow or stern chaser. Her net complement was established at 320 men and boys; too few by 30 at the least.

On the 13th of July, 1796, the *Glatton* sailed from Sheerness, where she had been just refitted, for the purpose of reinforcing the North-Sea fleet under Admiral Duncan; and, arriving soon afterwards in Yarmouth roads, sailed thence on the afternoon of the 14th, by the orders of Rear-admiral Macbride, to join a squadron of two sail of the line and some frigates, commanded by Captain Henry Savage of the *Albion* 64, and supposed to be cruising off Helvoetsluys.

On the 15th, at 1 A. M., the *Glatton* made the coast of Flanders, and discovered four large ships under the land. The weather was now calm; but at 8 P. M., Goree steeple bearing south by east, a breeze sprang up from the north-west, and at the same time two other ships were observed to join the four already in view. The *Glatton* now made all sail towards the strangers, and, on closing within signal distance, ascertained that they were an enemy's squadron of four frigates, two ship-corvettes, with a large brig-corvette and an armed cutter, hastening to join from to-leeward.

Having cleared for action, the *Glatton* stood on with a light breeze in her favour; and, so far from being daunted at the formidable appearance of the enemy, Captain Trollope was rejoiced at the opportunity thus afforded him of trying the effect of the heavy carronades in his ship. At 6 P. M. the wind freshened, and the four ships formed in close line of battle with their heads to the north-east. At 8 P. M., as a proof how confident they were of success, the strangers shortened sail, backing their mizen topsails occasionally to keep in their stations.

At about 9 h. 45 m. P. M. the *Glatton*, having hoisted the St.-George's ensign, arrived abreast of the three smaller and rear-most ships, but reserved her fire for the next ship, the latter from her superior size appearing to be the commodore; and which ship was now the second in the line, the ship next ahead of her having fallen to leeward. At a few minutes before 10 P. M., as the *Glatton* ranged up close alongside of the supposed commodore, Captain Trollope, hailing the ship, desired her commander to surrender to a British man-of-war. In an instant French colours and a broad pendant were displayed, and the commodore, and immediately afterwards all the other ships commenced firing at the *Glatton*.

The *Glatton* was not slow in returning the compliment, and poured into the French commodore, at the distance of not more than 20 yards, a broadside such as perhaps no single-decked ship ever before received. While the *Glatton* and the French commodore were continuing to go ahead and mutually engaging,

the French van-ship tacked, in the expectation of being followed by her squadron, and thereby driving the *Glatton* upon the Brill shoal, which was close to leeward. The French van-ship soon arrived within hail on the *Glatton*'s weather beam, and received a fire from her larboard guns, the effects of which were heard in the cries and groans of the wounded, and partially seen in the shattered state of the ship's side. This quickly elicited the cheers of the British crew, and the discomfited enemy passed on to the southward; leaving the *Glatton* still engaged with the French commodore upon her lee bow, another large frigate (the latter's second ahead when the action commenced) upon her lee quarter.

The action had now lasted about 20 minutes; when the *Glatton*'s pilot called out, that the ship, if she did not tack in five minutes, would be on the shoal. Captain Trollope replied: "When the French commodore strikes the ground, do you put the helm a-lee." Almost immediately afterwards the French commodore tacked to avoid the shoal, and, while in stays, received a heavy raking fire that much disabled him. The other French ships had previously gone about; and the *Glatton*, as well to continue the action, as to escape running on the shoal, prepared to do the same, but, owing to the damaged state of her sails and rigging, experienced a great difficulty in getting her head round.

The combatants were now all on the starboard tack; and, although the three large and hitherto principally engaged frigates had fallen to leeward, the three smaller ones still kept up a harassing long-shot fire; to which the *Glatton*, on account of the distance, could not make a very effectual return. The wounded state of the topmasts and the increasing power of the wind rendering it necessary to take a reef in the topsails of the *Glatton*, her men unhesitatingly flew upon the yards, which were also wounded by shot, and performed their task in the face of a smart cannonade from the nearest of the three ships to leeward left in a state to continue the action; and which ship, mistaking the cause of the cessation of the *Glatton*'s fire, was seemingly advancing to reap the fruits of her prowess. The British crew, however, were soon at their guns again, and the fall of a topsail yard belonging to one of the French ships, coupled with some other damage, convinced the Frenchmen on board that the victory was not yet to them, and very soon induced these three ships to follow the example of their three more powerful companions, and withdraw themselves from the combat.

The six French ships, thus beaten, were not, however, the only opponents that had been assailing the *Glatton*. Towards the close of the action the brig and cutter, the first mounting 16, and the other eight or ten guns, had stationed themselves under her stern, and opened a smart fire; a fire which the *Glatton*, from the defects in her equipment already noticed, could

only answer by musketry. After receiving a few well-directed volleys, the brig and cutter made sail after their companions; and at 11 p. m. all firing ceased between the Glatton and her many opponents.

The dismantled state of the Glatton rendered pursuit on her part out of the question. Every brace, and every stay except the mizen, had been cut away or rendered useless; and so had all the running and the greater part of the standing rigging. The principal part of the enemy's fire had passed between her tops and gunwale, so that the lower sails of the Glatton were cut nearly from the yards: the jib and mainsail, indeed, were in ribands. The mainmast, and the fore and main yards, were also badly wounded, and ready to fall. Scarcely half a dozen shot had struck the hull; and, in consequence, no men were killed, and, except a few bruises and scratches, two only wounded. One of the latter was Captain Henry Ludlow Strangeways, of the marines; the other, a corporal of the same corps. The first-named gallant officer, although badly wounded by a musket-ball in the thigh, and compelled in consequence, to have a tourniquet applied, insisted on returning to his quarters; where he remained until, being faint with loss of blood, he was carried off the deck: he died shortly afterwards.

The Glatton, during the night, used every exertion to put herself in a state to renew the action by morning, with the assistance, it was hoped, of one or two ships of Captain Savage's squadron. On the 16th, at daybreak, the French squadron, drawn up in a close head and stern line, was still in sight, with the advantage, by a shift of wind during the night to south-west, of the weather-gage. At 8 a. m., having knotted and spliced her rigging, bent new sails, and otherwise refitted herself, the Glatton offered battle to her opponents; but these, having felt too sensibly the effects of her 68 lb. shot, declined a renewal of the engagement, and about noon bore away for Flushing, followed by the Glatton. Having thus compelled a whole squadron of French ships to take shelter in port, the Glatton turned her head to the northward, and, standing in need of great repairs, steered for Yarmouth roads; where, on the 21st, she came to an anchor.

The Glatton's affair, like many other drawn battles, is imperfect in its details, for the want of any correct information as to the names, force, damage, and loss, of the ships which she had engaged. One French frigate was known to be the Brutus, a 74-gun ship cut down, mounting from 46 to 50 guns; 24-pounders on the first or main deck,\* and 12-pounders, with 36-pounder carronades, on the quarterdeck and fore-castle. A second ship is stated to have been the 38-gun frigate Incorruptible;† and a third, the 36-gun frigate Magicienne. A Flushing paper, of July 5, 1796, states that the French frigate

\* See p. 51.

† See table at p. 54.

Incorruptible, with another frigate, a 36, not named, the 28-gun frigate *Républicaine*, two ship-corvettes of 22 guns each, and an armed brig or snow, were lying in the road waiting an opportunity to get to France. These then, with the *Brutus*, were probably the squadron which the *Glatton* had engaged.

That the French ships sustained considerable damage in their hulls may reasonably be inferred, from the size of the *Glatton's* shot, the closeness of the action, and the shyness which they ultimately evinced. Moreover, on the morning succeeding the action, the *Glatton's* people plainly saw men, on stages, over the sides of the French ships, stopping shot-holes. In further corroboration, several of the Flushing fishermen afterwards reported, that considerable damage had been sustained by three or four of the frigates, so much so, indeed, that one of them had sunk in the harbour; that either that or one of the others had lost 70 men in killed and wounded, and that the French were astonished at finding the decks of their ships so ripped up by the *Glatton's* shot.

Viewed in every light, the action between the *Glatton* and this French frigate-squadron was highly honourable to the officers and crew of the former. The prompt decision of Captain Trollope to become the assailant, when one of the six opponent ships, admitting her to have been the *Brutus*, was 300 or 400 tons larger than the *Glatton*, coupled with the latter's conduct throughout the engagement, well entitled her commander to the honour of knighthood subsequently conferred upon him by his sovereign. The merchants of London, too, with their usual liberality, presented Captain Trollope with an elegant piece of plate. The three lieutenants of the *Glatton* on this memorable occasion were Robert Williams, Alexander Wilmot Schomberg, and William Pringle.

The crew of the *Glatton* not being sufficiently numerous to man her guns on both sides, the following expedient was resorted to: The allotment of men for each gun upon either broadside was divided into two gangs; one of which, having loaded and run out the gun, left it to be pointed and fired by the other, composed of picked hands, and then ran across and did the same to the gun on the opposite side. And how well the British crew plied their guns has already been shown in the result of the engagement.

The most formidable objection to the use of carronades, of the larger calibers, is their alleged liability to overset on becoming heated. It appears, however, that, notwithstanding the long and incessant fire kept up by them, none of the 68, and two only of the 32 pounders, were dismounted. These facts certainly enhance the merit of large-sized carronades: at the same time it should be remarked, that no ship of war ought to be sent to sea, as the *Glatton* was, without the power of using bow and stern chasers; and no other than a swift-sailing ship, who can

choose her distance, ought to be wholly armed with carronades. The *Glatton*, had she been of that description, might have succeeded in cutting off one, if not two of her opponents; and the smallest ship among them would have served to identify the whole of her companions.

On the 22d of July, at 5 p. m., the British 12-pounder 32-gun frigate *Aimable*, Captain Jemmet Mainwaring, being on a cruise off the island of Guadeloupe, discovered the French 36-gun frigate *Pensée* coming round the point of land named Englishman's Head. The *Aimable* immediately hauled to the wind in chase, stretching close in shore, to prevent the *Pensée* from getting into *Anse la-Barque*. At 6 h. 35 m. p. m., the weather nearly calm, the two frigates, being then about three miles south of the *Hayes* and about half that distance from the shore, met and came to action on opposite tacks, but not very closely. At 7 h. 45 m. a breeze sprang up from the eastward, and the *Aimable* ran down for the purpose of boarding her adversary; but, just as she had got within half a cable's length of the *Pensée*'s starboard bow, the *Aimable* was taken aback by the wind from the southward. The *Pensée* immediately made sail to the northward, and was followed by the *Aimable*, who succeeded in raking her with the starboard broadside. At 8 h. 10 m. p. m. the firing, which, owing to the distance maintained by the *Pensée*, had been rather ineffective, ceased; and the latter, whom the trade-wind had just reached, crowded sail to the west-north-west.

The *Aimable* continued in chase during the night, and at daylight the next morning, the 23d, discovered the *Pensée* about seven miles off right ahead. Every effort was now used by Captain Mainwaring to increase the sailing of his ship: the stays were slackened, the wedges of the masts eased, and the guns shifted, to give the vessel her proper trim; but still the *Pensée* was getting ahead. At 7 a. m., however, the French frigate shortened sail, and hauled up on the starboard tack under her topsails. The *Aimable* immediately steered down for her opponent; who, as if determined this time to fight, backed her mizen topsail occasionally for the former to come up.

At 8 h. 35 m. the *Aimable* advanced near to the *Pensée*'s weather quarter; and the two captains, in the true spirit of chivalry, exchanged salutes with the hat. But, in another five minutes, the *Pensée*, as if desirous to evade coming to close action, filled her mizen topsail, and hauled on board her fore and main tacks. Whereupon the *Aimable*, bearing round up, discharged her starboard broadside into her opponent; who then bore up also, and the firing became mutual. At 8 h. 50 m. a. m. the *Pensée*, having ranged ahead, hauled up on the larboard tack, with the intention of raking the *Aimable*; but the latter, putting her helm a-port, poured a raking broadside into the former. At 8 h. 55 m. a. m. the *Pensée*, pursued by the

Aimable, made sail: at first she hauled close up, then kept gradually going off the wind, until her stern-chasers would bear; from which the *Pensée* maintained, until 10 A. M., an unremitting though ineffectual fire. By this time the *Aimable*, in spite of every effort, had fallen so far astern as to be out of gun-shot. After running two hours longer and still increasing her distance, the *Aimable* discontinued the chase, and hauled her wind to the southward. That her opponent was the French frigate *Pensée*, there could be no doubt, the name having been plainly seen on her stern.

