NAVAL TACTICS.

PART IV.

INTRODUCTION.

With the year 1782, the last of the American war, remarkable for a series of interesting events, and of new and singular exertions of naval ability, we will begin the Fourth part of this work. The fortunate turn which then was given to naval affairs, and the splendid achievements then performed, render that important year the proper commencement of a Fourth period in the history of Naval Tactics. But, although victories, equally splendid with those of the year 1782, have been recently obtained*, and merit particular examination in a treatise on Naval Tactics, yet this part of the present work does not profess to embrace any account of these late glorious transactions, and will extend no farther than what was originally proposed.

That

* Earl Howe's, 1st of June 1796.—Earl of St Vincent's, 14th of February 1797
That the whole of this Fourth part was written while the author was under the immediate impression of the enthusiasm excited by the merit of the actions at the time, he cannot deny: nor will he dissemble, that the event, with the consideration of which this part is to commence, viz. the plan and enterprize to relieve the island of St Christophers, is, of all naval exhibitions, the first, which had given him any real pleasure in making the description. With respect to the other observations, they express what were the feelings of most people at the time; and now, after a lapse of more than twenty years, he has not yet seen reason sufficient to induce him to make any alterations.
SIR SAMUEL HOOD'S ENGAGEMENT.


A few months after the unfortunate catastrophe of Lord Cornwallis's army at York-Town in the Chesapeake river, Sir Samuel Hood being at Barbadoes, and hearing that an attack had been made upon the island of St Christopher, by a powerful armament under the command of Count de Grasse, set sail for its relief with twenty-two ships of the line, five frigates, and two schooners. He arrived off the south-east end of the island of Nevis, at day-break of the 24th February 1782; when, directing the squadron to be formed in line of battle, he determined to attack the fleet of the enemy, consisting of thirty-three ships, and then lying at anchor in Bassa Terra Road, island of St Christopher.

Plate XIII. fig. 1. A, The British fleet supposed on their course round the island of Nevis, on the morning of the 24th. F, The fleet of the enemy at anchor in Bassa Terra Road, having their van far to windward of the rear.

SIR SAMUEL's instructions to each ship, given in St. John's Road,
NAVAL TACTICS.

Road, Antigua, were, 'To stand on till abcast of the van of the enemy, as per course B B; and after having delivered each ship her whole fire upon the two headmost ships of the enemy, to haul off in succession, as per course C C C; and then, by tacking, to return in the same succession, and again, and again, to repeat each ship her whole fire.' By which ingenious method it was intended, first, to cut off or destroy these two headmost ships, which being effected, to repeat, in the same manner, the attack upon the next two ships after.

The misfortune of the ship Alfred running aboard of the Nymph in the morning, soon after the signal was thrown out, occasioning much delay, the enemy had intelligence of Sir Samuel's approach; and, dreading the consequences of an attack, in the situation they were then in, quitted their anchorage and put to sea, as per course G G; and in the afternoon, and during the whole night of the 21st, kept three or four miles to leeward of the British fleet, which was still under the west end of the island of Nevis.

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EXTRACT OF SIR SAMUEL HOOD'S LETTER.

'At day-light of the 25th, we plainly discovered 38 sail of the enemy's ships, 19 of which of two decks crowded in a line abreast. I made every appearance of an attack, which threw the Count de Grasse a little from the line: And as I thought I had a fair prospect of gaining the anchorage he left, and
and well knowing it was the only chance I had of saving the
island, if it was to be saved, I pushed for it, and succeeded, by
having my rear and part of my centre engaged.

The enemy gave a preference to Commodore Appleck;
but he kept up so noble a fire, and was so supported by his se-
conds, Captain Cornwallis and Lord Robert Man-
ners, that the loss and damages sustained in those ships were
but trifling, and they very much preserved the other ships in
the rear, &c. (And afterwards be says), 'Would the event of
a battle have determined the fate of the island, I would without
hesitation have attacked the enemy, from a knowledge how
much was to be expected from an English squadron, command-
ed by men amongst whom is no other contention than who
should be most forward in rendering services to his King and
Country: herein I placed the utmost confidence, and should
not, I trust, have been disappointed.

I anchored his Majesty's squadron in a close line ahead.
Next morning about eight o'clock, I was attacked from van to
rear with the whole force of the enemy (29 sail), for nearly
two hours, without having the least visible impression made
upon my line. The French ships then wore and stood off
again, and in the afternoon began a second attack upon my
centre and rear, with no better success than before; since which
the Count De Grasse has kept a safe distance.—Many of
the French ships have suffered considerably.'
DESCRIPTION.

Plate XIV. fig. 2. A, Sir Samuel Hood with the British fleet lying off the north-west end of the Island of Nevis in the morning of the 25th February at day-light, and intending to bring his fleet to an anchor in the ground Count De Grasse had left; but, at the same time, endeavouring to amuse the Count with the appearance of a design of making an attack upon him.

B, The van of the British squadron now come to an anchor under Green-point in a close line ahead, and with springs to bring the broadside of each ship to bear upon an enemy, who might attempt to come down and attack them.

C, The rear of the British fleet under Commodore Affleck, with part of the centre sustaining, while coming to an anchor, an attack from the enemy.

F, The French cannonading; but at such a distance, as nowise obstructed the British squadron from coming to an anchor.

The French fleet then wore and fled off to sea again, as per course G G.

Plate XIV. fig. 3. A, The Alfred, Canada, and Resolution, in the morning of the 26th at 6 o' clock, having been ordered to shift their ground, as the evening before they had anchored too far to leeward, and too near to the edge of the bank*; and being under way, these ships, from this position, had it more in their power to overawe the enemy, and prevent them from doubling back upon the British squadron, when they came to make the attack some hours after.

B,

* Without the bank, from the immediate depth of water, there is no an-
B, The British squadron in the morning, consisting of other 19 ships, at an anchor with springs, so that each ship in the line might, at one and the same time, be brought to bear upon an enemy coming down to make an attack.

F, The French fleet, about 8 o'clock in the morning, advancing to the attack with 29 ships; and, having begun the attack upon the van, as at H, they ranged along the whole British line, as per dotted line of course I I ; then hauling up after, as at K K, they evidently meant to rake the ships in our rear, or might have intended to have doubled back towards A; but, overawed by the three foresaid ships, the Alfred, Canada, and Resolution, under way at A, they wore in succession, and hauled off to sea, as per course L L L.

M M, The enemy now on the starboard tack, and on the return to the second attack, which they made upon the centre and rear, in the afternoon of the same day, after having taken such an offering as enabled them to fetch our fleet.

N, Guana Hill, from which the British squadron was threatened to be bombarded.

O, Mooring's Hills, where General Prescott had the skirmish with the Irish brigade; and where Monsieur de Bouillé declined attacking him.

The enemy, afterwards kept in the offering, not choosing to make another attack upon Sir Samuel, who, not having it in his power to give farther assistance to the island, after 10 or 12 days, cut his cables, laying hold of the opportunity, while the enemy had come to an anchor off the island of Nevis; and taking his course by the north end of the island of St Christophers, and by Sambriro, stood to the northward.

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OBSERVATIONS.

The singularity, or rather novelty, of this affair, so very important in all its consequences, cannot be passed over without endeavouring to give it a full consideration; and that this may be done with the greater impartiality, it will be necessary to state the facts simply as they are.

Hearing that a fleet of 33 ships of the enemy were lying at anchor, Baffa Terra Road, in support of the powerful attack which they were then making upon the island of St. Christoplers, Sir Samuel Hood, with a much inferior force, consisting of 22 ships only, resolves to attack them in this situation.

The French, discovering his intentions before his approach, and feeling, it seems, the situation which they were in disadvantageous, quitted it, and put to sea.

