

WILMINGTON GAZETTE.

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Late Foreign News.

FROM FRENCH PAPERS.

To the 15th of August received at Charleston.

VIENNA, July 13.

It appears that all the regiments have orders to hold themselves in readiness to march. The two regiments destined for Transylvania are already on their march, and have taken with them their recruits, whom they have not had time to clothe. The corps of artillery which is at Budweis will be conveyed in carriages into the interior of Austria. Besides the troops which will be united in Italy, two considerable camps will be formed; one near Pettau, in Stiria, and the other near Wastadin. They will be united until the end of Autumn.

ASCHAFFENBURG, July 30.

The Russian General Winzingerode, set off on the 18th inst. for Petersburg; after having had several conferences with the imperial ministers at Vienna. The Austrian Court invariably persist in their pacific system, nor are any hostile dispositions whatever remarked on the Russian frontiers, whatever may be said to the contrary by the indefatigable Gazetteer of Lemberg, who for these thirteen years past appears to have the army of Xerxes at his orders.

PARIS, August 12.

The news which we give to-day cannot fail to engage the attention of every reader. We are sorry that the want of room prevents our adding any thing to the reflections of the *Moniteur*. What is most astonishing in this engagement, is that its result changes nothing in the situation of the belligerent powers. The capture of two Spanish ships, which were unable to keep up with the fleet, is no doubt to be regretted. But this is a slight advantage for England, and very far from compensating the losses she has sustained in her colonies and her trade. After the long discouragement of the French navy, it is glorious for this squadron to have carried ruin and desolation throughout the English colonies, to have displayed the Imperial flag through the European and American seas, and to have bid defiance to five different fleets of the enemy, by which it was pursued. It is glorious, we say, for this squadron to have so long exercised its new sailors in so perilous an expedition; to have maintained an action with an enemy who may well boast of every advantage of numbers and experience, and to have kept the sea the next day, without the pretended vanquisher daring to dispute this honor with it, and in fine to have fully accomplished its design. The effect of this engagement, far from discouraging the allies, must animate them to further exertions. Such a beginning is the sure guarantee of an approaching victory.

MINISTRY OF THE MARINE.

On board his Imperial Majesty's ship the *Bucentaure*, the 8th Thermidor, year 13; 40 leagues W. S. W. of Cape Finisterre.

Monsieur—I have the honor to render you an account that the combined fleet quitted Martinique the 16th Prairial.

On the 20th Messidor being of Cape Finisterre, I was taken by the E. N. E. and N. E. winds, blowing with violence. The *Indomptable* carried away her main-top-mast and the fleet sustained considerable damage in their yards and sails. The winds growing calm, did not vary, but continued in the same quarter; and I remained in this situation, without being able to rise, struggling against contrary winds, until the 3d Thermidor, when I descried twenty-one sail of the enemy.

I immediately drew up the squadron in line of battle upon the larboard tack. Admiral Gravina made signal to the Spanish squadron to take the head of the line, and placed himself ahead of the combined squadron. The weather was excessively foggy; we steered towards the enemy, who also steered towards us in a scattered line, with the apparent intention of closing the wind upon our rear guard, and of placing it between two fires, by a counter-march with the wind ahead. As soon as I saw him to leeward of our quarter I made signal to stand about, tack for tack, with the counter-march.

The fog began to thicken. As soon as my signal had reached Admiral Gravina, he hastened to execute it with great resolution, and was successively followed by all the ships in the squadron. As soon as he arrived near the extreme ship, he commenced the engagement with some of the enemy's ships, which had already begun their movement with the wind ahead. But by this time the fog became so impenetrable, that it was impossible for me to perceive any thing more, and each ship had scarcely any thing more than her second.

The cannonade successively commenced along almost the whole line. We fired by the light of the enemy's fire, almost always without seeing him. It was only towards the end of the engagement that in a short mo-

ment of clear weather, I was able to perceive to leeward of the line a ship carrying Spanish colours standing to windward under her lower sails and struck top-sails. Near her were two ships which I perceived to be of the enemy, one of which with all her masts carried away, and the other a three decker dismantled of her fore-top-mast and very much unrigged, both steering with the wind abaft. The dismantled ship appeared to be in great confusion and hardly to suffice to the working of all her pumps.