The *Aimable* had the good fortune to escape with only two men wounded; while the *Pensée*, as related upon her arrival soon afterwards at St-Thomas's, where, for a short time, she was blockaded by the 12-pounder 32-gun frigate *Mermaid*, Captain Robert Waller Otway, lost 90 men in killed and wounded.

The two frigates were armed precisely as their respective class-mates in the two tables already given.\* Surely, then, there was nothing to alarm the French captain; nothing to excuse him for having disappointed the wishes of Captain Mainwaring and his crew; unless the severity of the *Pensée's* loss may be considered as a justification for her taking to flight while she had sails to carry herself off.

On the 8th of August, at 9 h. 30 m. A. M., Rear-admiral Pole, then with the 74-gun ship *Carnatic*, and two or three other British ships, lying at the *Saintes* near Guadeloupe, directed Captain Otway to proceed in chase of a strange ship, seen at a great distance in the offing. The *Mermaid* accordingly made all sail; and, on getting through the passage formed by the two islands, hauled to the northward, when a strange sail hove in sight under the land of *Basse-terre*. At 11 h. 30 m. A. M., as the *Mermaid* advanced nearer, the stranger was seen to be a frigate with French colours flying. Captain Otway, as directed, immediately made the signal for an enemy, and fired a gun. At 11 h. 45 m. A. M. the batteries on shore opened a fire upon the *Mermaid*, and many shots went over her. At about noon a shift of wind brought the strange ship, which was the 40-gun frigate *Vengeance*, on the beam of the *Mermaid*, who thereupon opened her broadside; one of the shots from the *Mermaid* sank a boat that was towing astern of the *Vengeance*, in which an aide-de-camp of Victor Hugues, then standing on the beach at *Basse-terre*, with orders to the French captain to take or sink the British frigate, had embarked.

In a few minutes the *Mermaid* wore round, and hove to on the starboard tack; in which position she exchanged several broadsides with the *Vengeance*. At 30 minutes past noon the latter's larboard topgallant sheet and mizentopsail tie were shot away. At 1 P. M. the *Vengeance* filled her main topsail, and bore down

\* See pp. 54 and 91.

a little. At 1 h. 10 m. P. M., finding that her opponent had shot ahead, the Mermaid filled also, and kept close to the wind, still engaging. At 1 h. 30 m. P. M. the Vengeance endeavoured to stay, but missed, and in this state received a heavy broadside from the Mermaid. Again the Vengeance tried to stay; again she missed, and again lay exposed to a destructive raking fire. At 2 P. M. the Vengeance set her foresail, and soon afterwards succeeded in tacking. The Mermaid, on getting into her opponent's wake, tacked also. At 2 h. 30 m. P. M. the wind, coming more northerly, prevented the Mermaid from fetching the Vengeance; whereupon the Mermaid, at whom the batteries on shore were still occasionally firing, wore round, fired a broadside into her opponent's stern, and hove to on the larboard tack. The Vengeance then filled and stood on, followed by the Mermaid; the two ships still firing at each other.

At 3 P. M. the Mermaid had her fore topgallantmast shot away. About this time the Vengeance tacked; as, presently afterwards, did the Mermaid, with her courses set, in close pursuit. At 3 h. 4 m. P. M. the Vengeance stood close in under the batteries and lay to, nearly becalmed. The Mermaid then, as she ran past the latter's stern, fired two distant broadsides, and afterwards wore and stood off. During all this time the batteries continued firing at the British frigates, but without effect. Presently a breeze sprang up from the east-north-east, and the Vengeance made sail for Basse-terre. The British 40-gun frigate Beaulieu, Captain Francis Laforey, was now seen coming down before the wind, under all sail; but, before she could get near, the Vengeance was safe at an anchor in the road of Basse-terre.

Besides losing her fore topgallantmast, the Mermaid had her sails pierced with shot-holes, and her standing and running rigging a good deal cut; but, fortunately, without a man killed or wounded. The Vengeance, on the other hand, suffered considerably in sails, rigging, and hull; and, according to the report of Victor Hugues, as communicated to some British dragoon officers, prisoners at Basse-terre, and who witnessed the whole of the combat, lost 12 men killed and 26 wounded.

When it is known, that the Mermaid was a small 12-pounder 32-gun frigate, and the Vengeance one of the largest 18-pounder frigates out of France, mounting 52 guns, the disparity in point of force may be readily conceived. The French frigate was unfortunate in twice missing stays within short gun-shot of an active enemy; and the Vengeance, no doubt, sustained the chief of her loss at those critical periods. Her ultimately retiring from the contest became an imperative duty, considering what ship was approaching to have a share in it. The Beaulieu having a tier of 18-pounders, with some heavy carronades, had she been alone, would have been a much fairer match for the Vengeance than the Mermaid.

On the 6th of July, at 7 P. M., the British 12-pounder 32-gun frigate Quebec, Captain John Cooke, being about seven leagues to the westward of the island of Porto-Rico, steering for Cape Nicolas-Mole, St.-Domingo, with four transports and one merchant vessel under her convoy, which she had brought from Martinique, perceived two strange sail, one to the westward and the other to the southward. At 9 P. M. the strangers were made out to be frigates, and were, as we conjecture, the French frigates *Thétis* and *Pensée* on a cruise. The Quebec immediately hauled her wind to the northward, and made the necessary signals to keep her convoy together for the night.

On the 7th, at daylight, the nearest frigate was seen with Spanish colours flying. These, at noon, she hauled down. At 1 h. 15 m. P. M. the Quebec, having been standing to the south-east on the larboard tack, hoisted her colours, and edged away to protect two of her convoy to leeward; whereupon the frigate on her lee bow hoisted French colours and fired a gun to windward. Having made the signal for her convoy to disperse, the Quebec kept her wind, and at 1 h. 30 m. P. M. exchanged broadsides with the French frigate; but without effect on either side, the shot from the lee-guns of the British frigate falling short, while those from the weather-guns of the French frigate passed over the Quebec.

In the mean time the second French frigate was employed in taking possession of the convoy; and never did English vessels so give themselves away, so court capture apparently, as the five ships and brigs in charge of the Quebec. Their masters had previously disobeyed all the signals made to them, and now crowned their misconduct by yielding up their vessels without an effort. Some of them did not wait to be fired at, or even approached within two or three miles, but shortened sail and hauled down their colours the moment they saw the head of the French frigate directed towards them. To give the names of these transports and their masters at this late day would be useless, otherwise we would most willingly expose them to the indignation of their countrymen.

Having now nothing but her own safety to consult, the Quebec made all sail, and soon outstripped the French frigate that was in chase of her. The following account of this occurrence appears in the work of a contemporary: "After capturing a French national cutter, Captain Cooke (previously mentioned to have joined the Quebec, January 1, 1796) was again ordered to the West Indies; where, by his conduct in a rencontre with two frigates of far superior force, he obtained the commendations of his commodore, the late Sir John T. Duckworth."\* At least, we can discover no other case than that we have just recorded, to which this account can apply; and, assuredly, Captain Duck-

\* Marshall, vol. ii., p. 21.

worth, at the period referred to, was the commanding officer at Cape Nicolas-Mole, the port to which, after the capture of her convoy, the Quebec proceeded.

On the 22d of August, at 10 A. M., as the squadron of British frigates under Commodore Sir Borlase Warren in the *Pomone*, consisting, besides that ship, of the 44-gun frigate *Anson*, Captain Philip Charles Durham, 38-gun frigate *Artois*, Captain Sir Edmund Nagle, 32-gun frigate *Galatea*, Captain Richard Goodwin Keats, and 18-gun brig-sloop *Sylph*, Captain John Chambers White, were cruising off the mouth of the river Gironde with the wind from the north-north-west, the French 36-gun frigate *Andromaque* made her appearance in the south-south-west, standing in towards the entrance of the river. This frigate had been cruising, and successfully, in company with the *Néréide* and *Décade* of the same force, and the 28-gun frigate (or 24-gun corvette, as the French would call her) *Baïonnaise*.

The *Galatea*, who, with the *Sylph* brig, was close in-shore and considerably ahead of her consorts, crowded sail to cut off the French frigate from the Gironde, and, by making several French signals, induced the *Andromaque* to come to an anchor near the entrance of the Grave channel. In a few minutes, however, the *Andromaque*, discovering her mistake, cut her cable, and made all sail to the southward, pursued by the *Galatea*; who, having stood into the channel between the lighthouse and the Chevrier bank, now hauled to windward of and rounded the latter in four fathoms' water. Having cleared this danger, the *Galatea* made all sail before the wind, followed by the *Pomone* and *Anson*. Meanwhile, the *Artois* and *Sylph* had been detached to examine two suspicious ships away in the south-west.

At 8 P. M. the *Galatea* was not more than two miles astern of the *Andromaque*. At 9 P. M. a violent squall, attended with heavy rain, thunder, and lightning, obliged the chasing ships to shorten sails; whereby the French frigate was suddenly lost sight of, owing to the extreme darkness of the night. At 10 P. M. the weather moderated; and, while the *Pomone* and *Anson* stood to the northward, on the supposition that the *Andromaque* had hauled her wind in that direction, the *Galatea* continued her course along the French coast to the southward.

At 11 P. M., the weather clearing, the *Galatea* regained a sight of the French frigate in the south-south-west, and made all sail in chase. At midnight the *Galatea* was only a mile off shore, and, at 4 A. M. on the 23d, not above two miles astern of the *Andromaque*. At daybreak the *Artois* and *Sylph*, who had found the two ships they had been sent to examine to be Americans from Bordeaux bound to Boston, were seen nearly hull-down in the north-west. At about 5 h. 30 m. A. M. the *Andromaque* hauled up for the land, and at 6 A. M. ran on shore within five leagues of Arcasson, successively cutting away her mizen, main, and fore masts.

As the *Andromaque* had not hoisted either ensign or pendant, Captain Keats concluded she did not intend to make resistance, and therefore fired no more than three shots before he sent the boats, under the command of Lieutenant Henry Lloyd, first of the *Galatea*, to effect her destruction. At a few minutes before 7 A. M. the *Artois* and *Sylph* came up, and joined their boats, with Lieutenant Benjamin Carter, first of the *Artois*, in command, to those already despatched by the *Galatea*. Notwithstanding the height of the surf, and the consequent danger of any attempt to reach the shore, the French crew seemed much more desirous to encounter the risk, than to surrender themselves as prisoners to the few boats which the heavy breakers would permit to approach the vessel. Several prisoners, however, including the captain, some of his principal officers, and a few Portuguese seamen taken out of two Brazil ships, were at length brought away; and the remainder of the frigate's crew, whom the ebbing of the tide had now enabled to walk to the shore, were humanely apprized by the British that it was the intention of the latter to destroy the ship.

At 8 A. M. the boats with the prisoners reached the *Sylph*, and, having placed them on board, took the brig in tow. On getting close abreast of the *Andromaque* the *Sylph* anchored with a spring on her cable, and commenced firing into the frigate's bottom, in order to prevent the possibility of her floating at the return of high water. At noon the *Sylph*, having accomplished her object, ceased firing, and sent the boats to their proper ships; the two nearest of which, the *Artois* and *Galatea*, were about two miles outside of her, and the remaining two, the *Pomone* and *Anson*, away in the offing.

Finding it impossible to board the frigate until the tide flowed, the *Sylph* weighed, and stood off and on until 3 P. M.; then again stood in towards the frigate. The French crew were now assembled among the sand-hills near their ship, as if they intended to prevent her being boarded; but a few well-directed shot from the brig soon dispersed them. At 4 P. M., when it was nearly high water, the *Sylph* ran within 700 yards of the shore, and, having again anchored, sent her boats to complete the destruction of the frigate; the crew of which made some resistance, but were kept in check by the fire of the brig. At 4 h. 30 m. P. M. the boats returned, having set the frigate on fire. At 5 P. M. the *Andromaque* being in a total blaze fore and aft, and having blown up forward, the *Sylph* weighed and made sail towards her squadron; which, at 6 h. 30 m. P. M., she rejoined.