Sir Samuel, thus disappointed in his intended attack, but confident that the obtaining a communication with, and supporting the same, was the only chance left him of saving the island, by a daring stroke in seamanship, seldom before this time attempted, in the face of this enemy, and even while in the act of sustaining a furious attack from the enemy, brings his fleet to an anchor in the self-same position, or station, which they but a little before, and with a fleet so very much superior, had quitted, as thinking it untenable.

The enemy first having suffered themselves to be dislodged, and afterwards having suffered this inferior fleet to come to an anchor, determined, if possible, to wipe off the double affront, by attempting an attack in their turn.

But
SIR S. HOOD'S ENGAGEMENT.

But this attack was either so ill conducted, or so feebly supported, that, though it was twice attempted, they, as unequal to the task, patiently permitted the British Admiral to keep his post for 12 days, without ever afterwards attempting to disturb him.

On the part of the enemy there were here no accidents, which, as in all other former cases, might be laid hold of, and held up as an excuse for want of success; nothing from winds, tides, or blowing up of particular ships, not the loss of a single mast or yard to furnish the shadow of an excuse, either for quitting their anchorage, or, after they had, for not overpowering with their numbers so inferior a fleet, occupying, and even fixed to, an anchorage, and affording an equal opportunity of being attacked for 12 successive days.

On the part of the British will be found a plan, gallantly, but prudently formed, to attack a force superior, as three to two, which if it was not put into execution, it was because the enemy had prudently declined. Again, in consequence of a still more daring plan having been formed immediately upon the above disappointment, we find them, in defiance of all former rules (in the face of this superior fleet, who had taken every means of obstruction, and even while they were maintaining a combat with this fleet), bringing their ships to an anchor without a possibility of being prevented. Afterwards, we find them disposed at anchor in so masterly a manner, that little loss was sustained, though two several attacks were made in the same day, by an enemy who had it in their choice to take every advantage.

Lastly, that there might be nothing wanting to establish a complete, proof of British superiority, we find them keeping, without
without difficulty, that post which had been thought untenable, 
sending relief on shore, and maintaining a communication with 
the island for 12 days, without interruption.

During the more ancient and even more heroic days of naval 
prowess, one fleet, at one time, might have had the good fortune 
to shew their valour in the attack, as those at Cadiz, at Vigo, 
&c. ; and another fleet, at another time, might have been so 
happy as to have an opportunity of exhibiting their steadiness in 
sustaining an attack, such as that under Blake in the Downs; 
but on no occasion whatever has one and the same fleet been so 
fortunate, as in this of Sir Samuel Hood forcing their oppo-
nents to so complete and unequivocal an acknowledgment of their 
superiority in both cases, whether we shall consider their courage 
and perseverance, or their skill in seamanship.

As there can be no doubt that this contrast drawn between 
the two fleets is a just one, what ought then to be the feelings of 
our countrymen upon this occasion, compared to that state of 
universal despondence into which the whole nation was plunged 
but a few months before?

Perhaps it may be said, by those who wish to lower or depre-
ciate the importance of this event, that the enemy, being con-
scious of their great superiority in the West Indies, had, with-
out thinking it necessary to take the proper precautions, come to 
an anchor in disorder; but, not thinking it proper for them to 
sustain, or permit an attack in this state from a fleet even much 
inferior, had prudently quitted their anchorage; or, being advis-
ed of the approach of the British fleet, inferior in strength, they 
had put to sea, with the intention to cut off all hopes of their 
making a retreat; or, being satisfied of the importance of pos-
fessing
SIR S. HOOD'S ENGAGEMENT.

feeling a superior fleet to the end of the war, and knowing, at the same time, that nothing could be done effectually to retard their operations in taking the island, they were determined to risk nothing.

All this, however, if it proves any thing, proves their inferiority in seamanship, or that they were determined to fight thy, as they have done on every former occasion, and should as effectually exalt the spirits and courage of British seamen, as it should depress those of the enemy.

It has been asked, it is true, Why should not this fleet have put to sea? Twenty-two well coppered ships, of which it consisted, might be said to have been a match sufficient for the fleet of Count De Grasse, although superior in number. No opinion will be given on this point; but, from the whole of the conduct, and, by keeping this station so long in the face of such a superior force, it should shew what might have been the fortunate issue, had the British fleet, at once been carried into the Chesapeake in support of Lord Cornwallis, in place of the vain and fruitless attempt of bringing the enemy to action, but a few months before, on the 5th of September 1781, which was afterwards attended with such dreadful consequences.*

* About two or three years after these engagements off St Christophers, being in conversation with a gentleman, an officer who commanded a ship there at the time, and who, rather offended with the observations expressed as above (for he, it seems, had been of a different opinion from the Admiral, about the plan of the service projected), upon being asked, what truly had passed in his mind on seeing his gallant friend Commodore Affleck bringing to an anchor the rear of the fleet, while yet warmly engaged with the enemy? (for the ship commanded by this officer had been among the first in the van to be brought to an anchor),
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"Why, ay," says he, with an enthusiastic agitation, "why, ay, that was a magnificent fight, a fight the most interesting that ever was seen!" And how was it the next day, while the enemy made their attack, and twice run down along your line from van to rear, without being able to make impression upon a single ship? "Why, ay," returned he again, "that was still more glorious indeed; and there was not a boy on board the whole fleet, who did not feel he was a seaman." And a British seaman, thought I, a character the like of which never did in the world exist before. This is all I have to require, was my reply; for it was the spirit and gallantry displayed in the execution of the enterprise itself, which was the object of importance with me.

SIR
SIR GEORGE BRYDGES RODNEY'S ENGAGEMENT,
ON THE 12TH APRIL 1782.

INTRODUCTION.

It is with great pleasure that we still are able to bring forward an accurate description, and in all its great extent, of Sir George Brydges Rodney's most celebrated battle of the 12th of April; and that the accuracy of this description may be properly supported, we have only to mention, that, besides Lord Rodney's letters to the Admiralty, we have the testimony of the late Lord Cranstoun, one of the Captains of the Admiral's ship the Formidable. This very able and intelligent officer, who first took possession of the Ville de Paris, Admiral Count de Grasse's ship, and was sent home with the dispatches, did me the honour to seek me out, and was so kind as to furnish a number of sketches, and even to assist with a great part of the description. Lord Rodney too himself, in a private letter, of a date so late as 14th June 1789, has given an account, by way of narrative, of his transactions, campaign 1782, in which is included this battle of the 12th April *.

* This letter was transmitted to me by a common friend, the late General Robert Clerk, together with a copy of Naval Tactics, as printed January 1, 1782: which copy contains a number of valuable marginal notes in his Lordship's own handwriting; but, coming too late, they could not be introduced, though particularly relating to part first of this work, when reprinted and published 1790.
FROM THE LONDON GAZETTE.

Admiralty-Office, 18th May 1782.

Lord Granstoun, one of the Captains of his Majesty's ship the Formidable, and Captain Byron of the Andromache, in which ship his Lordship came a passenger, arrived early this morning with dispatches from Admiral Sir George Brydges Rodney, Bart., Knight of the Bath, and Commander in Chief of his Majesty's ships at the Leeward Islands, to Mr Stephens, of which the following are copies.

Formidable, at Sea, April 14. 1782.

It has pleased God, out of his divine providence, to grant to his Majesty's arms a most complete victory over the fleet of his enemy, commanded by the Count de Grasse, who is himself captured with the Ville de Paris, and four other ships of his fleet, besides one sunk in the action. This important victory was obtained the 12th instant, after a battle which lasted, with unremitting fury, from seven in the morning till half past six in the evening, when the setting sun put an end to the contest. Both fleets have greatly suffered; but it is with the highest satisfaction I can assure their Lordships, that though the masts, sails, rigging, and hulls of the British fleet are damaged, yet the loss of men has been but small, considering the length of the battle, and the close action they so long sustained, and in which both
both fleets looked upon the honour of their King and country to be most essentially concerned. The great supply of naval stores lately arrived in the West Indies, will, I flatter myself, soon repair all the damages his Majesty's fleet has sustained.