The thickest fog at this time covered all the van-guard of the rear of the squadron, and deprived me of the faculty of getting any movements executed, and, as far as I perceived, all the advantage of the battle was on our side.

There was no clear weather the rest of the evening. During the night the two squadrons remained in presence of each other, making their signals to keep in company.—I thought, however, I perceived that the enemy withdrew. As soon as day appeared we descried him a great way to leeward of us. All the reports received from the French ships were satisfactory. Those of Admiral Gravina shewed themselves fully determined to pursue and again attack the enemy, as since the weather has cleared up, we did not perceive two Spanish ships, the *Firm* and the *St. Raphael*.

I ordered all the ships to rally, and having formed the line of battle on the larboard tack, I bore down upon the enemy.

The wind slackened, the sea was high, the enemy stood away to leeward, and it was impossible for me all day to bring him to an engagement as I wished.

I occupied myself during the night to keep the fleet in order, so as to be ready to recommence the engagement at break of day.

As soon as it appeared, I bore down upon the enemy, who had attained a great distance and was crowding sail for the purpose of avoiding a new engagement.

Finding it impossible to force him to a battle, I thought it advisable not to withdraw any farther from the place of my destination, and to shape my course to effect my junction with the squadron off Ferrol, conformably to my instructions. I experienced contrary winds from N. E. to E. N. E. which yesterday blew with the greatest violence.

The following are the only tidings I have had of the two ships missing from the Spanish squadron.

Capt. Cosman, commander of his imperial majesty's ship the *Pluto*, gave me an account that from the beginning of the action, the *Firm* had lost her mizen and mainmasts, that he had covered and protected her as long as he perceived her, by placing himself between that ship and the enemy; but that afterwards he lost sight of her in the fog.

With regard to the *San Raphael*, it appears certain that she was not dismantled; but being a bad sailer, making a great deal of lee way, must have fallen to leeward, as we lost sight of her the first night.

The fog was so constant and thick that I was not able to distinguish the enemy's force. But the morning after the engagement, I saw 16 ships, 3 of which were three deckers, the greater number of which appeared to me to have sustained great damage; and if what the Captain of la *Didon* assures me be true, that he counted 15 sail of enemy's ships before the action, there is reason to believe that one of them disappeared in it.

At all events this contest has been an honorable one to the arms of the two powers, and but for the thick fog which continued to favor the motions and retreat of the enemy, he would not have escaped the efforts of a decisive action.

I am as yet ignorant of the number killed & wounded, who are, however, I believe, but few. I have to regret the loss of Captain de Perrone, of his Majesty's ship *L'Intrepide*, who was killed. Captain Rolland of the *Atlas* was wounded. I shall have the honor to give you a more detailed account of this engagement very shortly.

I intreat your Excellency to accept my respect.

VILLENEUVE.

The Late Naval Engagement.

After stating the particulars of the late action between the British fleet, under Ad. Calder, and the French and Spanish combined fleet, [which have appeared in this Gazette] Bell's Messenger of the 4th August, remarks:

We must here be somewhat technical, in order to explain to our readers the general methods of sea engagements. Truisms are sometimes necessary, and we hope to escape ridicule in stating a self-evident thing, that all ships must be, as to each other, windward or leeward, and in their tacks, either starboard or larboard. A fleet to windward has invariably borne down in a slanting line on another to leeward, each ship in a line abreast of the other, till they brought up within a proper distance for a close and general engagement from van to rear. A fleet to leeward, therefore, desirous to avoid a general engagement, has full leisure to dis-

windward fleet, during its approach to battle; and when the latter has assumed a situation for close encounter, the former might bear away at intervals, whilst enveloped with smoke; or, by making more sail, might shoot ahead, and pour its whole fire into the opposite van, as it passed and wore in succession to form a new line to leeward on the opposite tack.

