

Fishguard to the City of Saint Davids, in the said County.

And Eight Private Acts.

Admiralty-Office, March 28, 1812.

*Extract of a Letter from Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Pellew, Bart. Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels in the Mediterranean, to John Wilson Croker, Esq; dated on board His Majesty's Ship Caledonia, at Port Mahon, the 8th of February 1812.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, copies of two letters from Captain Codrington, of the *Blake*, dated on board that ship off Mataro, the 26th of January and 2d of February last, which will acquaint their Lordships of the situation of affairs in that principality, according to the latest information.

Throughout the whole of the contest the zeal and judgement with which the aid of His Majesty's naval force has been applied to the patriot cause, is deserving their Lordships' approbation. The officers and men have not only sought every opportunity to distinguish themselves, but have submitted with the greatest cheerfulness to fatigue and privation, shewing the greatest humanity towards the suffering inhabitants.

SIR, *Blake, off Villa Nueva, Jan. 26, 1812.*

AN easterly gale of wind prevented our gaining any communication with the coast until the 11th, when I joined the *Invincible* in Salon Bay: shortly afterwards Captain Adam came on board with General Lacy from Reus, and acquainted me with a meditated attack upon Tarragona, by the division of the Baron d'Eroles, previously to their intended march into Arragon, as a diversion in favour of Valencia.

On the morning of the 19th I went to Reus, by desire of General Lacy, to be present at the final arrangement for the attack upon Tarragona that night: I found the commanding officers belonging to the different corps assembled; and the order of attack was scarcely made known to them, before an aid-du-camp of the Baron d'Eroles announced the actual arrival of the French at Cambrills from Tortosa, (having left Valencia after its surrender,) amounting, according to a letter previously received, to about three thousand men, "Alas armas," cried the Baron d'Eroles, with an animation which seemed to have a suitable effect on all the officers present; and I do not believe more than an half hour had elapsed, before the whole of the Division, consisting of between five and six thousand men, were on the ground, and ready to march. As I had ordered a boat to Salon, with twenty barrels of powder for the army, and as I was anxious to render what assistance might be in my power, I made an attempt to regain my ship, accompanied by an orderly dragoon; but, after proceeding about three miles, we were chased back by a party of French cavalry, which we met with at the crossing of the road.

Upon my return I found the troops advancing on

the road to Tarragona, in order to cut the enemy's line of march, the Baron d'Eroles putting himself at the head of about seventy cuirassiers, to reconnoitre their strength and position, while General Lacy directed the movements of the respective corps, in readiness for the intended attack. We had scarcely reached the road from Cambrills to Tarragona, when the Baron brought in prisoners two French cuirassiers, who stated that their General (Lafond) had reached the latter place in safety, accompanied by some dragoons, leaving the infantry, amounting to about eight hundred, just by in Villa Suca. General Lacy ordered the Regiment of Buca to attack them immediately, and directed other corps to surround the town, and prevent their escape. The enemy being advantageously posted behind the walls of the village, and that single regiment being much inferior to them in numbers, after a considerable loss in killed and wounded, including amongst the latter, and very severely, their gallant Colonel, Reding, they were obliged to retire; but the regiment intended for their support coming up, forced the French, who had advanced in a compact body, to retire in their turn, and being attacked in their rear by the Baron, they could never effectually rally, notwithstanding the effort they made, accompanied by a general cheer; despair was now visible in their conduct; and one or two discharges from a field-piece, which just then reached the ground, occasioned the surrender of all who remained alive, amounting to above six hundred;—I judge the number of the enemy, dead and dying, which I saw in the field, to amount to two hundred, that of the Spaniards bearing no proportion whatever. It seems, that having information from some spy of our landing, at the time one party of the dragoons chased me, another proceeded to Salon, where they made prisoners of Captains Pringle and Flin, who were walking near the beach, and of Lieutenant Cattle, belonging to this ship, who was waiting on shore with the powder, the boats and boats' crews having effected their escape. These officers, who were guarded close in the rear of the French during the whole of the battle, after being plundered of even part of their clothes, bear witness to their extreme pusillanimity on the approach of disaster, and to their severe loss both in the field and in the houses, in which they sought refuge, owing to the superior dexterity of the Spanish fire. I have given you this little affair in detail, because it evinces considerable improvement in the discipline and organization of the Catalan army; and I can vouch for the cheerfulness with which they proceeded to the attack, under belief of the enemy's force being much nearer their equivalent in numbers. The arrangements made by General Lacy appeared to me well calculated to keep up the mutual support requisite on such an occasion; and the whole conduct of the Baron d'Eroles particularly animating and exemplary; nor shall I readily forget the delight he expressed upon liberating my brother officers from the grasp of our mutual enemy.

Notwithstanding the fatigue of the troops, the General still expressed his intention of attacking Tarragona on that night, and we were therefore escorted to our ships about five o'clock, and weighed immediately. I stationed the *Sparrowhawk* off the