We regret to be obliged to observe, that very few of these particulars, so creditable to the respective officers and crews of the *Galatea* and *Sylph*, are contained in Sir John Warren's letter in the *Gazette*. The account of the destruction of the *Andromaque* French frigate ought to have been written by the captain of the *Galatea*. Under the peculiar circumstances of this case, almost any command-

ing officer would either have written such a letter as should have transferred the credit to the party by whose exertions (Sir John Warren was not even in sight during the critical point of this enterprise) the service was executed, or would have allowed that party to render his own account of the transaction; thereby enabling him, not merely to do justice to himself, but to recommend for promotion his deserving subordinates.

This latter consideration alone should induce an officer to try to conquer that modesty, that dread of being thought an egotist, which generally characterizes the man of true spirit. How many a lieutenant or commander, having missed a recommendation from his captain or superior officer, has never found a second opportunity of distinguishing himself. How many a one has remained ever afterwards in the back ground of the service, soured against a profession of which he might have been one of the brightest ornaments, and disposed, from a misconception of the cause of the neglect with which he is treated, to attach blame to a wrong quarter.

On the 25th of August, at 1 A. M., latitude  $41^{\circ} 39'$  north, and latitude  $66^{\circ} 24'$  west, the British 20-gun ship *Raison*, Captain John Poer Beresford, steering north-east by north, with a light breeze at south-east by east, discovered a large ship coming down under a press of sail. The stranger, not answering signals, betrayed herself to be an enemy, and was such a one, in point of apparent force, as the *Raison* did well to fly from with all the canvass she could spread. The chasing ship, which was no other than the *Vengeance*, the Mermaid's late opponent, now hoisted French colours, and commenced firing her bow-guns at the *Raison*. Having cut away her jolly-boat to make room for four stern-chasers, the *Raison* opened a fire from them, as soon as the *Vengeance*, whose shot were passing over her, got fairly within range. A thick fog intervening put an end, for the present, to all offensive operations.

In order to have the weathergage in case of a second meeting, the *Raison*, at about noon, hauled her wind to the eastward. At 7 P. M. she again saw, close on the larboard quarter, her powerful opponent; who, hailing, ordered the British ship to strike. To this the latter replied by a broadside. A running fight now commenced, and lasted until nearly 9 P. M.; when, after receiving a well-directed broadside from the *Raison*, the *Vengeance* dropped to leeward, and, owing to the density of the fog, was almost immediately out of sight. The *Raison*, in this rencontre, suffered greatly in her rigging and sails, and lost three men killed and six wounded.

Of the identity of the frigate from which the *Raison* had so fortunately escaped, not a doubt can remain, as an American vessel, the *Martha-Brand*, Captain Henry Stratton, on her arrival at Plymouth on the 26th of September, reported that, on the 25th of August, in latitude  $41^{\circ}$ , longitude  $63^{\circ}$ , she fell in with the

French national frigate *Vengeance*, who, on the preceding evening, had been fired into by an English sloop of war of 24 guns, which got under her stern and gave her a broadside; whereby the *Vengeance* was considerably damaged, and had six of her crew killed; and that the sloop of war then stood away under a press of sail, and escaped. It was not until 10 or 12 days afterwards that any account reached England of Captain Beresford's action.

Of what description of frigate, in point of force, the *Vengeance* was, has already been stated. She measured 1180 tons; while the *Raison*, whose armament was 20 long 9-pounders, and two 18-pounder carronades in the bridle-ports, on the main deck, and six long 6-pounders and two 12-pounder carronades on the quarterdeck and fore-castle, total 30 guns, with a complement of 195 men and boys, measured only 472 tons.

On the 28th of August, at 5 A. M., as a British squadron, composed of the

Gun-ship			
74	Resolution . . . . .	} Vice-admiral (w.) George Murray, Captain Francis Pender,	
50	Assistance . . . . .		„ Henry Mowat,
Gun-frigate			
38	Thetis . . . . .	„	Hon. Alex. F. Cochrane,
36	Topaze . . . . .	„	Stephen G. Church,
28	Thisbe . . . . .	„	John Oakes Hardy,
Gun-brig-slp.			
14	Bermuda . . . . .	„	Thomas Maxtone,

was lying becalmed about four leagues east-south-east from Cape Henry, three strange ships made their appearance in the east-north-east quarter. The signal was made for a general chase, but the British ships were unable to steer before noon. At 5 h. 30 m. P. M. the *Topaze*, who was considerably ahead of the remainder of her squadron, brought the sternmost of the enemy's ships to action. This ship, which was the French frigate *Elizabet*, of 36 guns (twenty-four 12-pounders on the main deck, and twelve 8-pounders on the quarterdeck and fore-castle) and 297 men, fired a broadside and hauled down her colours.

The *Assistance* and *Bermuda* were directed to take charge of the prize; and the admiral, with the rest of the squadron, continued in pursuit of the *Elizabet's* consorts, now seen to be two frigates, until dark, when the latter disappeared. The *Elizabet* was taken to Halifax, Nova-Scotia, but, having been an Indian bought into the French service, and a very indifferent sailer, was not purchased for the use of the British navy.

In the beginning of the year 1794, if not still earlier in the war, the French government contemplated sending out an expedition to India, to supply the isles of France and Bourbon with troops and munitions of war; and, that accomplished, to

play havoc with the valuable commerce of their enemies in those far distant, and, at this time, ill-protected seas. In the summer of the ensuing year, we find Rear-admiral Kerguelen appointed to command this expedition; which was to consist of the three 74-gun ships Redoubtable, Wattigny, and Droits-de-l'Homme, three rasés or 50-gun frigates, and a proportion of smaller vessels and transports. It was afterwards discovered that the rasés, having been worn out before they were reduced, and very slightly repaired while undergoing the alteration, were rotten and leaky. As a substitute for these, it was planned that three 74s should remove their lowerdeck guns into the hold, so as to carry about 700 troops each; thus making the whole expedition consist of six sail of the line, four frigates, six corvettes, and transports enough to carry, including those on board the ships of war, about 6000 troops.

The loss of the three ships off the isle of Groix, and the subsequent blockade of the French fleet in Lorient, with all the attendant evils of sickness, desertion, and dearth of provisions, having rendered it impracticable to equip an expedition upon the enlarged scale at first contemplated, in conjunction, especially, with the plans then forming for the invasion of Ireland, the Indian expedition was to consist of two 74s only, one armed wholly, the other en flûte, carrying, between them, no more than about 800 troops. In the mean time, the 36-gun frigate Preneuse, Commodore Charles Magon, and corvettes Brûle-Gueule, and, we believe, Moineau, sailed from one of the ports of France for the East India station.

After a delay, partly attributable, no doubt, to the unsettled state of the French government and its vacillating councils, it was resolved that the expedition to India should be composed of some frigates lying in Rochefort, and that Rear-admiral Sercey should have the command of it. While the expedition, consisting of four frigates and two corvettes, was lying at anchor in the road of the isle of Aix, waiting for a fair wind, the 36-gun frigate Cocardé got upon the rocks, and was so damaged that she could not proceed on the voyage. The 40-gun frigate Vertu, then repairing at Rochefort, was designed as a substitute for the Cocardé; but Rear-admiral Sercey did not feel justified in waiting until she could be got ready.

Accordingly, on the 4th of March, 1796, the rear-admiral weighed and put to sea with the 44-gun frigate Forte, bearing his flag, 36-gun frigate Régénérée, Captain (de vais.) Jean-Baptiste-Philibert Willaumez, Seine frigate, armed en flûte and commanded by Lieutenant Julien-Gabriel Bigot, ship-corvette Bonne-Citoyenne, and brig-corvette Mutine. On board the squadron were 800 troops under General Magalon, two companies of artillery, and a quantity of munitions of war; and on board the Forte were the two agents from the Directory, Baco and Burnel, sent out to the isles of France and Bourbon, to give

freedom to the slaves, in compliance with the regulations of the new constitution of September, 1795.

Encountering bad weather in the Bay of Biscay, the *Bonne-Citoyenne* on the 7th parted company; and on the 10th was captured by a squadron of British frigates under Captain the Honourable Robert Stopford of the *Phaëton*. This corvette was a beautiful ship of 511 tons, and would not have been caught but for the damage she had suffered in the gale. The *Bonne-Citoyenne* mounted 20 long 8-pounders, with a crew of 145 men, and became a great acquisition to the British navy as a first-class sloop of war. On the 8th the *Mutine*, having lost a topmast, was allowed also to part company, and eventually shared the fate of the *Bonne-Citoyenne*. The *Seine*, in the same gale, carried away her main topmast, but replaced it on the 10th. On the same day the squadron captured an English brig, which had formed part of a numerous convoy bound to the West Indies, under the protection of three sail of the line and several frigates.

On the 14th Rear-admiral Sercey passed Madeira and Porto-Santo, and on the 17th anchored off Santa-Cruz, the principal city of the isle of Palma, one of the Canaries, and the rendezvous fixed for the junction of the *Vertu*. On the 29th that frigate arrived, after a ten days' passage, under the command of Captain (de vais.) Jean-Marthe-Adrien l'Hermite. This officer commanded the *Cocarde* when she struck on the rocks, and had previously commanded the *Seine* during a long and successful cruise in the North Sea.

Setting sail from Santa-Cruz with his four frigates, the rear-admiral met with nothing remarkable until the 15th of May, in latitude about 32° south, and longitude from Paris 3° east, when he captured an English whaler. On the night of the 24th, also, when just abreast of Cape Aiguilles, a strange ship came into the midst of the squadron. This was a large Portuguese Indiaman, richly-laden from Calcutta. On the 25th, at 7 A. M., two other ships made their appearance under the land to the northward. One of these vessels was the British 20-gun ship *Sphinx*, Captain George Brisac; the other, an American ship, from Batavia bound to the Isle of France with provisions, and on that account detained by the former. While the *Vertu* was bringing to the American ship, the *Régénérée*, as the best sailer of the French squadron, went in chase of the *Sphinx*; who, the moment she discovered that her pursuers were not friends, spread all her canvass and steered for the land, then about four leagues distant. After a chase that lasted nearly the whole of the day, and during which the *Sphinx* was obliged to throw overboard the greater part of her guns, to keep ahead of the *Régénérée*, the latter was recalled to the squadron.

On the 3d of June the French admiral captured a British Indiaman from Bengal, and sent her to the Isle of France;

where, on the 18th, the four French frigates, with the captured Portuguese and American ships, also cast anchor. A small British squadron, which had been blockading the two French frigates *Prudente* and *Cybèle*, Captains (de vais.) Charles Magon and Pierre-Julien Thréouart, had a few days before sailed from the coast; thus affording to the French admiral the wished-for opportunity to enter Port-Louis unobserved, as well as unmolested.

It appears that MM. Baco and Burnel, the agents from the Directory, as soon as the nature of their mission was known, were very ill-received by the colonists of the Isle of France. In short, an insurrection ensued; and the governor, General Malaric, was obliged to order the two deputies to embark on board the corvette *Moineau*, whose commander had received instructions to carry them to Manilla. On the day after their departure, however, the two deputies, dressed in full costume, appeared on the deck of the vessel, and, in the presence of the crew, ordered the captain to carry them to Europe. The latter obeyed, and the *Moineau*, with the two rejected deputies, arrived safe in a port of France.

On the 14th of July, the *Seine* having remounted her guns and taken on board Captain Latour as her commander, and all the ships having been thoroughly refitted and stored, Rear-admiral Sercey put to sea with his six frigates, accompanied, for an aviso to the squadron, by the privateer-schooner *Alerte*. On the 18th the *Forte* and *Vertu* anchored in the road of St.-Denis, and the four remaining frigates and schooner in the road of St.-Paul, Isle of Bourbon. On the 22d the rear-admiral again got under way, and steered towards the coast of Coromandel. On making the land, the schooner, which from her bad sailing had greatly retarded the squadron, was detached to gain information respecting, as well the state of the British naval force in this quarter, as the number of merchant vessels at anchor in the different ports, their times of departure, and a few other necessary particulars. The captain of the privateer, corsair-like, preferred a cruise on his own account to the mission upon which he had been ordered. He accordingly, on the night of the 19th of August, ran down upon a supposed Indiaman, to carry her by boarding, and was himself taken by the British 28-gun frigate *Carysfort*, Captain James Alexander; with such precipitation too, that his papers containing the plan and route of the French admiral's intended cruise, fell into the hands of the captors.