The mystery of the French tactics was formerly no more than this: they never made an attack, but always courted a leeward situation; thus they have invariably disabled the British fleets in coming down to action, and, upon seeing it disabled, have made sail and demolished the van in passing, keeping clear of close engagement, and never lying ship abreast; on the other hand, the British, from an irresistible desire of attack, have as constantly courted the windward position; have had their ships constantly disabled and separated, and have never been able to close with the enemy, or make a capture.

Such was the system by which the French succeeded from the naval engagement with Admiral Byng in the Mediterranean, 1756, to the rencounter with Admiral Graves off the Chesapeake, 1781. In Admiral Byron's engagement off Grenada, our fleet bore down to windward, whilst the enemy bearing away, prevented an attack upon their rear, or a close engagement in the van. Our headmost ships were either disabled in making the attack, as they received the whole fire of the enemy's line, as each ship of the latter passed and wore in succession, in order to form to leeward upon the opposite tack. The French adhered so closely to this system, that, to avoid all chance of close or general engagement, they forbore even to intercept our disabled ships, which had necessarily fallen to leeward.

Such was the superiority of the enemy's tactics, that till the year 1782, above thirty years passed without any conspicuous naval victory; ship indeed engaging with ship, the British always succeeded; but the advantage was never extended to a general engagement. Rodney set the first example of an attack to leeward and cutting off the line; since then in all general battles, we have uniformly triumphed.

Rodney opened a new era, and with the exception of the battle of the Nile, where the French fleet was at anchor, the same manoeuvre of attacking to leeward, and cutting the line have uniformly succeeded. In Lord Howe's victory, the signal was given (the first we believe that was ever given, for Rodney's was rather accident than design) for the British fleet to leeward to tack successively and cut the line; the two fleets were instantly intermixed, the battle was that of ship to ship, and the event was evidence of the skill of the attack; indeed so sensible were the French of the cause of our victory, that the convention passed a decree of death against that captain who should ever suffer the line to be cut.

Lord St. Vincent, indeed, disregarded the regular system, from laying greater advantage in varying his plan of attack; but Lord Duncan in the victory off Camperdown, cut the Dutch line immediately in the centre.

Such being the approved system of tactics and the invariable success of adopting them, it is asked, did Sir Robert Calder conform to them? had he or had he not the opportunity of applying them, or did he reject them from choice?

At noon, on the 22d July, our gallant admiral discovered the combined fleet to windward; he immediately concerted his plan of attack, indeed, but one plan presented itself. Having made signals for the closest order, he bore down upon the enemy, and upon closing with them, made the signal for attacking the centre. When he had reached their rear, he tacked his ships in succession, evidently meaning to intercept them, and bring on a close engagement of ship to ship. It was impossible to devise a plan of attack more promising; we venture to pronounce Lord Nelson would have done the same;—Lord St. Vincent did the same; when that illustrious man perceived the Spanish fleet to windward, consisting of 27 sail of the line, he instantly cut off a division of it, though he could not bring on a general engagement, as the enemy, in great trepidation, chose rather to fly, than succour any part of their squadron. "When I had reached their rear," says Sir Robert, "I tacked the squadron in succession; this brought me close up under their lee, and when our headmost ships had reached their centre, the enemy were tacking in succession; this obliged me again to make the same manoeuvre, by which I bro't on an action of four hour hours, when I found it necessary to bring to the squadron, to secure the two captured ships."

Sir Robert then proceeds to observe, which is a perfect vindication of his not being able to do more, that the enemy had every advantage of wind and weather; that the fog was so great that he could scarcely perceive the ship ahead or astern of him: this rendered it impossible to take advantage of the enemy by proper signals: "had the weather, he continues, been more favourable, I am led to believe the victory would have been more complete."

In many of the accounts we have received

it is positively stated, that the British ships twice or thrice by mistake, fired into each other, and that five of the enemy were at once upon the *Windward*. It is thus evident that not above two or three ships succeeded in passing the line of the enemy; the rest were prevented by not perceiving the signals, and not knowing what impression the leading ships were making.

