

Admiralty-Office, July 11.

A Dispatch, of which the following is a Copy, has been received at this Office from Sir W. Sidney Smith.

S I R,

Diamond, at Anchor off the Islands of St. Marcon, July 5, 1795.

IN pursuance of the Orders of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, I sailed from St. Helen's on the Evening of the 1st Instant, and stretched across the Channel towards Cherbourg, His Majesty's Ships Syren and Sibylle, also Four Gun-Boats in Company. On looking into that Port we found that One of the Three Frigates which had been seen there the last Time we were off, was missing: The Master of a Neutral Vessel, just come out, informed me she had failed to the Eastward, and I accordingly proceeded in quest of her. Going round Cape Bar-leur, we saw Two Ships, One of them having the Appearance of the Frigate in Question, at Anchor under the Sand, and immediately made Sail towards them; we soon after saw a Convoy coming along Shore, within the Islands of St. Marcon. The Wind dying away, and the Ebb Tide making against me, I was obliged to Anchor, and had the Mortification to see the Enemy's Vessels drift with the Tide under the Batteries of La Hogue, without being able to approach them.

At Four o'Clock in the Morning of Yesterday, the Breeze springing up with the first of the Flood, I made the Signal to the Squadron, weighed, and worked up towards the Enemy's Ships, which we observed warping closer in Shore under the Battery on la Hogue Point. As we approached I made the Signal for each Ship to engage as she came up with the Enemy, and at Nine o'Clock began the Action in the Diamond. The other Frigates having been sent in Chace in different Quarters the Day before, had not been able to anchor so near in as we did, and were consequently to Leeward, as were Two of the Gun-Boats. The Fearless and Attack were with me, and their Commanders conducted them in a Manner to merit my Approbation, by drawing off the Attention of the Enemy's Gun-Boats, of which they had Two also. The small Vessels of the Convoy ran into the Pier before the Town. The largest, a Corvette, continued warping into shoal Water; we followed, engaging her and the Batteries for Three Quarters of an Hour; when finding that the Enemy's Ship had attained a Situation where it was impossible to get fairly alongside of her without grounding likewise, and the Pilots being positive as to the Necessity of hauling off from the Shore, where the Water had already begun to ebb, I acquiesced under their Representations, and wore Ship. The Syren and Sibylle were come up by this Time, and the Zeal and Ability of their Commanders would, I am persuaded, have carried them into Action with some Effect, if I had not annulled the Signal to engage, which I did, to prevent them getting disabled, as we were, when we had no longer a Prospect of making ourselves Masters of the Enemy's Ship. She had suffered in Proportion, and we now see her laying on her Broadside, with her Yards and Top-Masts struck, but, I am sorry to say, so much sheltered by the Reef which runs off from La Hogue Point, that I cannot indulge a Hope of her being destroyed. In Justice to my Officers

and Ship's Company, I must add, that their Conduct was such as gave me Satisfaction: I received the most able Assistance from the First Lieutenant Mr. Pine, and Mr. Wilkie the Master, in working the Ship, on the Precision of which every Thing depended, circumstanced as we were with respect to the Shoals and the Enemy. The Guns of the Main Deck were well served, under the Direction of Lieutenants Pearson and Sandbury, and the Men were cool and collected. No Officer was hurt, but I am sorry to say I have lost One of the best Quarter-Masters in the Ship, Thomas Gullen, killed, and Two Seamen wounded. The Enemy fired high, or we should have suffered more materially from their red-hot Shot, the Marks of which were visible in the Rigging. We have shifted our Fore and Main Top-Masts, which, with Two Top-sail-Yards, were shot through, and having repaired our other more trifling Damages, I shall proceed in the Attainment of the Objects of the Cruise. Fishing-Boats, with which we have had an Intercourse, confirm all former Accounts of Distress for Want of Provisions, and the consequent Discontent in this distracted Country.

I have the Honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

W. SIDNEY SMITH.

*Evan Nepean, Esq;
Secretary, Admiralty.*

Admiralty-Office, July 11.

Extract of a Letter from Captain Sir Richard Strachan, of His Majesty's Ship Melampus, dated off Cape Frebel, July 4, 1795, to Evan Nepean, Esq;

BEING off Point D'Enqui on the 3d Instant, we saw, near St. Maloes, Thirteen Sail, which we gave Chace to, and, coming up with them, drove the Merchant Vessels, in different Directions, to Leeward, whilst the Vessels of War kept to Windward, and endeavoured to gain the Port of St. Maloes, which they at last effected, except One Brig, which was taken by this Ship, and Six of the most considerable of the Merchant Vessels, which were taken chiefly by the Hebe, with her usual Activity. It being rainy Weather, the others, small Vessels, escaped to Leeward. This proved to be a Convoy which failed in the Morning from St. Maloes, bound to Brèhat and Brest, under a Ship of War of 26 Guns, Two Brigs and a Lugger. The Vessels we have taken are said to have Military Stores on Board. The Brig of War mounts Four Twenty-four-Pounders, and had Sixty Men.

Downing-Street, July 7.

This Morning the Messenger Slater arrived with Dispatches from Sir Charles Whitworth, K. B. His Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of St. Petersburg, dated June 14, which contain an Account of the Russian Squadron, destined to act with His Majesty's Fleet, having failed that Morning from Cronstadt. It was to be joined at Revel by Four Ships, when it would consist of Four Ships of 74 Guns, Eight of 66, and Eight Frigates, and was thence to proceed with the utmost Expedition to the Downs.