Unacquainted with this disaster, Rear-admiral Sercey, on the 14th of August, made the south-east point of the island of Ceylon. Here he cruised four days and made a few prizes: he then ascended to the northward, and stood along the Coromandel coast between Pondicherry and Madras; making there and at Tranquebar, whither the *Prudente* and *Régénérée* had previously been detached, a few more prizes, but, like the others, of no great

value. As the British force off this coast was far too weak to prevent Rear-admiral Sercey from capturing a number of richly-laden ships about to sail for Europe, the French squadron would have made a fine harvest; but the British officer, who had captured the *Alerte*, and thus become acquainted with the schemes of the rear-admiral, practised upon the latter a very successful ruse. By false information, adroitly conveyed, he induced the French admiral to believe that his squadron was far inferior to that which was cruising to intercept him.

Rear-admiral Sercey, accordingly, made sail for the straits of Malacca, with the intention, in the first instance, of destroying the British factory at Pulo-Penang. On the 1st of September the squadron made Pulo-Way, and Point Pedro, island of Sumatra, and afterwards captured two or three vessels in the road of Acheen. On the 7th, when cruising off the north coast of Sumatra, the squadron captured the country ship *Favourite*, laden with rum and rice; and on the 8th, at daybreak, while occupied in transferring several useful articles of stores from the prize to the frigates preparatory to the former's departure for the Isle of France, the squadron descried two large ships to leeward.

It was just at 6 A. M., Point Pedro bearing west distant about eight leagues, that the two British 74-gun ships *Arrogant*, Captain Richard Lucas, and *Victorious*, Captain William Clark, descried the French squadron, bearing about south-west by west. At 10 A. M. Rear-admiral Sercey, having formed his squadron in line of battle astern of the *Forte*, tacked, with a light air from west by north, to reconnoitre the strangers. At noon the French ships hoisted their colours; and shortly afterwards the prize parted company and stood in under the high land of Pulo-Way. At 1 P. M. the *Arrogant*, who was considerably ahead of her consort, tacked to speak her; and, on arriving within hail about 2 P. M., Captain Lucas stated to Captain Clark, that he considered the strangers to be six large French frigates, and the seventh ship, the *Triton* Indiaman, their prize. Captain Clark, in reply, gave it as his opinion, that two of the ships were of the line. Captain Lucas subsequently went on board the *Victorious*; and it was agreed between the two captains, that they should dog the six French frigates, and bring them to action whenever it could be done with advantage.

The leading French frigate, the *Forte*, had, in the mean time, approached near enough to count the ports in both British ships, and to ascertain precisely their force. Having done so, the French admiral, at 2 h. 30 m. P. M., tacked and stood away, as if to seek a less troublesome enemy. That Rear-admiral Sercey did not intend to be the assailant, is acknowledged by a French naval writer; who maintains, also, that the principle is a correct one, and ought to be, and indeed is, the general practice of the French navy. As this last assertion, if true, will tend to elucidate much that is recorded in these pages, we may be allowed to

digress so far as to give the French writer's words on the subject.

"In the weak state of the French marine, the greatest of all follies is to send ships to sea to seek and offer battle to those of the enemy. It was done, however, at the commencement of the war, and we have witnessed the ill consequences arising from it. This fatal experience, moreover, was unnecessary to prove that such are not the proper tactics of the weaker party. To deceive the vigilance of the stronger, escape his pursuit, strike unawares upon a point which he has left unprotected (and it is impossible for him to protect all), is the proper way to compensate for great inequality of force: even were the forces of two enemies equal, he who acted thus would soon triumph over the other. In naval matters, an engagement is not always the aim to be proposed, unless a party possesses a force so superior, that he may hope very soon to annihilate his enemy. Ships of war have thus always an object, other than that of fighting the ships of an enemy; and it often happens that, whatever may be the issue of the combat, this first and principal object fails to be fulfilled. The important point to the state is, that a naval commander should execute the mission with which he is charged, and not neglect to do so, in order to afford a proof of his courage and acquire a trophiless glory for his country. According to these principles, the different governments which succeeded each other in France during the war of the revolution, have, almost all of them, and very wisely, given a formal order to their flag-officers and captains, to avoid an action, except in a case of absolute necessity, and to devote the whole of their energies towards the accomplishment of their mission."\*

Soon after M. Sercey and his frigates had tacked, the Arrogant and Victorious did the same, and at 4 h. 30 m. p. m. bore up in chase of the former: who were still stretching in towards Pedro in the following order: Cybèle, Forte, Seine, and Vertu, as the four heaviest frigates in one line, and, a little to windward of them, to act as a light squadron, and, if an action ensued, to double upon the enemy, the Prudente and Régénérée. At 6 p. m. the two 74s hoisted their colours; and at 9 h. 30 m., getting very near the land, they tacked and stood off; just previous to which the rearmost French ship bore about three miles ahead of the Arrogant. At about 10 p. m., having sounded in 20 fathoms, the Forte made the signal to tack in succession; and she and her consorts, favoured by the land-wind, then steered about east-south-east.

On the 9th, at daybreak, the French frigates were again ahead of the two British 74s, steering to the eastward with

\* As our translation is more according to the spirit than the letter of the original, we have copied the original passage into the Appendix, for which see No. 22.

very light airs; and the two rearmost frigates, being nearly within gun-shot, were carrying a press of sail to close their companions. The *Arrogant* and *Victorious* now edged away a little, to endeavour to cut off these two frigates, but did not succeed, owing chiefly to the calm state of the weather. At a few minutes past 6 A. M., finding an action inevitable, Rear-admiral Sercey signalled his squadron to put about together, intending to try for the weather-gage. The frigates were soon reformed on the larboard tack, and, with the *Vertu* now as the van-ship, stretched on to windward of their opponents.

At 7 h. 25 m. A. M. the *Arrogant*, still with her consort on the starboard tack, opened her fire on the *Vertu*, at the distance of about 700 yards, and succeeded in discharging two broadsides before the French frigate, owing to her position, could bring any guns to bear. The first broadside, however, which the *Vertu* did fire, brought down the *Arrogant's* ensign. It was immediately replaced by a union-jack. The frigates were formed thus: *Vertu*, *Seine*, *Forte*, *Régénérée*, the latter a little to windward of her second ahead and astern, *Cybèle*, *Prudente*, the last on a line with the *Régénérée*. As they slowly passed in succession, the frigates kept up a brisk cannonade upon the two 74s; the fire from one of which cut away the foretopsail yard of, and otherwise greatly damaged, the *Vertu*. At 8 h. 30 m. A. M., the rearmost French frigate, the *Prudente*, having got so far on the starboard quarter of the *Arrogant* as to be out of gun-shot from her, the latter ceased firing.

Since ten minutes after the commencement of the action a calm had prevailed; and the *Arrogant*, even had she been in perfect order, would have found it difficult to wear. As it was, her foretopsail yard had been shot away; and so had the larboard arm of the maintopsail and cross-jack yards, starboard arm of the spritsail yard, and the mizen topgallantmast. The main topgallantmast had also been shot through, and the main yard, mainmast, and bowsprit much wounded. Three of her boats had been rendered useless by shot; and all the larboard main rigging and stays were cut away, with the whole of the starboard or weather braces and yard tackles. Her sails, also, were in a shattered condition. Thus situated, the *Arrogant* was quite in an unmanageable state.

The *Victorious*, who lay about a cable's length astern, and rather to leeward, of the *Arrogant*, opened her fire, as the French frigates, after having discharged their broadsides at the latter, successively got abreast of her. At about 8 A. M. Captain Clark was wounded in the thigh and carried below, and Lieutenant William Waller took command of the ship. At 8 h. 40 m. A. M., which was soon after the *Arrogant* had, as already stated, ceased firing, the *Victorious* wore round on the same tack as the enemy, and brought her larboard guns to bear. At 9 A. M. she perceived a signal at the *Arrogant's* foretopmast head.

but, owing to the smoke and to the flags not blowing out, did not understand it. The signal, which was for the *Victorious* to come to again on the starboard tack, remained up about ten minutes, and was then hauled down without having been answered.

The two leading frigates had now stationed themselves on the larboard bow of the *Victorious*; and the remaining four lay from the beam to the quarter, at the distance of about 900 yards. The 74 sustained and returned the united fire of the six French frigates until 10 h. 15 m. A. M.; when, having received several shot in her hull, upwards of 40 of them between wind and water, had her three lower masts and bowsprit, as well as her yards and topmasts, badly wounded, and her rigging and sails very much cut; and finding that the *Arrogant*, whose distance already was nearly a mile and a half, still continued to stand on upon the opposite tack, the *Victorious* attempted, with a light air of wind, to wear and rejoin her consort.

No sooner was the stern of the *Victorious*, in wearing, exposed to the enemy, than three of the frigates advanced to rake her, and, it falling a dead calm, continued pouring a destructive fire until 10 h. 45 m. A. M.; when, fortunately for the *Victorious*, a breeze sprang up from the northward, and enabled the latter to bring her starboard broadside to bear. At this time the *Vertu*, from the loss of her foretopsail yard, had dropped astern, and lay in the south quarter, and another frigate was observed to be sweeping and towing with boats in that direction. The latter was the *Cybèle*, proceeding, by signal, to take the crippled *Vertu* in tow. At 10 h. 55 m. A. M., this service having been executed, the French squadron bore up and steered west by north, under a crowd of sail; and at 11 h. 15 m. A. M. the *Victorious* ceased firing, the last of the frigates being out of gunshot.

The condition of the two British ships at the close of this long and tedious contest, as far as respects their masts, yards, rigging, and hulls, has already been described. It remains to show, what loss in men they each of them sustained. The *Arrogant*, out of a crew of 584, or thereabouts, lost one midshipman and six seamen killed, and 27 men wounded. Among this ship's damages should have been noticed, the disabling of one second-deck, and two lowerdeck guns, and the dismounting of one gun on the quarterdeck. The loss of the *Victorious*, whose established complement was the same as the *Arrogant's*, but who had sent away in prizes her first lieutenant and 90 seamen, amounted to 15 seamen and two marines killed, her captain, one midshipman, 48 seamen, and seven marines, wounded: making the total of loss on board the two ships 24 killed, and 84 wounded.

With respect to the damage sustained by the squadron of Rear-admiral Sercey, we can only gather, that three of the

frigates, including the *Vertu* and *Seine*, were much cut up in hull, masts, yards, and rigging. That the remaining three frigates also suffered in some degree, will be evident from the following account of the loss incurred in the action. The *Vertu* had nine officers and men killed, and 15 wounded; the *Seine*, 18, including Captain Latour her commander, killed, and 44 wounded; the *Forte*, six killed and 17 wounded; the *Cybèle*, four killed and 13 wounded; and the *Prudente*, three killed and nine wounded: making a total of 42 killed and 104 wounded.

Of the force opposed in this action it may be sufficient to state, that the two British 74s were of the common or 18-pounder class; the *Forte*, a frigate of 1400 tons, mounting 52 guns, including 30 long 24-pounders; the *Seine*, *Vertu*, and *Cybèle*, all large 18-pounder frigates, armed like the *Virginie*: and the *Régénérée* and *Prudente*, frigates of the 12-pounder or 36-gun class. Consequently, the superiority of force, especially in men, the numbers there being about as 10 to 19, was on the side of M. Sercey. Judging, however, from the relative loss of the combatants, we should say that, had the state of the weather, and other circumstances to which we need scarcely advert, permitted the two 74s to manœuvre and act in concert, they would, in all probability, have captured two, at least, of the six frigates opposed to them. Unless, indeed, the French admiral had put in practice a well-concerted plan of boarding; in which case, undoubtedly, his decided numerical superiority would have placed the two line-of-battle ships in great jeopardy.

After the action the *Arrogant* and *Victorious*, the latter in tow of the former, proceeded straight to Madras, and on the 6th of October anchored in the road. The French squadron steered for *Isle-du-Roi*, in the Archipelago of Margui, and anchored there on the 15th. Here the frigates got themselves thoroughly stored and refitted, even to the renewal of their damaged lower masts. They sailed thence in the early part of October, steering first towards the coast of Golconda, and afterwards to the eastern coast of Ceylon.

