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*Admiralty-Office, February 7, 1804.*

**D**ISPATCHES, of which the following are Copies, have been received at this Office, from Rear-Admiral Sir John Thomas Duckworth, K. B. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Jamaica :

**SIR,** *Echo, Port Royal, Sept. 10, 1803.*  
**H**AVING in my Letter of the 17th July, transmitted you, for the Information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, Captain Bissell, of the *Racoon's* Letter, on the very spirited Manner in which the Capture of the National Brig *Lodi* had taken place at Anchor in Leogane ; it is now, with great Pleasure, I add to it, his Account of the Destruction of the National Brig *La Mutine*, on the Coast of Cuba, wherein it appears a superior Degree of professional Abilities, with great Gallantry, were displayed, and I trust he will be honored with their Lordships' Protection.

I have the Honor to be, &c.

J. T. DUCKWORTH.

*Sir Evan Nepean, Bart.*

*Racoon, off the East End of Jamaica, 20th August 1803.*

**SIR,**  
**U**PON receiving the Intimation that the French Privateers, which were long since supposed to have been fitting out in the Ports of Cuba, had probably put to Sea, I worked up along Shore from Lucca to the East End of Jamaica to see the Coast clear, and then crossed over to St. Jago de la Cuba, where I saw four French Schooners at Anchor, apparently armed, I of course watched the Port very narrowly, and in a few Days I fell in with Three of them at Daylight in the Morning, Two of which I have captured, after tedious Chases, from their separating on different Courses, and the other I drove on Shore in a small Bay where she was inevitably lost.

On the Wednesday the 17th, at One P. M. I observed a Brig coming along Shore, which soon after hauled her Wind to speak a Schooner which had been avoiding us all Day. At Three they bore up together, under all Sail, with a strong Breeze :—I stood off until certain of fetching them, and then made Sail in Shore. At a Quarter past Four the Brig hoisted French Colours and fired a Gun, still keeping within Half a Mile of the Shore under a Press of Sail. At Twenty Minutes past Four she

fired her Broadside at us, and attempted to cross our Hawse, which I was fortunate enough to prevent, for I ordered the Helm to be put hard-a-port to board her, though going Eight Knots at the Time, and fired a Broadside at her, which, from being nearly aboard each other, brought down his Studdingails, Topsails, &c. he then luffed up and ran on Shore on the Rocks in a small Bay, and struck his Colours. To avoid a similar Fate I was compelled to heave in Stays ; and when we wore round our Stern was nearly in the Breakers. In this Position we fired our opposite Broadside to effect her Destruction. In about half an Hour she hoisted her Ensign again, and I made several short Tacks near her, firing upon her in passing. Towards Sunset her Mainmast went over the Side, and she fell on her Beam Ends. At this Moment Mr. John Thompson, the Master, asked my Permission to go with a few picked Men, and endeavour to burn her ; an Enterprize it would have been unjustifiable to admit of undertaking, from her having landed Boats full of armed Men, and lined the Shores, but the Gallantry of the Master could not fail of exciting my Admiration, and will, I am sure, meet your Approbation. I watched the Brig all Night, and in the Morning her Masts were all overboard, and she lay a perfect Wreck full of Water. I have since learned her Name is *La Mutine*, National Brig, carrying Eighteen long Eighteen-Pounders, and was full of Men, from Port au Paix bound to St. Jago ; but I have not been able to obtain the Name of her Captain.

I regret that I was not able to secure to the Service so fine a Vessel as *La Mutine* appeared to be ; but, under the Circumstance of having the Two Lieutenants and Forty-two Men absent in Prizes out of this Sloop's Company, you will, I trust, feel satisfied that no Effort was left untried, and that Mr. Thompson the Master, and the remaining Part of the Crew, have performed their Duty on this Occasion with Credit.

The Schooner which was in Company made her Escape, notwithstanding the Endeavour of Lieutenant Wright, in Charge of One of the Prizes, who used all possible Means to disable her.

I have, &c. AUSTIN BISSELL.

To Sir John Thomas Duckworth, K. B.  
Ec. Ec. Ec.