The gallant behaviour of the officers and men of the fleet I have the honour to command, has been such as must for ever endear them to all lovers of their King and country. The noble behaviour of my second in command, Sir Samuel Hood, who, in both actions, most conspicuously exerted himself, demands my warmest encomiums. My third in command, Rear-Admiral Drake, who, with his division, led the battle on the 12th instant, deserves the highest praise; nor can less be given to Commodore Affleck for his gallant behaviour in leading the centre division. My own Captain, Sir Charles Douglas, merits every thing I can possibly say; his unremitting diligence and activity greatly eased me in the unavoidable fatigue of the day. In short, I want words to express how sensible I am of the meritorious conduct of all the captains, officers, and men, who had a share in this glorious victory, obtained by their gallant exertions. The enemy's whole army, consisting of 5500 men, were on board their ships of war. The destruction among them must be prodigious, as, for the greatest part, of the action, every gun told; and their Lordships may judge what havoc must have been made, when the Formidable fired near eighty broadsides.

Enclosed, I have the honour to send, for their inspection, the British and French lines of battle, with the account of the killed
led and wounded, and the damages sustained by his Majesty's fleet. Lord Cranston, who acted as one of the Captains of the Formidable during both actions, and to whose gallant behaviour I am much indebted, will have the honour of delivering these dispatches. To him I must refer their Lordships for every minute particular they may wish to know, he being perfectly master of the whole transaction. That the British flag may for ever flourish in every quarter of the globe, is the most ardent wish of him who has the honour of being, with great regard,

SIR, &c.

G. B. Rodney.

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**Extract of a Letter from Sir G. B. Rodney to Mr Stephens.**

*Formidable, at Sea, April 14. 1782.*

On the 5th of April, I received intelligence that the enemy were embarking their troops on board the ships of war, and concluded they intended to sail in a very few days. Captain Byron of the Andromache, an active, brisk, and diligent officer, watched their motions with such attention, that, on the 8th instant, at day-light, he made the signal of the enemy's coming out, and standing to the north-west. I instantly made the signal to weigh; and having looked into the bays of Fort Royal and St. Pierre, where no enemy's ships remained, I made the signal for a general chase; and, before day-light, came up with the enemy under Dominique, where both fleets were becalmed, and continued
SIR G. B. RODNEY'S ENGAGEMENT.

continued so for some time. The enemy first got the wind, and stood towards Guadaloupe. My van division, under that gallant officer Rear-Admiral Sir SAMUEL HOOD, received it next, and stood after them. At nine the enemy began to cannonade my van, which was returned with the greatest briskness. The baffling winds, under Dominique, did not permit part of the centre division to get into action with the enemy's rear till half past eleven, and then only the ship next to me in the line of battle.

Their Lordships may easily imagine the mortification it must have been to the sixteen gallant officers commanding the ships of the rear, who could only be spectators of an action in which it was not in their power to join, being detained by the calms under Dominique. The enemy's cannonade ceased upon my rear's approach, but not before they had done considerable damage to the ships of the van, and disabled the Royal Oak and Montague, and his Majesty had lost a gallant officer, viz. Captain BAYNE of the Alfred, and a number of officers and seamen, as mentioned in the account transmitted to their Lordships; but such was the steady behaviour of Sir SAMUEL HOOD, and the ships of the van, that the enemy received more damage than they occasioned. The night of the 9th instant the fleet lay to, to repair their damages. The 10th, they continued to turn to windward under an easy sail, the enemy's fleet continuing to do the same, and always had it in their power to come to action, which they cautiously avoided, and rendered it impossible for me to force them in the situation they were in, between the Saints and the island of Dominique. On the 11th of April, the enemy having gained considerably to windward, and the wind blowing a fresh
fresh and steady gale, I made the signal for a general chase to windward, which continued the whole day. Towards sun-set, some of the headmost ships of the fleet had approached near to one of the enemy's ships that had received damage in the late action, and had certainly taken her, if Count De Grasse had not bore down with his whole fleet for her protection, which brought him so near, that I flattered myself he would give me an opportunity of engaging him the next day. With that view I threw out the signal for the form of failing, and flood with the whole fleet to the southward till two o'clock in the morning; then tacked, and had the happiness, at day-light, to find my most sanguine desire was near being accomplished, by my having it in my power to force the enemy to battle. Not one moment was lost in putting it into execution: The consequence has been such as I have had the honour to represent in my former letter of this day; and can say no more, than that too much praise cannot be given to the gallant officers and men of the fleet I had the honour to command.

G. B. Rodney.
SIR G. B. RODNEY'S ENGAGEMENT.


In Monday, the 8th of April 1782, signal was made from the British cruisers off Fort Royal Bay, Martinico, that the French fleet, attended by a number of transports, were then got under way. Our fleet immediately weighed from Grosse Islet Bay, St Lucia, and floated after them to the northward, under the west end of Martinico, and soon got sight of part of their men of war. The pursuit was continued, during the night, with all the sail that could be made, directed by the enemy's night signals. The wind a fresh gale at N. E. by E. At two in the morning, the Valiant, being to windward, discovered the enemy under the north end of the island of Dominica. At three o'clock the fleet brought to by signal; the enemy at that time nearly bearing north, &c.

Plate XV. fig. 1. A, The British fleet, at two in the morning of the 9th of April, discovering part of the French fleet under the north end of Dominica at F; at three o'clock brought to by signal; at half past five the signal was thrown out to prepare for battle. The line to be formed at two cables length afunder, and the fleet to fill and stand on.
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G, The French fleet afterwards, at five in the morning, on the starboard tack, working to windward in the Channel, between the islands of Dominica and Guadaloupe, where they had a steady breeze.

H, One of the enemy's ships, at this time so far to leeward, that she must have been taken, had not the wind failed us, while she had it so fresh as served her soon to recover her station.

Plate XV. fig. 2. A, The van of the British having at last got the breeze, fetched up with the centre of the enemy, still upon the starboard tack, when they were fired upon about nine o'clock, where, for the space of an hour, they sustained a distant cannonade from as many of the enemy's ships as could be brought to bear upon them. The centre and rear, in the mean time, lying still becalmed under the island of Dominica, at B.

F, The French not all in order of battle, as some of their ships were endeavouring to work to windward.

Plate XV. fig. 3. A, The centre of the British having afterwards got the breeze, joined the van about noon, when the action, after an interval of two hours, was renewed; but the Duke, the Formidable's second after, was the sternmost ship engaged upon this occasion; the 16 ships in the rear division, and after of her, not being able to get up.

B, The van of the British.

The centre now having joined the van, the cannonade was continued an hour and three quarters, until the rear, which had, in the mean while, been becalmed at C, began to join and close the line also, as at D.
F. The enemy, (who, during all this time, kept, as usual, at such a distance as shewed that they meant to disable), as soon as they saw the junction of the whole British fleet, hauled off to windward, tacking from the van, as per line of course H H.

G. The enemy's fleet of transports stretching away to windward of the Saints.

The enemy did not at first appear to have suffered much; but soon after, however, one of them seemed to be crippled; and, afterwards, we found two had received so much hurt, that they were obliged to bear away to Basse Terre, Guadaloupe, to refit; so that they were not in the second action, which was afterwards fought on the 12th *

The 10th of April was spent in refitting and keeping our wind, and shifting the van and rear divisions, as the van had suffered in the action of the ninth.