Having, while on this station, been led to believe that he should get all the wants of his squadron supplied at Batavia, Rear-admiral Sercey proceeded thither; particularly as the *Vertu*, *Seine*, and another of the frigates required large repairs in their hulls. The delay occasioned by this step detained M. Sercey in port at a very critical season; and so far the action between his squadron and the two British 74s contributed to preserve from spoliation much valuable property in the eastern hemisphere.

Plymouth was this year visited by a calamity which will long be remembered by its inhabitants. On the 22d of September, at about 4 h. 30 m. p. m., the 32-gun frigate *Amphion*, Captain Israel Pellew, while lashed to the sheer-hulk on one side and almost touching the Yarmouth receiving-ship on the other, both of which

lay close to the dock-yard jetty, unfortunately blew up. Two parties were on board at dinner, one in the cabin, the other in the gun-room; and, owing to its being known that the *Amphion* would put to sea on the following day, nearly 100 men, women, and children, over and above the ship's complement, were on board, taking leave of their kindred and townfolk. Captain Pellew, his first lieutenant, and a visiter, Captain William Swaffield of the *Overyssel*, were sitting at table, when the first shock threw them all from their seats against the carlings of the main deck. The first two, although much bruised, retained their self-possession, and, running to the cabin windows, threw themselves out and were saved. Captain Swaffield, stunned probably by the blow against the deck, shared the fate of the ship, and of 300 out of her 310 or 312 unfortunate inmates. The mangled bodies, limbless trunks, and disunited arms, legs, and heads, that every where presented themselves, made humanity shudder. The *Amphion* having been chiefly manned from the town, these black and scorched pieces of flesh had to be scrutinized by the sorrowful inhabitants, in order that they might ascertain, if they could, which had belonged to a father, a son, a brother, a husband, or a friend.

Three or four of the survivors had been among the men engaged in the tops. Another, the boatswain, was standing on the cat-head, superintending the rigging of the jib-boom: after being lifted up by the shock, he fell into the sea, and escaped with the loss of an arm. The sentinel at the cabin-door happened to be looking at his watch, when he felt it suddenly dashed out of his hand: beyond that he knew nothing, and yet was but little hurt. The cause of this dreadful disaster has never been satisfactorily explained. If by design, the incendiary, and, if by accident, the defaulter, probably fell a victim to his crime or his carelessness. Early in October an attempt was made to weigh the *Amphion*, and two frigates, the *Castor* and *Iphigenia*, were moored on each side of her. It only served to harrow up afresh the feelings of the inhabitants, by dislodging the putrid bodies, and casting them on shore all along the beach. In November, however, Mr. Hemmings, the master-attendant at Plymouth, succeeded in dragging the wreck to the jetty to be broken up. As one means of preventing the repetition of such an accident so near to the town, it was ordered that every ship should land her powder previously to entering the harbour.

On the 23d of September, at daybreak, the island of *Désirade* bearing south-east by south distant six or seven leagues, the British 18-gun brig-sloop *Pelican*, Captain John Clarke Searle, mounting sixteen 32-pounder carronades and two long sixes, found herself close on the lee beam of an enemy's frigate. Not over-desirous of engaging where the odds were so decidedly against him, Captain Searle made sail to the north-west, and was followed by the frigate; who, having the weathergage, and

sailing remarkably fast in the prevailing fresh breeze, rapidly approached the Pelican.

Having away in prizes her master and several of her petty-officers and seamen, the brig could not muster, at this time, more than 97, out of her established complement of 121, men and boys; and some of the seamen appeared to hesitate about engaging a ship of such evident superiority of force. But, when Captain Searle called to their recollection the frequent occasions on which they had distinguished themselves while under his command, and expressed a hope that they would not sully their well-earned reputation, nor place less confidence in him than they had been accustomed to do, the fine fellows gave three cheers, and at once declared their resolution, rather to sink with their commander than forfeit his good opinion.

As soon as she had made all ready, the Pelican, to the great surprise, no doubt, of all on board the frigate, shortened sail: and at 7 A. M. the French 36-gun frigate *Médée*, having arrived within gun-shot, opened her fire. The brig reserved hers until her carronades could reach with effect. Having at length got within the proper distance, the Pelican commenced a very brisk fire, and kept it up until 8 h. 53 m. A. M.; when the *Médée*, whose crew appeared to be in some confusion, hauled on board her maintack, and made off to the northward under all possible sail. Having had every brace and bowline, all the after back-stays, the main-stay, several of the lower shrouds, the topsail ties, and other parts of her rigging, shot away, her sails very much torn, and her mainmast, maintopsail yard, and fore yard a good deal injured, the Pelican was not in a condition for an immediate pursuit; and the *Médée*, being thus left to herself, soon ran out of sight. With all her heavy damage, the Pelican had no person killed, and only one slightly wounded.

At 10 A. M., while the Pelican was repairing her damages, the man at the mast-head discovered a large ship on the lee beam. At 11 A. M., having got her rigging and sails in tolerable order, the Pelican gave chase; and at 3 P. M., Englishman's Head, Guadeloupe, bearing south-south-east, distant a mile and a half, succeeded, after firing several shot, in cutting away the stranger's maintopsail yard. Upon this the latter brought to, and proved to be the *Alcyon*, late a British army-victualler, but then a prize in the possession of the *Médée*; who had captured her on the 9th, about 100 leagues to windward of Barbadoes. Having put on board the *Alcyon* Acting-lieutenant Thomas Ussher and a party of men, the Pelican, at 4 P. M., made sail to the southward with the prize in tow; but at midnight, owing to a calm and a heavy westerly swell which caused the *Alcyon* three times to fall on board the Pelican, the latter was obliged to cast her off.

At daybreak on the 24th the *Alcyon* was found to have drifted very near to the shore at Anse-la-Barque; and, at about a gun-

shot within her, was seen the *Médée* herself, having a light air from the land, while the *Pelican* and her prize lay quite becalmed. The *Médée*'s boats soon regained possession of the *Alcyon*; and Captain Searle, knowing that the *Thétis* and another French frigate, either the *Pensée* or *Concorde*, were at anchor in *Anse-la-Barque*, thought it the most prudent course to abandon his prize. Scarcely had the *Pelican* taken advantage of the breeze which had just sprung up, and set sail from the spot, ere one of the frigates came out and joined the *Médée*; but neither frigate evinced any further disposition to molest the *Pelican*, and she proceeded to the *Saintes* to refit.

Soon after the *Médée*, in company with the *Alcyon*, had anchored at *Anse-la-Barque*, Victor Hugues, the governor of *Guadeloupe*, sent for Lieutenant Ussher who had been taken prisoner in the prize, to ascertain from him, whether or not there was any truth in the statement made by the captain of the *Médée*, that the English vessel, which he had engaged on the 23d, was a frigate with her mizenmast out. The mistake was soon cleared up, to the evident mortification of the French governor.

On the day after the *Pelican* had anchored at the *Saintes*, an aide-de-camp of Victor Hugues arrived with a flag of truce; and the French officer, appearing to entertain a doubt about the force of the vessel which had beaten off the *Médée*, was allowed to go on board the *Pelican* to count her guns. About the same time arrived an officer of the 60th regiment, who had been a prisoner on board the *Médée*, during the action, and got released on her arrival at *Guadeloupe*. He confirmed every statement respecting the proceedings of the *Médée*; adding, that she mounted 40 guns, with a complement of 300 men, and sustained much damage, besides a loss, in killed and wounded together, of 33 men.

It was afterwards ascertained from Lieutenant Ussher, that the *Pelican*'s first broadside killed the man at the wheel, wounded three men, and disabled a gun; and that the last raking broadside, which the *Pelican* poured into the stern of the *Médée*, killed and wounded from 10 to 12 men upon the main deck. Great as was the noise which this truly gallant exploit of the *Pelican* made in the West Indies, we have searched in vain for any account of it in the "*Victoires et Conquêtes*," and in some other French works to which we have had occasion to refer.

On the 13th of October, at daybreak, the British 12-pounder 32-gun frigate *Terpsichore*, Captain Richard Bowen, while cruising off the port of *Carthagena*, with a light air at west-south-west, observed a strange frigate to windward, standing towards her. The former's situation was such, that an engagement with an enemy, of the apparent force of the ship approaching, was not very desirable. The *Terpsichore* had left 30 of her men sick at the hospital in *Gibraltar*, and her sick and convalescent lists

showed more than that number still on board ; many of whom were dangerously ill, and none strong enough to be useful at quarters. Moreover, she was then in sight of the very spot on which the Spanish fleet had been cruising only two days previous ; and a small Spanish vessel, apparently a tender, was at this very time passing in the direction of Carthagena, the port to which the fleet belonged. Under all the circumstances, therefore, Captain Bowen could hardly flatter himself with bringing off, either the enemy's frigate if captured, or his own if disabled. To fly, however, was not to be borne ; and the *Terpsichore* continued standing on, without any alteration in her course.

At 9 h. 30 m. the Spanish 12-pounder 34-gun frigate *Mahonesa*, Captain Don Tomas Ayaldi, having approached within hail of the *Terpsichore*, hauled to the wind on the latter's weather beam. This being apparently done in order to place herself to advantage, the *Terpsichore*, whose position was then tolerably good, fired one gun as a trier of her opponent's intention. It was instantaneously returned by a whole broadside, and the action proceeded with mutual spirit. After a while the the Spanish crew began to slacken their exertions ; and at the end of one hour and 20 minutes, the *Mahonesa* tried to make off. By this time the *Terpsichore* had had her three lower masts and bowsprit wounded, her spare spars and boats shot through, two of her anchors disabled, and her rigging and sails much cut. In the course of 20 minutes, however, by characteristic alacrity in refitting and making sail, the British frigate was again close alongside of her antagonist, with every gun well charged and pointed ; when the *Mahonesa*, whose booms had fallen down and disabled her waist-guns, and who was altogether in a crippled and defenceless state, hauled down her colours.

Out of her 182 men and boys, the *Terpsichore* lost none in killed, and but four in wounded : whereas the *Mahonesa*, out of her 275 in complement, had 30 killed, and the same number wounded, a portion of them mortally.

Both frigates mounted guns of the same nominal caliber, and of the number, 32 and 34, expressed by their respective rates. Admitting, therefore, the *Terpsichore* to have had her full complement at quarters, we should pronounce this to be as fair a match as an English officer would wish to fight, or an English writer to record. Nothing is more truly characteristic of a brave man, than promptitude in doing justice to the efforts of an unsuccessful enemy. Captain Bowen, in his official letter, dwells with emphasis, on the zeal, courage, and good conduct of Don Tomas Ayaldi, the commander of the *Mahonesa*. He declares that this officer, although, towards the last, he could rally but few of his men, persevered to defend his ship, longer almost than was justifiable.

Notwithstanding the crippled state of the *Mahonesa's* masts, which had been left with scarcely a shroud to support them,

Captain Bowen succeeded in carrying his prize to Lisbon. But the fine contour of the Mahonesa, boasted of as it was by the Spaniards, had been so disfigured by the *Terpsichore's* shot, that the ship, although, setting aside what she had suffered in the action, a remarkably fine frigate of 921 tons (239 more than the *Terpsichore*), was considered not worth the cost of a thorough repair; hence, the Mahonesa had little more than a nominal existence among the 36-gun frigates of the British navy.

The following is the account given of this action by a contemporary: "The first Spanish ship captured after the declaration of war was the Mahonesa of 36 guns, by Captain Richard Bowen, of the *Terpsichore*. The action took place off Malaga. The Mahonesa had between 50 and 60 of her people killed and wounded; the *Terpsichore* had no one hurt on board. There is little credit to be gained in conquering such antagonists."\* Passing over the slight mistake, that "the *Terpsichore* had no one hurt on board," we shall extract another passage from the same work, if only to show how differently the writer could reason in (as he has made it appear) a similar case. "This instance," that of the *Crescent* and *Réunion*, "may be fairly adduced in support of the proposition, that a long list of killed and wounded is not always a certain criterion of the merit of an action."†

On the 24th of October the British 12-pounder 36-gun frigate *Santa-Margarita*, Captain Thomas Byam Martin, cruising at the entrance of the channel, captured the ship-privateer *Buonaparte* of 16 guns and 137 men; and on the next morning discovered two ships approaching her, which came nearly within hail before they discovered the *Santa-Margarita* to be a frigate. They now made all sail from her, and, to secure the retreat of one or the other, stood on different tacks.