This is evident from the circumstance of some ships having suffered greatly, and some triflingly; the fact is, the line can scarcely be said to have been cut at all; the fleets indeed passed each other upon opposite tacks; but, from the circumstances of the weather, and the signals not being noticed, the British fleet were never able to form a new line to leeward, or, in returning on the contrary tack, to rake the enemy as each ship passed. Every advantage therefore, of cutting the line in a leeward attack was lost to Sir Robert Calder, because his ships could not act under his superintendance, or, with that unanimity of attack which alone can lead to decisive victory, and which must ever depend on a quick perception, and obedience of signals in each ship.

In respect to the Admiral's terminating the engagement, in order to cover the two prizes. Lieutenant Nicholson's account is most satisfactory.—He says, "the two ships which had struck were dropping fast to leeward, and the enemy by a successful manoeuvre, might easily have recovered possession of them, if our squadron had not brought to in order to cover them."

GREAT-BRITAIN.

London, Aug. 1.

THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE PACKET.

WE have, in a former paper, noticed the French account of the contest which preceded the loss of the Queen Charlotte packet, capt. Mudge, on the 16th of May last, on her passage from Halifax to Falmouth. We have now an opportunity of laying before our readers a more circumstantial detail of that action, so honorable to capt. Mudge, his officers and men, with which we have been favored by an officer of that ship, as follows:

"At 7 in the morning, of the 16th of May, 1805, in lat. 48, 00, N. lon. 11, 20, W. we discovered a sail on the lee-bow, standing to the N. W. She fetched so near us, that we could plainly perceive her to be a brig cruiser, and that of an enemy. At 9 she tacked, and stood after us; at noon she got so near that it was thought best to shorten sail, and bring her to action; with a view of cutting away her masts, or rigging, previous arrangements for that purpose, having been made. A few minutes after, we got very near to each other; when an exceedingly hot fire commenced on both sides with round, grape & musketry, & was continued for 1 hour & 55 minutes, the whole time not out of the range of pistol shot. The Queen Charlotte being now a perfect wreck, and quite ungovernable, we were under the painful necessity of sinking the mail, and striking our colors, to the privateer brig of war *L'Hirondelle*, of Dunkirk, mounting 16 long carriage guns and a crew of 110 men, capt. Allamas.—The damage we sustained before we surrendered was as follows: 5 guns on the side engaged disabled, 1 from shot, and the other 3, which were carronades, and very bad guns in action, recoiling, they being very badly constructed; jibstay, halyards and out-hauler; foretopmast-staysail, stay and halyards; fore and foretop bowlines, foretacks and sheet, foot of the foresail in two places, foretopgallant and foretopsail ties, 1 fore and 1 foretopsail brace, and 1 sheet, 1 main brace, both topsail braces and bowlines, 1 main brace, both topsail braces and bowline, topgallant tye, cross-jackbraces and bowlines, peck halyards and both topping lifts, all the bobstays, 3 fore shrouds on the engaging side, all the topmast shrouds, and 1 back-stay, 1 topmast shroud and 1 backstay on the other side, 2 main shrouds and 1 of the topmast shrouds, and all the backstays on the engaging side, and on the other, 1 lower shroud and 2 topmast shrouds, the mizzen rigging much cut, the foremast had 5 round shot quite through it, and sticking in it, the main-mast much damaged & the mizzen mast much more so; with several shot which struck her hull. The privateer had several shot in her hull, and the fore mast badly wounded, sails and rigging very much cut, but none of her head sails came down; she had 9 principal officers on board and 25 experienced soldiers at small arms. The captain of her, kibe crew most part, are Flemings, who, I understand, have been employed in the smuggling trade. The Queen Charlotte had on board 24 of her own crew, one distressed subject, and 14 invalids from Halifax, debilitated paralisid, age and long service, but their hearts were good, and they behaved with true English courage. Our captain was well supported by his officers, and the men behaved very well. The Queen Charlotte had 1 man killed and 4 slightly wounded.—*L'Hirondelle* had the pilot and 2 others killed, and 2 very badly and 4 slightly wounded. Her damage is such, that it will occasion her some time to remain in port and refit. The French captain treated capt. Mudge, his officers and crew, very honorably while on board.