Plate

* From Lord Rodney's Narrative, contained in his private letter above mentioned.

About two o'clock in the morning of the 9th of April, the British fleet came up with the enemy's under Dominique; both were becalmed. The enemy first got the wind, and stood towards Guadaloupe; the British van followed, as did the centre, when the breeze reached them. The enemy attacked the van, and a cannonade ensued; but it ceased when the Admiral and his two seconds joined his van. In vain; when the Admiral got abreast of the Ville de Paris, he laid his main-top sail aback for the French Admiral to bear down and engage: He kept his distance; and plainly indicated it was not his business to bring on a battle, as the enemy's whole fleet had got the wind, and could have brought them to engage half of the English. Admiral Rodney had his signal ready to wear and stand to his rear, seven, or which were becalmed at a very considerable distance. However, the enemy would not risk the attack, and the breeze soon reaching the rear, it soon joined the centre.
Plate XVI. fig. 4. A, The British fleet, in the morning of the 11th, perceiving two disabled ships under the islands of Saints, at G, chased them into Basle Terre, Guadalupe; but, soon after, discovering two others far to windward, and disabled, at H, near the north end of Dominica, a general chase was ordered, only, three or four of the French fleet being at this time visible, at I, from the Formidable's mast-head. But, upon the Agamemnon and others, at B, coming near the ships, at H, Count de Grassi, though far to windward, bore down, as at F, to protect his two disabled ships. Upon this the Agamemnon, and the other ships, advanced in the pursuit. Upon the signal to call in all cruisers, they returned to their respective stations in the line.

Plate XVI. fig. 5. A, the British fleet, at two o'clock in the morning of the 12th, after having run to the southward from B, their position the evening before, having taken advantage of the wind, as at W, which generally hauls to the northward in the West Indies in the evening. At which time, (viz. two o'clock), having tacked to the northward, the French were discovered broad under their lee-bow, in some confusion, at F; and one of their ships was directly to leeward, at G, with her bow-sprit gone, and her fore-mast across her fore-castle, towed by a frigate, and the wind at E. S. E.; as at Z.

C, The Valiant and Monarch were ordered down from the rear to engage this disabled ship with her consort, which obliged Count de Grassi to edge down, as at H, to their protection.

D, The van of the British, about 4 or 5 o'clock, leading on the starboard
SIR G. B. RODNEY'S ENGAGEMENT.

starboard tack; and the Admiral judging the Count de Grasse might now have got so far to leeward, by the last mentioned movement, that it would not be possible for him to avoid an action, the Valiant and Monarch, the ships in chase, were ordered into their stations.

1. The French, aware of their situation, forming on a larboard tack; and the wind afterwards coming about from E. S. E. to nearly east, as at Y, they conceived hopes of regaining their usual fighting distance, more especially as their van, at this time, began to point to windward of the British.

Plate XVII. fig. 6. A, The British fleet.
F, The French fleet; their leading ships having gained the wind.

At half past seven in the morning, the Marlborough, the leading ship of the van of the British, having fetched the fifth ship of

Lord Rodney's Narrative continued.

The 10th and 11th April were employed in endeavouring to bring the enemy to battle; and on the 12th, late in the afternoon, the enemy bore down to protect two of their ships, who were in danger of being cut off. This brought them to the position the Admiral wished. He instantly issued orders to fall during the night, according to the order of sailing; to put all lights out; to stand to the southward till two o'clock in the morning; and then the whole fleet to tack without signal. This deceived the enemy, who had no conception that the British fleet should be so near them at day-light, and instantly formed the line of battle upon the starboard tack; the enemy formed theirs upon the larboard tack, and had made the signal to wear; but the nearness of the British fleet prevented its being put in execution; and the British fleet taking the lee-gage, the Admiral made the signal to engage and close.
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of the line of the enemy, was fired upon; * when the signals for close action, and to close the line, were thrown out.

Plate XVII. fig. 7. A, The van of the British ranging slowly and closely (but on opposite tacks) along the enemy's line, each ship giving and receiving a heavy fire.

F, The enemy's fleet having gained the wind, ranging in like manner in opposite directions.

B, The Formidable, the Admiral's ship, not bearing away, but keeping the wind, &c. at the time when the two fleets might be supposed to be completely abreast of each other,

Plate XVII. fig. 8. A, The Formidable, the British Admiral's ship, after having given her first fire to the enemy's fifth ship, and having passed the Ville de Paris, F, and her seconds almost in contact, kept her wind, and piercing the enemy's line between the fourth and fifth ship astern of Count de Grasse's own ship, the Ville de Paris, was followed by the Namur and Duke, the two next ships astern. † By which spirited, bold, and

* N. B.— This ship, the Marlborough, having fetched the fifth ship, as mentioned; and after suffering a cannonade from thirty-one ships, the remaining part of the enemy's line, along the whole of which she had run, and close under their lee; in performing this and other service, from the ninth to this day the twelfth, had three men killed only, and sixteen wounded.

† LORD RODNEY'S NARRATIVE continued.

‘The British Admiral's ship, the Formidable, reached the enemy's fourth ship from their van, and began a very close action within half musket-shot, and continued such action close along the enemy's line, under an easy sail, till an opening appeared
and new mode of attack, the enemy's line was not only cut in
twain, their van from their rear, but the headmost ships of their
rear division, then coming up, were forced away to leeward, as
at G.

B. The van of the British still ranging along the remaining
part of the enemy's rear.

C. The rear of the British line following up after the Admiral.

H. The Glorieuze, the last ship of the van of the French,
stretching past the rear of the British line.

Plate

appeared at the third ship after of the enemy's Admiral, which gave an op-
portunity of breaking their line, and putting their rear in the utmost confusion;
when six of their ships falling on board each other, in that condition the Ad-
miral and division attacked them, tore them to pieces, and the moment they
had disengaged themselves, they bore away right before the wind.'

Whether it was between the third and fourth ship that the line was cut, or
between the fourth and fifth ship, as the text has it, is of little moment. But
we cannot well omit the following anecdote, as related to me by the late Admi-
ral C. Inglis. He commanded the St Albans, one of the next ships after of
the Formidable, in cutting the French line. When he got alongside of this
ship H, supposed to be the Glorieuze, the last of, the van division of the enemy,
where it was cut asunder from the rear, he remarked that she did not return a
single gun, nor was any body to be seen on board, but one man upon the poop;
and some accidental musket-shot being fired by the marines, this poor fellow
dropped, and was no more to be seen. After Captain Inglis had pulled on a-
head, directing his attention still to this ship H, as well as to the Canada, the
British ship which followed him next after, he observed that neither did the
Glorieuze return a gun to this ship; But the Canada, pouring in a whole broad-
side into the Glorieuze, so dreadful was the appearance to Captain Inglis, who
saw the dust, the pieces of timber, and smoke, which flew to a great distanc
from the side opposite to that where she had received the blow, it seemed as if
the ship (literally speaking) had been blown out of the water, and as if the whole
in a mass had been driven to windward.
Plate XVII. fig. 9. A, B, C. The Formidable, Namur, and Duke, after having cut the line, kept up a powerful raking fire upon these ships of the rear division of the enemy, which they before had forced to leeward, and which are now going off before the wind, as at G.

D, The rear of the British, under Sir S. Hood, following up after the Admiral.

F, The van of the British, under the command of Admiral Drake.

G, The headmost ships of the rear division of the enemy, which were forced to leeward by the Formidable, &c. having got into a huddle, or group, were, for some time, exposed to a cannonade from three ships, the Formidable, the Namur, and the Duke; when the whole of this rear division of the French line, consisting of the rear and part of the centre, now under the conduct of M. Bougainville, as soon as the British van had stretched past, put before the wind with all the sail that could be carried, escaping through the gap, evidently made in the British line, between the van and the attack made by the Formidable; which part of the enemy’s fleet, for distinction’s sake, shall be called the northern division of flight, which was not pursued.