The *Santa-Margarita* followed the larger ship, with little prospect of taking the other; but Lieutenant William Birchall, first of the frigate, gallantly volunteered to attack the latter in a boat. At this time the shot from the frigate had so disabled this ship, as to enable the boat to get alongside, and Lieutenant Birchall took possession, without resistance, of the merchant ship *Potomak*, from Poole bound to Newfoundland, with a cargo, a prize to the *Vengeur*, of 16 guns and 120 men, from Brest, the ship of which the *Santa-Margarita* was in pursuit; and which, on receiving a few shot from the latter, hauled down her colours. Having now nearly as many prisoners on board as equalled his crew in number, Captain Martin was obliged to return into port to get rid of them.

An express from the island of Anguilla having reached St.-Kitt's on the 25th of November, bringing an account that two French ships of war, with smaller vessels and a body of troops,

\* Brenton, vol. ii., p. 142.

† Ibid. vol. i., p. 248.

were attacking the island, the British 28-gun frigate *Lapwing*, Captain Robert Barton, lying at anchor at St.-Kitt's, immediately weighed and made sail, in the hope of reaching Anguilla in time to save the inhabitants from the dreadful consequences that invariably attended one of Victor Hugues's pillaging visitations.

A northerly wind made it the following evening ere the *Lapwing* reached Anguilla; too late, as was evident, to prevent the enemy from setting fire to the houses. The very appearance of the frigate, however, freed the inhabitants from the further presence of the invaders; who, that very afternoon, to the number of nearly 300, embarked on board the French 20-gun ship *Décus* and brig *Vaillante*, which had transported them thither. These vessels, one of which mounted 26 guns, 18 of them long 6, and two, brass 8 pounders, with six English 18-pounder carronades, and the other six, two long 24s and four brass 36-pounder carronades, then stood out of the bay of Anguilla, and were immediately chased by the *Lapwing*; who, at about 10 P. M., brought them to close action. At the end of an hour's mutual cannonade the brig bore away; and, in less than half an hour, the *Décus*, after making a vain attempt to escape, struck her colours. As soon as he had secured the ship, Captain Barton directed his attention to the brig; but, in the mean time, the latter had run on shore on the neighbouring island of St.-Martin: she was, however, soon destroyed by the fire of the *Lapwing*.

The *Lapwing*, whose damages were chiefly confined to her sails and rigging, had but one man, the pilot, killed, and six seamen wounded. The *Décus* is represented to have lost, out of a complement, including troops, of 336 men, as many as 80 killed and 40 wounded. It is probable that the *Décus* had some of her masts shot away; but, although the *Gazette* contains two letters on the subject of the action, not a word appears about any damage sustained by either ship: nor, in short, are any details given. The loss sustained by the brig, whose complement, including troops, was about 135, was doubtless severe, but could not be ascertained.

The promptitude and vigour of the *Lapwing's* attack upon these French vessels reflect great credit upon Captain Barton, his officers and crew. A slight degree of less decision in the business might have encouraged the French commodore to try the effects of boarding, in the hope, by his overwhelming numbers, to have carried the British ship. With respect to the immediate effect of Captain Barton's success, it was most salutary and cheering; inasmuch as it routed a nest of hornets, and relieved a suffering people from further pillage, and, not improbably, from massacre.

On the following day, the 27th, the *Lapwing* having her prize in tow, was chased by the French frigates *Thétis* and *Pensée*. Their near approach compelled Captain Barton, after removing

his men and the prisoners from the *Décus*, to set the vessel on fire. Thus unencumbered, the *Lapwing* escaped from her pursuers, and reached *St.-Kitt's* in safety. Soon after his return to this island, Captain Barton was presented by a deputation of the inhabitants with a very flattering address, lauding as well his gallantry in the action we have just detailed, as his subsequent humanity towards the crew of the *Décus*. To this address a suitable reply was returned.

Having repaired at Gibraltar the damages which she had sustained in her action with the *Mahonesa*, the *Terpsichore* frigate was again at sea in search of an opponent; when, on the 12th of December, at daybreak, while lying to about 20 leagues to the westward of Cadiz, Captain Bowen descried an enemy's frigate also lying to, distant about four miles on his weather quarter. Owing to the stormy weather of the preceding night, and the fresh south-easterly wind which, with a short uneasy sea, still prevailed, the *Terpsichore* was under a close-reefed main topsail, and had her topgallantmasts struck. Quickly replacing these, and spreading as much sail as the state of the weather would permit, the *Terpsichore* tacked and stood after the stranger; whom we may at once introduce as the French 36-gun frigate *Vestale*, Captain Foucaud, who had parted company a few days before, in a gale, from the squadron of Rear-admiral Villeneuve, already mentioned as on its way from Toulon to Brest.

As if desirous to avoid an action, the *Vestale* made sail, tacked, and stood to windward. The *Terpsichore*, owing to the breeze getting more ahead, was unable to fetch within gun-shot, but continued working up until past 2 P. M.; when the *Vestale* wore, and stood to the east-north-east. This brought the two ships nearer together; but a change in the wind again baffled one and favoured the other, and its increased violence sprang the *Terpsichore's* fore and main topmasts. The chase was nevertheless persevered in, each ship under her courses, until 2 A. M. on the 13th; when, being close in with the land about Cape Marcus, the *Terpsichore* wore and brought to with her head off shore.

At about 8 A. M. the *Vestale* was again seen from the mast-head; and, a shift of wind to the south-west having now given the British frigate the weather-gage, the latter again wore and made sail in chase. The sprung state of the *Terpsichore's* masts rendered it likely that the *Vestale*, carrying the sail she did, would soon reach Cadiz, the port towards which she was seemingly directing her course, and then but a few miles distant. However, at 9 h. 30 m. P. M., to the great joy of the *Terpsichore's* officers and men, the *Vestale* hauled up her courses and hove to. In this state, without firing a shot, or even hoisting her colours, the latter waited until the *Terpsichore* had reached her weather quarter.

Having there in vain hailed the *Vestale* several times, the *Terpsichore*, at 10 P. M., ranged alongside of her opponent within 10 yards, and opened her fire. The *Vestale*, as she promptly returned this warm salute, ran up the tri-coloured flag with lights, and a most determined action ensued; during which the *Terpsichore*, owing to her braces getting foul, was compelled, for several minutes, to receive her adversary's fire without the power of returning it. At length, when the action had lasted, with mutual spirit, until 11 h. 40 m. P. M., the French frigate, having all her three masts and bowsprit in a tottering state, and her captain and a great proportion of her crew killed and wounded, struck her colours. Immediately afterwards the *Vestale's* mizenmast fell over the side; and, almost at the same instant, unintentionally, it is supposed, a double-shotted gun belonging to her went off, and killed a boy, and wounded dangerously in the shoulder (by which his arm was ever afterwards rendered nearly useless) the only lieutenant on board the *Terpsichore*, George Bowen, brother to the captain, besides four of her seamen.

The *Terpsichore* had received several shots between wind and water, and between the guns on the main and quarter decks. All her boats, except the small cutter, were much damaged; and so were her bowsprit, fore and main masts, main topmast, spare spars, sails, and standing and running rigging.

It appears that, at the time of this action, the British frigate had away in prizes and sick at the hospital, two lieutenants, three midshipmen, the boatswain, and 40 men; which therefore reduced her complement to 166 men and boys. Of these the *Terpsichore* lost four seamen killed, her second and only lieutenant, and 17 petty-officers, seamen, and marines wounded. The *Vestale*, out of a complement, according to one English account, of 300, and to another, of 270, lost her captain, two officers, and 27 men killed, and 37 officers and men, including her first lieutenant, wounded.

Had the *Terpsichore's* 46 absentees, including two of her three lieutenants, three midshipmen, and the boatswain, been where their wishes would have led them, still the *Vestale*, as will sufficiently appear by a reference to the comparative statement in the action of the *Astræa* and *Gloire*, would have had a preponderance of force in her favour. It cannot be said, however, that the French frigate yielded without a struggle, and a manful one too. In addition to the loss of her mizenmast, the fore and main masts and bowsprit of the *Vestale* fell, just as the *Terpsichore's* boat got alongside. Of what avail, then, would have been a longer resistance; especially against an adversary, whose masts, although much wounded, were still standing?

Having possessed the *Terpsichore* of her well-earned prize, our next business is to show what became of her. Such had been the ardour of the conquerors in this long night-action, that

their near approach to a treacherous shore had been entirely overlooked. Both ships, in fact, were close to windward of the shoals that lie between Cape Trafalgar and Cadiz. The Vestale, in particular, to whom Captain Bowen, in the reduced state of his crew, and the critical situation of the Terpsichore's masts, yards, and rigging, had been able to send only his master, one midshipman, and seven seamen, had drifted into four fathoms' water, and was without an anchor clear for letting go. The Vestale's surviving crew, too, or the greater part of them, lay drunk about the decks, and were incapable, even if they were willing, to assist in saving the lives of those on board: of whom, in all probability, the whole would have perished, had the ship gone on shore. By great exertions on the part of Mr. James Elder and his handful of men, the prize was brought up in little less than three fathoms' water. The Terpsichore, with great difficulty, weathered the rocks of St.-Sebastian, and gained an offing.

On the following morning, the 13th, the Terpsichore stood back in search of her prize, and at 10 A.M. cast anchor in 20 fathoms' water, about four miles south-west of the island of San-Pedro. Hitherto no opportunity had offered for removing any more of the prisoners than the Vestale's second lieutenant; and the shattered state of the boats belonging to both frigates, added to the loss of the Terpsichore's cutter by swamping alongside the prize in the troubled state of the sea, rendered even the passing of a tow-rope to the Vestale a hazardous and tedious operation. At length a stream-cable was got on board the latter; and, at about 4 P.M., a favourable slant of wind enabled the two ships to cut the cables by which they rode, and make sail. But, while the Terpsichore's people were heaving in the bend of the stream-cable, to which a hawser had been made fast, the cable got foul of a rock, and the Terpsichore was compelled to cut herself free. The Vestale, meantime, rode by the stream-cable as it clung to the rock, and, owing to the master's provident care, had a second anchor ready to let go. Darkness coming on, the Terpsichore again stood off for the night; and, it falling calm about midnight, was drifted by the current into the Straits. Towards daylight on the 14th the wind changed to the south-east; and Captain Bowen, having chased and spoken a Swedish ship that had hove in sight, again steered towards the spot on which he had left his prize; but he and his officers and crew had the mortification to see the Vestale, with some spars erected and sails set, and with French colours flying, towing, within the shoals, straight towards Cadiz. The Terpsichore gave chase, but, in her crippled state, was quite unable to overtake the Vestale; who, in a few minutes more, was safe moored in port.

The fact is, that, as soon as the Terpsichore had sailed out of sight on the preceding evening, the French crew, recovering from

their inebriated stupor, dispossessed the master of his charge, and anchored the ship in five fathoms' water. They then got up a pair of sheers for hoisting out the launch, in order that some of them might proceed to the shore. By this time the wind, as already mentioned, had drawn round to the south-east, and blew fair for Cadiz. Soon afterwards, some Spanish boats coming alongside, the French crew hove up the anchor, and, setting a few sails on the sheers, allowed the Spaniards to tow the *Vestale* out of the reach of those, by whom she had been so honourably fought and so fairly won.

Captain Bowen afterwards sent into Cadiz a letter addressed to the *Vestale's* late first lieutenant, then her commanding officer, demanding the restitution of his prize; but the Frenchman, feeling his head shake at the bare thought, returned no answer.

Thus had the brave crew of the *Terpsichore* no second trophy to carry home; but what, it may be asked, is the worth of a shattered hulk, compared with the glory acquired in gaining a victory over, at the least, an equal opponent? This mode of estimating the merits of the case was not, however, that adopted in the proper quarter. Hence Captain Bowen's letter to Sir John Jervis, describing the action, never made its appearance in the *London Gazette*; nor, that preliminary omitted, did the *Terpsichore's* captain receive the honour of knighthood: an honour, as we have seen, frequently conferred, even where a British 18-pounder frigate had captured a French frigate of the class of the *Vestale*.

Captain Bowen's vigilance in protecting the trade, equalled his ardour in vindicating the honour of his country; and, in order to show their sense of both, the merchants of London presented him with an elegant piece of plate: that, too, while Captain Bowen was in command of the same *Terpsichore* in which he had thus captured, in succession, two frigates of the enemy, each of equal, if not superior force, to his own.

