

retreated to the Mole after the French had taken the Batteries, and who were safely landed again during the Night at the Milagro, that is, within the Works on the East Side of the Town. And in order to counteract the Depression, which might ensue from the extensive and unexpected Advantages gained by the Enemy on the Night of the 21st, I Yesterday led the Squadron as near to the Mole and Puerto as could be done with Safety, and drove the Enemy from the advanced Position they had taken. This Position, which was taken with the View of picking off the Artillerymen at their Guns, as they did on the Lines of the Puerto, was immediately afterwards, and still remains, occupied by the Spanish Guerillas.

But the French are making a Work near the Fuerte Real Battery from which they will quickly breach the Wall of the Town, and are digging their Trenches in such a Direction as will secure them from the Fire of the Shipping. In the mean time they are destroying the Custom-House, the large Stores, and all the Buildings of the Puerto, in order, I presume, to ruin the Place as much as possible, and I have no Doubt but the Town will share the same Fate, if it should unfortunately fall into their Hands.

The Baron de Eroles has taken a Convoy of Five Hundred Mules laden, and destroyed some of the Escort.

The Exertion and Ability of the French in besieging this Place has never, I believe, been exceeded, and, I trust, the brave Garrison will still make a Defence worthy the brilliant Example which has been set them in some other Parts of the Peninsula. But I am sorry to say the Safety of the Place now seems to depend particularly upon the Army of the Marquis of Campo Verde; and, I fear, the Town will eventually fall a Prey to the merciless and sanguinary Enemy, who has so greatly circumscribed its Means of Defence.

I have the Honour to be, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD CODRINGTON.

Admiral Sir Charles Cotton, &c. &c. &c.

No. 7.

*Blake, off Tarragona,
29th June 1811.*

SIR,

YESTERDAY Morning, at Dawn of Day, the French opened their Fire upon the Town; about Half past Five in the Afternoon a Breach was made in the Works, and the Place carried by Assault immediately afterwards. From the Rapidity with which they entered, I fear they met with but little Opposition; and upon the Barcelona Side a general Panic took place. Those already without the Walls stripped and endeavoured to swim off to the Shipping, while those within were seen sliding down the Face of the Batteries; each Party thus equally endangering their Lives more than they would have done by a firm Resistance to the Enemy.

A large Mass of People, some with Muskets and some without, then pressed forward along the Road, suffering themselves to be fired upon by about Twenty French, who continued running beside them at only a few Yards Distance. At length they were stopped entirely by a Volley of Fire from One small Party of the Enemy, who had entrenched themselves at a Turn of the Road, supported by a second

a little higher up, who opened a masked Battery of Two Field Pieces. A horrible Butchery then ensued; and shortly afterwards the Remainder of these poor Wretches, amounting to above Three Thousand, tamely submitted to be led away Prisoners by less than as many Hundred French.

The Launches and Gun Boats went from the Ships the Instant the Enemy were observed by the Invincible (which lay to the Westward) to be collecting in their Trenches; and yet, so rapid was their Success, that the whole was over before we could open our Fire with Effect.

All the Boats of the Squadron and Transports were sent to assist those who were swimming or concealed under the Rocks; and, notwithstanding a heavy Fire of Musketry and Field Pieces, which was warmly and successfully returned by the Launches and Gun Boats, from Five to Six Hundred were then brought off to the Shipping, many of them badly wounded.

I cannot conclude my History of our Operations at Tarragona without assuring you, that the Zeal and Exertion of those under my Command, in every Branch of the various Services which have fallen to their Lot, has been carried far beyond the mere Dictates of Duty.

The Invincible and Centaur have remained with me the whole Time immediately off Tarragona, and Captains Adam, White, and myself have passed most Nights in our Gigs, carrying on such Operations under Cover of the Dark as could not have been successfully employed in the Sight of the Enemy; I do not mean as to mere Danger, for the Boats have been assailed with Shot and Shells both Night and Day, even during the Time of their taking off the Women and Children, as well as the Wounded, without being in the smallest Degree diverted from their Purpose.

It is impossible to detail in a Letter all that has passed during this short but tragic Period. But Humanity has given increased Excitement to our Exertions; and the bodily Powers of Captain Adam have enabled him perhaps to push to greater Extent that Desire to relieve Distress which we have all partaken in common.

Our own Ships, as well as the Transports, have been the Receipts of the miserable Objects which saw no Shelter but in the English Squadron; and you will see by the Orders which I have found it necessary to give, that we have been called upon to clothe the naked, and feed the starving, beyond the regular Rules of our Service.

Our Boats have suffered occasionally from the Shot of the Enemy, as well as from the Rocks from which they have embarked the People; amongst others the Barge of the Blake, which however I was so fortunate as to recover after being swamped and overset, in consequence of a Shot passing through both her Sides, with the Loss only of One Woman and Child killed out of Twelve, which were then on board in addition to her Crew. But the only Casualty of Importance which has happened in the Squadron is that which befel the Centaur's Launch on the Evening of the 28th, and I beg to refer you particularly to the Observations of Captain White respecting Lieutenant Ashworth, whose Conduct and whole Misfortune entitle him to every Consideration. I have the Honour to be, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD CODRINGTON.