I', The van of the enemy, stretched past the rear of the British line, preparing to break into two divisions.

H, The middle division which made to the west.

Plate XVIII. fig. 10. So soon as the van division of the enemy had stretched past the rear of the British line, in steering away, it broke into two divisions; one steering west, as at H, and which may be called the middle division;
SIR G. B. RODNEY'S ENGAGEMENT.

A. The Formidable, with part of the centre, putting about in pursuit of the enemy's van.

B. The rear of the British line putting about for the pursuit also. The signal for the rear to close the centre being soon after made, both these divisions, in pursuit of the southern division F, where COUNT DE GRASSE was himself, passed to windward of the middle division of the enemy H, without annoying it.

C. The British van.

F. The COUNT DE GRASSE, with the southern division, flying under every sail he could set, pursued by the rear and part of the centre of the British, and steering a S. S. W. course. It was from this division of the enemy from which all the captures were afterwards made.

H. The middle division of the enemy steering a more westerly course; and, as they were not pursued, they did not carry a press of sail; but, repairing the damage they had received, waited for, and the same evening, after it was dark, rejoined the ships of the southern division which had escaped the pursuit.

G. M. BOUGAINVILLE, with the rear division of the enemy, crowding sail, and fast advancing to the westward.

Plate XVIII. fig. 2. Upon the breaking of the van division of the enemy, the southern division, which had at first steered to the S. S. W. as at K, soon afterwards got with their heads to the northward, as at F, with the view of rejoining their other divisions, and forming a new line of battle to leeward. COUNT

K k
DE GRASSE making repeated signals for that purpose; but seeing, after every pains taken, these signals without effect, and, at the same time, perceiving, if this northerly course was continued, that the line of the British pursuit would thereby be much shortened, he changed his direction again, and is now, about two o'clock in the afternoon, with his ships heads to the S. S. W. as at I.

A and B, The centre and rear of the British in pursuit of the southern division of the enemy.

C, The van of the British.

G, The rear division of the enemy advancing still farther to the westward.

H, The middle division of the enemy, not being pursued, under an easy sail repaired their damage.

Plate XVIII. fig. 12. F, The southern division of the enemy with their heads again to the northward, at six o'clock, at sun-set, having run through the dotted line of course H H, in which they were outflanked, and turned from their southerly direction, by the British ships in pursuit, as at A.

During this pursuit, five ships were taken from the enemy. The Gloriente having lost her masts by the fire which she received in the morning, while ranging past to windward, struck to the fleet at 12 o'clock, upon their bearing away large for the pursuit. The Caesar struck to the Centaur at four o'clock.—The Hector, at half past four, struck to the Canada and Alcide.—The Ardent, a little after five, struck to the Belliqueux and Prince William.—And the Ville de Paris, Count de Grasse, at six o'clock, about
about sun-set, struck to the Barfleur and Canada. At this time, Count de Grasse had got above five leagues to the westward and leeward of the field of battle; and, night immediately coming on, Admiral Rodney thought proper to give over further pursuit. *

* Lord Rodney's Narrative continued.

* Count de Grasse, in the Ville de Paris, having behaved most bravely, and his ship being entirely crippled, and three British Admirals being very near him, struck his flag about ten minutes after the sun had set. Admiral Rodney made the signal for a night battle; but looking about him, and observing that his fleet were greatly dispersed; that two of his 90 gun ships were totally disabled; his own (the Formidable) greatly damaged; that his van and centre were much hurt; that none of the prisoners from the captured ships were taken out; that a very dark night, of twelve hours, was come on, he thought it most prudent to make sure of the victory, and not run the risk of a reverse of fortune, or the danger of a night battle, wherein his own fleet might receive more damage from one another than from the ships of the enemy; that, by running to leeward in the night, the enemy might deceive him by ordering some of their frigates to hoist the lights of their Admirals, and steer a course to lead him (Rodney) a different course from them; and as the night was extremely dark, being the first day of a new moon, they might have hauled their wind to the north, or to the south, without being seen; at the same time they most carefully had hid all lights whatever. The British fleet, by pursuing, might have found themselves far to leeward in the morning, without a possibility of their getting to windward, by the crippled condition they were in. These reasons, and his experience of a night battle, induced the Admiral to secure the victory, and not to hazard a reverse of fortune. He therefore made the signal for the British fleet to bring to, on the starboard tack, then to dark that one ship could not see another. Day-light the next morning proved the wisdom of that signal; for notwithstanding it was the duty of every ship to obey it, thirteen made fail, yet not one of them fired a shot, or came up with an enemy. This was a convincing proof of what might have happened, had the whole fleet gone to leeward, and the enemy have hauled their wind; not only the captured ships might have been re-taken, but some of the British crippled been taken.
NAVAL TACTICS.

By laying that these ships of the enemy struck to particular ships of the British, is meant only, that those of our ships mentioned were engaging the prizes close at the instant of hauling down their colours, while the whole of the fleet was surrounding them at the time.

G. Monsieur Bougainville, with the rear division of the enemy, advanced now above ten leagues to the westward and to the leeward of the field of battle.

1. The middle division of the enemy, consisting of seven ships, having waited for, rejoined the ships of the southern division, which afterwards effected an escape *.

* Lord Rodney's Narrative continued.

1. On the morning of the 13th, frigates were dispatched to St Christophers and Luuatu, to see if any of the enemy's ships had sheltered themselves in those roads. Upon the report returned, that none were there, but that some ships had pained these islands in a crippled state, Rear Admiral Hood and his division were sent to intercept such ships as might go to the south side of Porto Rico and St Domingo, while Admiral Rodney took care of the prizes and his own shattered ships; and, so soon as he was enabled to put his squadron in a condition to bear away, he got to St Domingo, where Admiral Hood soon joined him with two other enemy's ships of the line, which had been taken in the Mona Passage.

2. The British fleet arriving off Cape Tiberon, the west end of St Domingo, Admiral Hood was sent with a fleet of 25 sail of the line to blockade the island of St Domingo, while Admiral Rodney himself bore away for Port Royal, Jamaica, with the prizes, and those of his ships which were most shattered, with the view of having the whole put in repair. The enemy's shattered ships, in the mean time, made their escape to the Havana, some to America, and some even to France; and the British fleet, within a month, were completely fitted, stored, and manned. The van was gone out of harbour, the centre going; and Admiral Rodney himself, with the whole fleet, in pursuance of the enemy to America, was ready to leave Jamaica the next day. When Admiral Pigot arrived from England, and took the command.
SIR G. B. RÖDNEY'S ENGAGEMENT.