On the 19th of December, at 10 P. M., Commodore Nelson, in the 38-gun frigate *Minerve*, Captain George Cockburn, accompanied by the 12-pounder 32-gun frigate *Blanche*, Captain d'Arcy Preston, being on his way from Gibraltar to Porto-Ferrajo, to bring away the stores left there, fell in with two Spanish frigates. While the *Blanche*, agreeably to the commodore's directions, wore to attack the frigate to leeward, the *Minerve* hauled up, and at 10 h. 40 m. A. M. brought to close action the larger frigate, or that to windward. After a brave resistance of two hours and 50 minutes, during which she lost her mizenmast, and had her fore and main masts shot through in several places, the Spanish 40-gun frigate *Sabina*, Captain Don Jacobo Steuart, struck her colours to the *Minerve*; whose masts, although none of them had been shot away, were, as well as her rigging and sails, much wounded.

Out of her complement, consisting with a few supernumeraries

of 286 men and boys, the *Minerve* had one midshipman and six seamen killed, one lieutenant (James Noble, who had quitted the *Captain* 74, to serve under Commodore Nelson), the boatswain, and 32 petty-officers, seamen, and marines, or soldiers (a detachment from the 18th regiment), wounded. The *Sabina* had commenced the action also with 286 men and boys; of whom she lost, in killed and wounded together, according to Commodore Nelson's letter, 164, but, according to a Spanish account of the action published at Carthagena, 10 men killed and 45 wounded, two of them mortally.

The *Minerve* mounted her 42 French guns,\* and the *Sabina*, 40 guns, 18 and 8 pounders Spanish. The loss and damages of the former show, that the Spaniards pointed the *Sabina's* guns with more than their accustomed precision. The British, on the other hand, must have felt some disadvantage from the French armament of the *Minerve*. Upon the whole, the action was very gallantly maintained on both sides; and it is scarcely necessary to state, that Commodore Nelson, in his official letter, pays the full tribute of praise to his Spanish opponent.

The first and second lieutenants of the *Minerve*, John Culverhouse and Thomas Masterman Hardy, with 40 petty-officers and seamen, having been placed on board the *Sabina*, the latter was taken in tow, when, at 4 P. M., a frigate, known by her signals to be Spanish, was seen coming up. The *Minerve* cast off the prize, which immediately stood to the southward; and, at 4 h. 30 m. P. M. the former came to action with the 34-gun frigate *Matilda*. In half an hour the *Minerve* compelled this her second antagonist to wear and haul off, and would, most probably, have captured her, had not three other Spanish ships, the *Principe-de-Asturias* of 112 guns, and the frigates *Ceres* of 40, and *Perla* of 34 guns, hove in sight. At daylight on the 20th these three ships were joined by the *Matilda*; and the *Blanche* also made her appearance far to windward. The *Minerve* had now her own safety to look to; and crippled as she was, it required the greatest exertions to get clear. The squadron chased all day, but at dark gave up the pursuit; leaving the *Minerve* with much additional damage to her rigging and sails, and with the additional loss of 10 men, including the gunner, wounded.

Lieutenant Culverhouse, now the commander of the *Sabina*, purposely to draw the attention of the Spaniards from what, on more than one account, would have been by far the more valuable prize of the two, hoisted English over Spanish colours; and the lieutenant and his few hands, although greatly inconvenienced in having the whole surviving Spanish crew, except the captain, in their custody, manœuvred the prize with the utmost skill and steadiness, not surrendering the *Sabina* until her two

\* See p. 291.

remaining masts went over the side, and left her a mere wreck upon the water.

In three or four minutes after the *Minerve* had poured her first broadside into the *Sabina*, the *Blanche* was close alongside the frigate to leeward. Eight or nine broadsides, very feebly returned, silenced her; and, calling for quarter, the *Ceres* hauled down her colours, with a loss, as subsequently ascertained of seven men killed and 15 wounded. But the consummation of the victory was impracticable; the *Matilda* and *Perla*, who were almost within gun-shot when the action commenced, being at this time so near that the *Blanche* was obliged to wear and make sail in the direction of her consort the *Minerve*. As, however, the *Matilda* and *Perla* did not close immediately with the *Ceres*, who although damaged in her rigging and sails, had now got her foresail, fore topsail, and fore topgallantsail set, the *Blanche* again stood towards the latter. But the *Ceres* out-sailed the *Blanche* before the wind, and, moreover, was presently joined by the *Principe-de-Asturias* three-decker, from near the land. Captain Preston, therefore, although his ship had sustained neither damage nor loss, was obliged to content himself with a trophiless triumph.

The *Minerve*, in the mean time, had proceeded upon her destination, and on the 26th anchored in the harbour of Porto-Fer-rajo. Here the commodore remained, embarking the troops and stores, until the morning of the 29th of January, 1797; when the *Minerve*, accompanied by the *Romulus*, *Southampton* and *Dido* frigates, *Dolphin* and *Dromedary* store-ships, two sloops, and 12 transports, set sail upon her return. On the same evening, the *Minerve* and *Romulus* parted company from the squadron, and stood towards the French coast. On the 1st of February these two frigates reconnoitred the road of Toulon, and successively the ports of Barcelona and Carthagena, and on the 10th rejoined their companions at Gibraltar.

COLONIAL EXPEDITIONS.—NORTH AMERICA.

Rear-admiral Richery, with his seven sail of the line and three frigates, as soon as the kind friends, who had released him from his long thralldom at Cadiz, parted company on their return home, steered straight for North America, and on the 28th of August arrived on the grand bank of Newfoundland. The British naval commander-in-chief on the station was Vice-admiral Sir James Wallace, who had under his command only the 50-gun ship *Romney* and three or four 12-pounder frigates; and all of these were out on a cruise, except the 32-gun frigate *Venus*, Captain Thomas Graves, lying at an anchor in the harbour of St.-John. As soon as it became known that the French squadron was off the coast, Captain Graves, with the greater

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part of his crew, was ordered on shore to assist in manning the batteries, one of which, called the chain rock, is but a few feet above the level of the sea: the frigate, meanwhile, under the command of the second lieutenant, was moored across the entrance of the harbour, which is only 160 yards wide. Rear-admiral Richery stood close in, with a fresh breeze, but, not liking the appearance of the defence, bore away to the southward.

On the 4th of September the French squadron entered the bay of Bulls: here M. Richery plundered and set fire to the huts of the poor fishermen, and destroyed their vessels and fishing-stages. On the 5th he detached chef de division Zacharie-Jacques-Théodore Allemand, with the Duquesne and Censeur 74s and frigate Friponne, to the bay of Castles on the coast of Labrador; while he himself, with the Victoire, Barras, Jupiter, Berwick, and Révolution 74s, and frigates Embuscade, and Félicité, set sail for the islands of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon; where, on his arrival, he destroyed all the buildings, vessels, and fishing-stages of the inhabitants, as he had previously done at the bay of Bulls.

Delayed by head winds and fogs, M. Allemand did not enter the bay of Castles until the 22d of September; by which time the greater part of the vessels had departed for Europe. The French commodore then sent an officer with a flag of truce, demanding the surrender of the town. This was refused, but the approach of the squadron compelled the British commanding officer to destroy the fishing-stages. Finding this to be the case, M. Allemand stood away from the coast, and, as M. Richery had done, steered homewards. On the 5th of November, the latter, with his division, entered the port of Rochefort: and on the 15th M. Allemand, with his, was equally fortunate, in reaching Lorient. The two divisions, between them, had destroyed upwards of 100 merchant vessels, and made a great many prisoners; part of whom were sent in a cartel to Halifax, and the remainder about 300 in number, were carried into France.

On the 15th of April Captain John Parr of the 54-gun ship Malabar, having under his orders a few frigates and transports with a detachment of troops amounting to 1200 men, commanded by Major-general John Whyte, was detached by Admiral Sir John Laforey, who, since June of the preceding year, had been reappointed the commander-in-chief on the Leeward-island station in the room of Vice-admiral Caldwell, to take possession of the Dutch settlements of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice, in Dutch Guayana, on the continent of South America. On the 22d of April the first two, and on the 2d of May, the last of those settlements surrendered peaceably to the British arms. A Dutch 24-gun ship, the Thetis, and a 12-gun cutter, along with several richly-laden merchant vessels, were captured at Demerara.

On the 21st of April the long-delayed expedition under Rear-admiral Sir Hugh Cloberry Christian, consisting of two sail of the line and five smaller vessels of war, having in charge a numerous fleet of transports, arrived in Carlisle bay, Barbadoes. After the squadron and convoy had sailed on the 9th of December, the greater part of the ships were again, in the course of January, driven back by tempestuous weather, and did not finally quit Spithead until the 20th of March. The recapture of Sainte-Lucie was the first object to be attended to. Accordingly, on the following day, the 22d, Sir John Laforey proceeded, with the squadron (now greatly augmented) and transports, to Marin bay, Martinique; where, on the 23d, the whole expedition came to an anchor. On the 24th the admiral resigned the command to Rear-admiral Christian, and sailed for England in the 74-gun ship *Majestic*.

On the 26th, in the evening, Rear-admiral Christian, with the squadron and transports, on board of which was a large body of troops, under the command of Lieutenant-general Sir Ralph Abercromby, quitted the bay and stood across to Sainte-Lucie; off which, by the morning of the 27th, the whole had arrived. The three intended points of debarkation were, Anse du Cap and Anse-Béquène in Longueville bay, Choc bay and Anse-la-Raye, some distance south of the Cul de Sac. The first point in Longueville bay, Anse du Cap, was protected by a 5-gun battery on Pigeon island. To keep this battery in check the 38-gun frigate *Hebe*, Captain Matthew Henry Scott, led into the anse, or creek. The 74-gun ship *Ganges*, Captain Robert M'Doual, supported her; and the 18-gun brig-sloop *Pelican*, Captain John Clarke Searle, anchoring in Anse-Béquène, covered the troops in their approach. Other able dispositions were made; and the fire of the ships, dismounting one and silencing the remainder of the guns at the Pigeon island battery, enabled the first division of troops to make good its landing.

The 74-gun ship *Alfred*, Captain John Totty, was to have led the second division into Choc bay, and the 54-gun ship *Madras*, Captain John Dilkes, supported by the 40-gun frigate *Beaulieu*, Captain Lancelot Skynner, the third, into the anchorage at Anse-la-Raye. A strong lee current, which had set the transports considerably to leeward, rendered it necessary to defer both attempts. However, on the next morning, the 28th, the landing at Choc bay was effected without the slightest opposition; as, on the following day, the 29th, was that at Anse-la-Raye. Eight hundred seamen, under the command of Captain Richard Lane of the 32-gun frigate *Astræa*, and George Frederick Ryves, of the bomb-vessel *Bull-dog*, were then landed, to cooperate with the troops in the intended attack upon Morne-Fortunée.

Morne-Chabot, the first post attacked, was, on the night of the 28th, carried by one division only of the force that had marched against it, with the loss of 13 officers and privates

killed, 49 wounded, and nine missing. The failure of an attempt, on the 3d of May, to dislodge the republicans from their batteries on the base of the mountain, near the Grand Cul de Sac, occasioned a loss of 12 officers and privates killed, 56 wounded, and 34 missing. An attempt, made in the night of the 17th, to get possession of a post named the Vigie, although conducted with the utmost bravery, and partially successful, failed also in the main object, and was attended with the loss of one lieutenant killed, 114 officers and privates wounded, and 65 missing. After a few attacks of outposts, the enemy, annoyed by the guns brought by the ships and planted by the seamen, retired to the fortress of Morne-Fortunée. At length, on the evening of the 24th, the enemy desired a suspension of arms until noon the next day. It was granted until eight in the morning, when the whole island surrendered by capitulation. On the 26th the garrison, to the number of 2000 men, marched out and laid down their arms. A great quantity of ordnance, besides stores of every description, was found in the different forts; and one or two small privateers and some merchant vessels were taken in the carénage. The total loss sustained by the British army, in the reduction of this valuable island, amounted to 56 officers and privates killed, 378 wounded, and 122 missing.