LINE OF BATTLE of the BRITISH FLEET under the command of Sir G. B. Rodney (the Royal Oak to lead on the starboard tack, and the Marlborough on the larboard tack), with the Loss of the Killed and Wounded in both the battles of the 9th and 12th of April. The damage which the ships in the van suffered in the battle of the 9th, made it necessary that this order of the line should be reversed, and Sir Francis Drake's division becoming the van, the Marlborough as the headmost ship, led the fleet on the 12th of April.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ships</th>
<th>Commanders</th>
<th>Guns</th>
<th>Men.</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Wounded</th>
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<tr>
<td>Royal Oak</td>
<td>Capt. Burnett</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alfred</td>
<td>Bayne</td>
<td>74</td>
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<td>Bowes</td>
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<tr>
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<td>74</td>
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<td>Linne</td>
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<td>610</td>
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<td>Buckner</td>
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<td>500</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Hercules</td>
<td>Savage</td>
<td>74</td>
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<td>Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marlborough</td>
<td>Penny</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>3</td>
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37 1* Deduct the Prudent not with the fleet in the action, 64

36 2640

FRIGATES.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Frigates</th>
<th>Project in the Action</th>
<th>Not Present in the Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Champion, to repeat.</td>
<td>Andromache.</td>
<td>Lizard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zebra</td>
<td>Floris, to repeat signals</td>
<td>La Nymph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alecto.</td>
<td>Alert.</td>
<td>Convert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alarms.</td>
<td>10 Everyplace, to repeat signals</td>
<td>Sybil.</td>
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LIST
**LIST OF THE FRENCH FLEET.**

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Due de Bourgogne</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>Le Languedoc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Neptune</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Zéphir</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Glorieux</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Closter</td>
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<td>Le Souverain</td>
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<td>Le Marsouin</td>
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<td>Le Cœurs</td>
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<td>Le Héctor</td>
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<td>Le Pluton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Hercule</td>
<td>74</td>
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<td>Le Scipion</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
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<td>Le Concorde</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>Le Dauphin Royal</td>
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<td>Le Magnifique</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Bourgogne</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Le Sceptre</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Le Conquérant</td>
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<td>Le Marsouin</td>
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<td>Le Palmiste</td>
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<td>Le Ardent</td>
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<tr>
<td>L'Utile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Caron</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Sablon</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Tres, armé en flotte</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Minotaur, ditto</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Brave</td>
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<td>Le Nomphant</td>
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<td>Le St Esprit</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Dufin</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Réflect</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Sagittaire</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Expérimenter</td>
<td>50</td>
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</table>

**Arrived with the Brest convoy,**

- Le Concorde
- Le Dauphin Royal
- Le Magnifique
- Le Bourgogne
- Le Bien Aimé
- Le Sceptre
- Le Northumberland
- Le Conquérant
- Le Marsouin
- Le Palmiste
- Le Ardent
- L'Utile
- Le Caron
- Le Sablon
- Le Tres, armé en flotte
- Le Minotaur, ditto

**Joined at St. Kitts,**

- Le Nomphant
- Le St Esprit
- Le Dufin
- Le Réflect
- Le Sagittaire
- L'Expérimenter

**Out of repair,**

- Thirteen Frigates
- Seven armed Brigs
- One Cutter

*Total, 36 of the line, two 40 gun ships, 13 frigates, 7 armed brigs & 60 ships, and 2 cutters.*
Observations on the battles of the 9th and 12th April 1782.

In the course of these actions, there will be found a complete illustration of the following particulars.

1. The difficulty which an enemy's fleet will find in making an escape to windward.

2. That the crippling of some of his ships will be a necessary consequence of the efforts made to effect this escape.

3. That the protection given to ships crippled in consequence of these efforts, as it was the cause of bringing on the actions of both the 9th and 12th, and had nearly produced an action on the 10th, will also be the cause of bringing on an action on all future occasions of the like nature, or in like circumstances.

The attack made by the British in the action of the 9th, may be considered as an example of the simple attack, and shows how little may be expected from any rencontre between two fleets on the same tack, when an attempt shall be made from the leeward.

The judicious movement made by the British fleet, from a northerly course to a southerly one, on the night between the 14th and 19th, as it shows the advantage that may be made by a change of wind, at the same time shows the necessity of attention to such periodical changes. For it was by this means only that the
the British fleet got within reach of the enemy on the morning of the 12th April.

The little loss sustained by fleets, while ranging past an enemy's line, particularly exemplified in the case of the leading ship, the Marlborough, in this battle, as well as in others, viz. the three battles formerly mentioned,—the 27th July 1778, the 15th and 19th May 1780,—sufficiently and incontrovertibly should establish how little can be effected by the encounter of two adverse fleets passing on opposite tacks, without having something more important in view than the simply effecting the said passage.

From the facility with which the Formidable, the Admiral's ship, kept her void, and forced her passage through the line of the enemy, and the necessary consequence that the headmost ships of the rear division must thereby be forced and driven to leeward, should with certainty establish, that breaking or cutting an enemy's line, by an attack from the leeward, is not only a practicable manœuvre, but a manœuvre attended with little additional danger, or risk of shipping; and that, with the same facility, and with equal probability of success, it might have been attempted, in former renencounters, as already mentioned*. And although Admiral Rodney, in either of his former renencounters of the 15th or 19th of May, had not then been convinced of the importance of this manœuvre—still, having been the first to put it in execution, as on this occasion of the 12th April, he has acquired a name renowned over the whole world, as well as among his countrymen,

* Keppel's Engagement of the 27th July 1778, and Rodney's two engagements of the 15th and 19th May 1780.
countrymen, who must ever remember this essential effort of service with the utmost gratitude.

The glorious consequences, from having cut and divided the enemy's line on this occasion, as they may be admitted to be illustrations of the foregoing demonstrations, may also be admitted as a proof of what ought to be expected in future on every similar occasion.

The hurry and precipitation with which the rear division of the enemy made their escape through the gap in the British line, as it shewed their apprehensions, should also be a proof of the danger of their situation.

The effort to escape, made by the van division of the enemy, as it confirms the general position, their desire of evading a conflict, confirms also the idea of that superiority of British seamen, which seems, indeed, to have been incontestible from the beginning of the whole affair to the end thereof.

The manner by which the van of the British was rendered almost without effect, shews that the rear division of the enemy, and not the van, ought to have been the object of pursuit.

The proximity of the rear of the British to the rear division of the enemy, should sufficiently point out the object of pursuit they also should have chosen.

Therefore the British line, van and rear, not having been prepared to take advantage of their necessary mutual proximity to the rear division of the enemy was a loss.

Again, the rear division of the British, by having been obliged to put about ship, in pursuit of the van of the enemy, already got

Vide Attack with the Centre, Part II. pages 180, 181, 182, and 183.
got some number of miles distant, is a full confirmation of the hypothesis laid down, That the pursuit of a rear division, cut off from the van of an enemy’s fleet passing on contrary tacks, ought in general to be preferred.

Lastly, The facility with which the rear of the British came up with the flying van of the enemy, after consideration had to all the foregoing circumstances, without doubt shews, that neither was there any inferiority of failing in the British ships on this occasion.
BATTLES BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH SQUADRONS IN THE EAST INDIES, 1782.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM SIR EDWARD HUGHES BART. TO MR STEPHENS,
DATED ON BOARD THE SUPERBE, AT SEA, OFF THE COAST OF COROMANDEL,
4TH APRIL 1782.

I sailed on the 31st of January from Trincomalé for Madras Road, in order to get a supply of provisions and stores, of both which the ships were then in want.

On the 8th of February I anchored in Madras Road; and the same day received advice from Lord Macartney, the governor of that place, that a French squadron, consisting of thirty sail of ships and vessels, was at anchor about twenty leagues to the northward of that port. In the afternoon of the 9th, Captain Aimis, in his Majesty's ship Monmouth, with the Hero, Isis, and the armed transport Manila, joined me in the road. I continued to use all possible diligence in getting the necessary stores and provisions on board the several ships, until the 15th of February, when the enemy's squadron, consisting of 12 sail of line of battle ships, 6 frigates, 8 large transports, and 6 captured vessels, came in sight to the northward, standing for Madras Road; and, about noon, the same day, anchored about four miles without the road.

In the mean time, I placed his Majesty's ships in the most advantageous manner to defend themselves, and the other ships in the road, with springs on their cables, that they might bring their
broadside to bear more effectually on the enemy, should they attempt an attack.