Exclusive of 800 seamen, 320 marines had been landed from the ships of war; and both departments exerted themselves with their usual promptitude and gallantry. In establishing batteries, especially on commanding eminences deemed almost inaccessible, the ready resources of the sailors astonished their land-associates, and mainly contributed to the successful result of the expedition. An acknowledgment to this effect, made in the handsomest terms by Lieutenant-general Sir Ralph Abercromby, was communicated to the navy through the channel of a general order issued for the purpose; and in which, besides Captains Lane and Ryves, Captain James Stevenson, of the Charon armed store-ship, is named.

The islands of St.-Vincent and Grenada were the next to be subdued. On the 8th of June, in the evening, the troops destined for the attack of the former island were safely disembarked, under cover of the 38-gun frigate *Arethusa*, Captain Thomas Wolley; who also sent a detachment of seamen to serve on shore with the troops. After some skirmishing and an obstinate resistance, the enemy, composed chiefly of people of colour and Charibs, capitulated on the terms proposed by General Abercromby; who, on the 11th, took possession of the island. The loss sustained by the British on the occasion amounted to 38 officers and privates killed, and 145 wounded.

In a few days afterwards Grenada followed the example of St.-Vincent; but the monster Fedon, after having, in the very face of the British troops, butchered several Europeans (twenty white people of Morne-Quaquo were laid out, stripped, pinioned,

and murdered, all in full view of the British on the plain below), had withdrawn with his banditti into the wood. Here, being closely pursued by a detachment of German riflemen, many of the villains paid the forfeit of their crimes. The loss of the British, in the several attacks that led to the reduction of this island, amounted to nine privates killed, and 60 officers and privates wounded. The 32-gun frigate *Mermaid*, Captain Robert Waller Otway, while cooperating with the *Hebe* frigate, and *Pelican* and *Beaver* sloops, in covering the landing of the troops, unfortunately had a maindeck gun burst, whereby seven of her seamen were killed and five badly wounded.

On the 17th and 18th of March a detachment of British and colonial troops from the garrison of Port-au-Prince in the island of St.-Domingo, under the command of Major-general Forbes, was embarked to proceed against the town and fort of Léogane, in the same island. On the 21st the troops landed, in two divisions, the western division covered by the 32-gun frigate *Ceres* and sloop *Lark*, Captains James Newman Newman and William Ogilvy; and the eastern, by the 32-gun frigate *Iphigenia*, Captain Francis F. Gardner, and sloops *Cormorant* and *Sirène*, Captain Francis Collingwood and Daniel Guerin; with the *Leviathan* 74, Captain John Thomas Duckworth, and *Africa* 64, Captain Roddam Home, to cannonade the fort, and the *Swiftsure* 74, Captain Richard Parker, the town.

In the course of half an hour the fire of the *Swiftsure* was interrupted by the march of the troops, but the *Leviathan* and *Africa* continued to play upon the fort for nearly four hours; when, it growing dark, the ships took advantage of the land-wind, and moved off to an anchorage. The town and fort being much stronger, and the enemy more numerous, than had been expected, the troops were withdrawn in the course of the following day and night, with the loss of a few men. The ships, however, were the principal sufferers on this occasion. The *Leviathan* had five men killed, and 12 (two of them mortally) wounded; and the *Africa*, one killed and seven wounded. Both ships, too, had been so seriously damaged in their masts and yards, that they were compelled to proceed to Jamaica to refit.

A more successful attack was afterwards made upon the fort and parish of Bombarde. The fort was at a distance of 15 miles; and the only road by which cannon could be transported had been blocked up by felled trees, and even, in some places, by stone walls built across it. Besides these impediments, the weather was excessively hot, and not a drop of water could be procured. Finally, however, the troops reached and surrounded the fort; when the garrison, consisting of 300 whites, and who had in vain attempted to check the advance of the troops, surrendered on capitulation. The possession of the place, cost the British eight officers and privates killed, 18 wounded, and four missing.

On or about the 12th of May a French squadron arrived at Cape-François, having on board about 1200 troops, 20,000 muskets, 400,000 lbs. weight of powder, and 12 field-pieces, besides the agents from the directory, Santhonax, Giraud, Raymond and Leblanc, General Rochambeau, and several military and civil officers. This squadron had quitted France in two divisions: one, commanded by Commodore Henri-Alexandre Thévenard, and consisting of the 74-gun ships Fougueux and Wattigny, 40-gun frigate Vengeance, and, we believe, 20-gun ship-corvette Berceau sailed from Rochefort; the other, consisting of the 40-gun frigate Méduse, 36-gun frigate Insurgente, 20-gun ship-corvette Doucereuse, and eight transports, under Captain Guillaume Thomas, had escaped from Brest. The most extraordinary circumstance is that, in spite of the numerous British cruisers afloat, all these ships got safe back to France.

## EAST INDIES.

On the 5th of February an expedition, composed of the British 12-pounder 32-gun frigate Heroine, Captain Alan Hyde Gardner, 16-gun ship-sloops Rattlesnake, Echo, and Swift, Captains Edward Ramage, Andrew Todd, and James Sprat Rainier, and five armed ships belonging to the East India company, with a body of troops on board, under the command of Colonel Stuart, from the Cape of Good Hope, anchored off Negombo, a settlement and roadsted distant about 18 miles from the object of the expedition, the important fortress of Columbo in the island of Ceylon. The fort at Negombo, having been abandoned by the enemy, was immediately taken possession of; and, in the course of the 6th, the whole of the troops were safely disembarked.

While the troops proceeded over land to Columbo, meeting on their march with little opposition, the Heroine and squadron had stationed themselves close to the fortress, to be ready to land the artillery. On the 14th, every thing being prepared for commencing the attack, the garrison was summoned to surrender, and, on the next day, the 15th, agreed to the terms of capitulation proposed. Thus was this valuable and highly important settlement and its dependencies, with a very trifling loss, transferred to the possession of Great Britain. The pepper, cinnamon, and other merchandise, independent of the ships and the military and naval stores, were valued at 25 lacks of rupees, or about 300,000*l.* sterling.

On the 16th of February an expedition under Rear-admiral Peter Rainier, composed of the 74-gun ship Suffolk, Captain Robert Lambert, 50-gun ship Centurion, Captain Samuel Osborne, 44-gun ship Resistance, Captain Edward Pakenham, 32-gun frigate Orpheus, Captain Henry Newcome, and 16-gun ship-sloop Swift, Captain James Sprat Rainier, with one or two armed

ships belonging to the East India company, and three transports containing a body of troops, arrived off the Dutch island of Amboyna, the capital of the Molucca islands, and the principal settlement of the Dutch in this quarter. On the same afternoon the troops were landed and possession taken, without resistance, of this important island and its dependencies. In the treasury were found 81,112 rix-dollars, and in the warehouses 515,940 lbs. weight of cloves.

On the 5th of March, the rear-admiral and squadron got under way, and made sail for the Banda or Nutmeg islands. On the 7th, in the evening, the expedition arrived off Great-Banda, or Banda-Neira, and on the 8th, early in the afternoon, the troops, along with a detachment of marines from the squadron, were disembarked on the north side of the island, under cover of the Orpheus frigate, and Harling armed East India ship; between which ships and two batteries of two guns each, some firing was interchanged. The batteries, however, were soon silenced, and the troops took possession of them. All further hostility ceased; and on the same evening the settlement of Fort-Nassau on Banda-Neira, with that and all the other islands, its dependencies surrendered to the British arms, upon nearly the same terms as had been granted at Amboyna. In the treasury at Banda-Neira were found 66,675 rix-dollars, and in the warehouses 84,777 lbs. of nutmegs, 19,587 lbs. of mace, exclusive of a great quantity of valuable merchandise and other stores.

In a military point of view, captures effected like those of Amboyna and Banda, can excite very little interest; and their principal political importance is of a negative character, resting on the loss of property sustained by the despoiled enemy. We must, however, except the enrichment of the captors. That is a positive, although an individual advantage; and we believe that the five captains of the navy, present at the surrender of Amboyna and Banda, received each about 15,000*l.* sterling. Aware, from our researches, that Captain Benjamin William Page, of the 18-gun ship-sloop Hobart, owing to his local experience, had been employed by Rear-admiral Rainier to lead the squadron through the straits of Malacca, Sincapore, and Banca, we had hoped that an officer who had been so instrumental to the success of the expedition, would also have been one of the fortunate sharers of the prize-money that flowed from it. We find, however, that on the capture, towards the end of January, of the Dutch brig of war Haerlem, with important despatches, the Hobart was sent back by Rear-admiral Rainier, with those despatches, to Madras and Bengal, and that Captain Page, being necessarily absent at the time of surrender, was not allowed by his brother-captains to participate in the fruits of the conquest.

Misled as to the amount of the British naval force at the

Cape of Good Hope, or, more probably, cajoled by the proffers of co-operation made by their allies the French, the Dutch had actually sent the small squadron which we formerly noticed as having pursued the *Glatton* and other ships in February, to regain possession of that important settlement: and which squadron consisted of the

Gun-ship			
66	{	Dordrecht . . . . .	{ Rear-adm. Engelburtus Lucas.
		Revolutie . . . . .	{ Captain _____
54		Van-Tromp . . . . .	„ Valkenburg.
Gun-frigate			
40	{	Casthor . . . . .	„ Clariffe.
		Braave . . . . .	„ Zoetmans.
26		Sirène . . . . .	„ De Cerf.
24		Bellona . . . . .	„ Valk.
Gun-sloop			
18		Havik . . . . .	„ Bezemer.

On the 3d of August intelligence was received at Cape-Town, of the appearance of nine sail of Dutch ships, which was the squadron in question, off Saldanha bay. At this time Vice-admiral Sir George Keith Elphinstone was lying in Simon's bay, with the

Gun-ship			
74	{	Monarch . . . . .	{ Vice-adm. (b.) Sir Geo. Keith Elphinstone.
			{ Captain John Elphinstone.
		Tremendous . . . . .	{ Rear-adm. (r.) Thomas Pringle.
64	{	America . . . . .	„ John Blankett.
		Ruby . . . . .	„ Henry Edwin Stanhope.
		Stately . . . . .	„ Billy Douglas.
		Sceptre . . . . .	„ William Essington.
		Trident . . . . .	„ Edward Oliver Osborn.
		50	

*Frigates*, Crescent and (20-gun ship) *Sphinx*.

*Sloops*, Moselle, Rattlesnake, Echo, and Hope.

Owing to the *Monarch's* being without her mainmast, and to the tempestuous state of the weather during the 3d, 4th, 5th, it was not until the 6th of August, that the British squadron was enabled to put to sea. Information now arriving that several sail had, the preceding night, been seen in the offing near False bay, the vice-admiral steered to the southward and westward. The storm soon afterwards increased in violence, so as to damage several of the ships, and compel the squadron, on the 12th, to re-enter Simon's bay. Here the vice-admiral learnt that nine sail of ships had, since the 6th, put into Saldanha bay. The British squadron remained weather-bound until the 15th, when it put to sea, and on the following evening at sunset, arrived off Simon's bay. The *Crescent* frigate then stood in, and plainly descried the Dutch squadron, consisting of two 66-gun ships, one 54-gun ship, five frigates and sloops, and one store-ship, as

already named, lying at anchor. The British ships, formed in line, soon afterwards anchored within gun-shot of the Dutch; to whose commanding officer, Sir George immediately sent a message, inviting him to surrender without attempting any resistance, which, in the great disparity between the forces, could not be otherwise than unavailing. On the 17th a capitulation was agreed to, and Rear-admiral Lucas surrendered his nine ships to the British admiral. The highest complement among the Dutch ships was that of the *Revolutie*, 400 men. The *Van-Tromp* had but 280 men; the *Havik* sloop only 76; and the whole of the "seamen and troops" on board the nine Dutch ships amounted to no more than 1972. The aggregate number of men in the British squadron, according to Sir George's letter, was, without reckoning the crew of the *Hope* brig, 4291. No imputation, therefore, could attach to Admiral Lucas or his officers, for having refrained from engaging a British force more than treble their own. In the month of October Vice-admiral Sir George K. Elphinstone, in the *Monarch*, sailed for England, leaving the command of the fleet to Rear-admiral Pringle.

On the 2d of December Captain John William Spranger, in the 36-gun frigate *Crescent*, accompanied by the *Braave*, late Dutch frigate, of the same force, and *Sphinx* 20-gun ship, took possession of and destroyed the French settlement on Foul Point in the island of Madagascar; bringing away with him five merchant vessels that were lying in the road.