At four in the afternoon, the enemy weighed and stood to the southward, when I immediately made the signal to weigh, and stood after them, having received on board a detachment of 300 officers and men of his Majesty's 98th regiment, who were distributed to the ships of the squadron that were worst manned. I stood with the squadron, as per margin *, to the southward all that night under an easy sail; and in the morning, at day-light, found the enemy's ships had separated in the night; their 12 line of battle ships and a frigate bearing east of me, distant about four leagues, and 16 sail of their frigates and transports bearing south-west, distant about three leagues, and steering a direct course for Pondicherry; on which I instantly made the signal for a general chase to the south-west, in order, if possible, to come up with and take their transports, well knowing the enemy's line of battle ships would follow to protect them all in their power.

In the course of the chase, our copper-bottomed ships came up with, and captured six sail of ships and vessels, five of which were English, taken by the enemy, when to the northward of Madras, out of which I ordered the Frenchmen to be taken, and the vessels to proceed, with their own crews, to Negapatam; the sixth was the Lauriston, a transport, having on board many French officers, and 300 men of the regiment of Lausanne, and laden with guns, shot, powder, and other military stores. This ship, so valuable to us, and of so much consequence to the enemy, was taken by Captain Lumley of his Majesty's ship Isis.*

---

So soon as the enemy's squadron discovered my intention to chase their transports, they put before the wind, and made all the sail they could after me; and, by three o'clock in the afternoon, four of their best sailing line of battle ships were got within two or three miles of our sternmost ships; and the ships in chase were very much spread, by the enemy's ships they were chasing steering different courses, some to the south-east, others to the south, and several to the south-west. I therefore judged it necessary to make the signal for the chasing ships to join me, which they all did about seven o'clock in the evening; and I continued standing to the south-east, under an easy sail, all that night, the enemy's squadron in sight, and making many signals.

At day-light, in the morning of the 17th, the body of the enemy's squadron bore north by east of ours, distant about three leagues, the weather very hazy, with light winds and frequent squalls, of short duration; from the north north-east, the enemy crowding all the sail they could towards our squadron.

At six in the morning, I made the signal for our squadron to form the line of battle ahead; at 25 minutes past eight, our line ahead being formed with great difficulty, from the want of wind, and frequent intervals of calms, I made the signal for the leading ship to make the same sail as the Admiral, and made sail, formed in the line ahead, intending to weather the enemy, that I might engage them closely. At ten, the enemy's squadron having the advantage of the squalls from the north north-east, (which always reached them first, and in consequence continued longest with them), neared us very fast; and I made the signal
for our line to alter the course two points to leeward, the enemy then steering down on the rear of our line, in an irregular double line abreast. At half past noon, I made the signal for our squadron to form the line of battle abreast, in order to draw the rear of our line closer to the centre, and prevent the enemy from breaking in on it, and attacking it when separated.

At three in the afternoon, the enemy still pushing on to our rear in a double line abreast, I again altered my course in the line, in order to draw our rear ships still closer to the centre; and at forty minutes after three, finding it impossible to avoid the enemy's attack, under all the disadvantages of little or no wind to work our ships, and of being to leeward of them, I made signal for our squadron to form at once into the line of battle ahead. At four, the Exeter (which was the sternmost ship in our rear, when formed in line of battle ahead, on the larboard tack), not being quite close to her second ahead, three of the enemy's ships in their first line bore right down upon her, whilst four more of their second line, headed by the Hero, in which ship M. Suffrein had his flag, hauled along the outside of the first line, towards our centre.

At five minutes past four, the enemy's three ships began their fire upon the Exeter, which was returned by her and her second ahead. At ten minutes past four, I made the signal for battle; and at twelve minutes past, the action became general from our rear to our centre; the commanding ship of the enemy, with three others of their second line, leading down to our centre, yet never at any time advancing farther than opposite to the Superbe, our centre ship,
ship, with little or no wind, and some heavy rain during the engagement.

Under these circumstances, the enemy brought eight of their best ships to the attack of five of ours. As the van of our line, consisting of the Monmouth, Eagle, Burford, and Worcester, could not be brought into action without tacking on the enemy; and although the signal for that purpose was at the masts-head ready for hoisting, there was neither wind sufficient to enable them to tack, nor for the five ships of our centre and rear, then engaged with the enemy, hard pressed, and much disabled in their masts, yards, tails, and rigging, to follow them, without an almost certainty of separating our van from our rear.

At six in the afternoon, a squall of wind from the south-east took our ships, and paid them round ahead on the enemy to the north-eastward, when the engagement was renewed by our five ships, with great spirit and alacrity, from our starboard guns; and at twenty-five minutes past six, just before dark, the enemy's ships engaged with ours, having visibly suffered severely, the whole of them hauled their wind, and stood to the north-east.

At this time the Superbe had lost her main-yard, shot into two pieces in the slings, had five feet water in her hold, which continued for some time to gain on all her pumps, until several of the largest shot-holes under water were plugged up, and neither brace nor bow-line left entire; and the Exeter, reduced almost to the state of a wreck, had made a signal of distress. The other three ships in our rear, the Monarca, Isis, and Hero, had suffered less, as the enemy's fire appeared plainly to be directed principally against the Superbe and Exeter.
DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND BRITISH SQUADRONS ON THE COAST OF COROMANDEL, 17TH FEBRUARY 1782, TAKEN FROM THE FOREGOING LETTER.

Sir Edward Hughes having left Trincomalé the 31st of January 1782, came to an anchor in the road of Madras the 8th of February; and, the same day, he received advice, that a French squadron was at anchor about twenty leagues to the northward of that place; and, all diligence being used in getting the necessary stores aboard the several ships, the enemy's squadron, on the 15th, came in sight from the northward; and, at noon, anchored about four miles without the road. In the mean time, the men of war were placed in the most advantageous posture of defence, with springs on their cables, that they might bring their broadsides to bear more effectually on the enemy, should they attempt to make an attack.

Plate XIX. fig. 1. The British squadron at anchor in the road of Madras, the 15th of February, at A, with springs on their cables, prepared to receive any attack.

F. The French squadron come to an anchor likewise, the morning of that day, and about four miles distant, without the said road; but not finding it convenient to attack Sir Edward Hughes, as he was then situated, they got up their anchors that same afternoon, and stood away to the southward. The British squadron
squadron soon after weighed, and stood after them, carrying an easy sail all the night; and, in the morning of the 16th, at daylight, the enemy's ships having separated during the night-time, the positions of the different fleets lay as follows:

B, The British squadron standing to the southward.

C, The enemy's line of battle ships, supposed to be 12 in number, with one frigate, bearing east from the British squadron, and distant about four leagues.

H, The enemy's transports and frigates, 16 sail, bearing S. W., distant about four leagues, and making for Pondicherry.

The British squadron being thus situated between the enemy's men of war and their transports, signal for a general chase to the south-west was instantly made, in the hope of taking some of their transports, not doubting that their line of battle ships would follow and endeavour to protect them. In the course of the pursuit, the copper-bottomed ships came up with and captured six of these transports; but by this means the British squadron was much separated.

In the mean time, the enemy's squadron, so soon as they perceived the danger their fleet of transports were in, having put before the wind, some of their best-failing coppered ships had got within three or four miles of the sternmost of the British, about three o'clock in the afternoon; upon which, a signal was made by Sir Edward Hughes for the chasing ships to join the squadron, which they all did about seven o'clock in the evening, when, afterwards, he continued, all the following night,
standing to the south-east, under an easy sail, as at C, while the enemy still kept in fight, as at I, making many signals.

Plate XIX. fig. 2. A, The British squadron, on the 17th, at 10 o'clock forenoon, extended in a line of battle ahead, on the larboard tack; at this time the ships in the rear of the line were too far astern, particularly the Exeter, B, the sternmost, occasioned by the light irregular breezes of wind.

F, The enemy having the wind more constant, steering down on the rear of our line in an irregular double line abreast, and bearing us fast.

Fig. 3. The ship B, the Exeter, in the rear of the British, from the irregularity of the wind, continuing still to be far separated; at half an hour past noon, a signal was made for the squadron to form a line of battle abreast, as at A, to give an opportunity for each ship in bearing away, particularly those in the rear, to close with the centre, as at the points C C C, which, if accomplished, would prevent F, the enemy, from taking the rear at a disadvantage.

The enemy, F, still pushing on for the rear. At three in the afternoon, the course of each ship in the line was attempted to be still farther changed, and with the intention to draw the ships in the rear still closer to the centre, as from D to E.

Plate XX. fig. 4. At 45 minutes past three o'clock, finding it impossible to avoid the enemy's attack, a signal was made for the British squadron to form at once into the line of battle ahead, as at A.
B, The Exeter, the foremost ship, not having been able to close with the next ship ahead,—

G, Three of the enemy's ships of their first line bore right down to attack her, while four ships of their second line, headed by the Hero F, in which ship Monsieur Suffrein had his flag, hailed along the outside of these three ships which were firing on the Exeter, intending to attack our centre, the Superbe with her seconds, at A.

Plate XX. fig. 5. G, The enemy's three ships began to fire on the Exeter at five minutes past four.

B, The Exeter and her seconds returning the fire.

F, The Admiral's ship, Monsieur Suffrein, with three others of the enemy's second line, having led down on our centre A, the engagement commenced from our rear to centre about 12 minutes after four.

In this manner Monsieur Suffrein had it in his power to bring eight of his best ships to make an attack on five of the British only;—the wind at N. N. E.

Fig. 6. At six o'clock in the afternoon, the wind having changed, a squall from the south-east, as at Z, took our ships, and paid them head round on the enemy to the north-east, viz. from the first position A, to the position B; that is, from a larboard tack to a starboard tack, when again the engagement was immediately begun with fresh spirits from the starboard guns of our five ships.
Fig. 7. At twenty-five minutes past six, just before it was dark, the enemy's ships which had been engaged having suffered severely, the whole of their squadron hauled their wind, and stood off to the north-east, as at F; and the British squadron being on a contrary tack, standing to the north-west, as at A, the two fleets were soon separated.
### List of the British Squadron, with the Killed and Wounded, in the Battle of the 17th February 1782.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Wounded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superbe</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monarca</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hero</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burford</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouth</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seahorse</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combustion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 32 killed and 95 wounded.

**Notes:**
- Superbe, Captain Stevens wounded (since dead).
- Lieutenants Hughes and Newcombe wounded.
- Exeter, Captain Reynolds killed.
- Lieutenant Charles Jones wounded.

### List of the French Squadron now on the Coromandel Coast, and of the Land Forces embarked in it, and the Transports at the Mauritius, the 7th December last, and now landed to join Hyder Ali.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Guns</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L'Hero,</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>M. D. Suffrin, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Orient,</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Chef D'Estaing, 525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Anibale,</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Cap. Du Pallière, 685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Anibale,</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Thomelin, 685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Artisan</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>St. Felix, 516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Aja,</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Bouvet, 516</td>
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<tr>
<td>L'Alex,</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Sultier, 516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Alex,</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Duchalieu, 516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Artisan</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>L'Alandro, 516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Mamine,</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>De Queberville, 430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng. Hannibal,</td>
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**Notes:**
- (French List)

### Fregates

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>L'Alpha,</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Cap. Du Galle, 400</td>
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<tr>
<td>L'Alpha,</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Prieur de Salvert, 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Alpha,</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Bovard, 516, 516</td>
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<tr>
<td>L'Alpha,</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>De Beaullieu, 142</td>
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<tr>
<td>L'Alpha,</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Alpha,</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'Alpha,</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- (French List)

### Flutes and Transports.

- Languillon, Bon Ami, Maurepas Brifon, Deux Aimes, Fille Unique, St Anne, Duc de Luxembourg.

### Land Forces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Guns</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regiment D'Austrasie</td>
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<td>657</td>
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<tr>
<td>D'Ile de France</td>
<td></td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Légion de Launanne</td>
<td>455</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volontaires de Bourbon</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Régiment d'Artillerie</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caffers of the Islands</td>
<td>3157</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sapeurs</td>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total:** 2457
Observations on the Battle off the Coast of Coro-
mandel, 17th February 1782.

As the British navy has hitherto afforded so few examples of an
inclination to evade or avoid battle, our object has hitherto been
confined to treat of the mode of attack only, not that of defence.
On this occasion, however, it must be admitted, that M. Suffrein,
the commander of the squadron of the enemy, has given us something new, not only by obliging Sir Edward Hughes
to act on the defensive, but by having, in his masterly seamanship,
attempted a change, and put in practice a new mode of attack
from the windward. He is also the first of an enemy, for this
century at least, who will be allowed the honour to have made an
attack upon a British squadron.

In the course of this action, there will be found an illustration
of the following particulars:

1. That the swift-sailing vessels of the squadron in pursuit were
coming fast up with, and would have cut off, the slow-sailing ves-
sels of the squadron endeavouring to make off.

2. That to prevent the loss of these slow-sailing vessels, and to
protect them from the enemy, Sir Edward Hughes was in-
duced to abide an engagement, which otherwise he was inclined
to have avoided.

3. That M. Suffrein, by carrying down his squadron in two
divisions; sending three of his headmost ships to force an attack
upon two ships in the rear of the British, at B, fig. 5. Plate XX.;
bringing
SIR E. HUGHES'S ENGAGEMENT.

bringing up the remainder of his squadron in support of these three ships; hauling past them to windward, so as to attack, and confine himself to the attack of the British centre, the Superbe and her seconds, has put in practice a new mode; and it is also an illustration of that mode which we have formerly demonstrated and endeavoured to recommend.

Though the full effect of this admirable disposition of attack made by M. Suffrein, was in the end prevented, by the British squadron being brought round on the starboard tack, and thereby enabled to get all its ships into action by the change the wind made; yet nothing but a consciousness of inferiority somehow in his seamen can excuse M. Suffrein, or account for the retreat he made, or why he drew off his superior number of ships, after once having had the merit of bringing up his squadron to so masterly and advantageous an attack, where in one place he had three ships opposed to one, and in another place had brought five ships against three; and after having had the additional advantage, when the British ships might have been much hurt by his raking fire, while they were forced, with their heads round, by the change the wind made in the heat of action.
SIR EDWARD HUGHES’S ENGAGEMENT IN THE EAST INDIES
WITH M. SUFFREIN, THE 12TH APRIL 1782.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM SIR EDWARD HUGHES TO MR STEPHENS, DATED ON BOARD THE SUPERBE, IN TRINCOMALEE BAY, 19TH MAY 1782.

In my last I mentioned the junction of his Majesty’s ships Sultan and Magnanime with the squadron on the 30th of March. Both ships were then very sickly, and much reduced by the scurvy; but as I had on board the squadron a reinforcement of troops for this garrison, and a quantity of military stores, I judged it most for the public service, especially as I knew the enemy’s squadron was to the southward, not to return to Madras to land the sick and scorbutive of these two ships, but to proceed directly for Trincomalé, and there to land the reinforcement and military stores, as well as the sick of the Sultan and Magnanime, without either seeking or shunning the enemy.

In pursuance of this resolution, I fled with the squadron to the southward; and, on the 6th of April, fell in with a French ship, last from Mauritius, having on board dispatches from France for their Commanders in Chief by sea and land. This ship was chased on shore, and burnt near Tranquebar, the officers and men escaping with the dispatches.

On the 8th, about noon, I came in sight of the enemy’s squa-
SIR E. HUGHES'S ENGAGEMENT.

Drone; consisting of 18 sail, in the N. E. quarter; and continued my course for this place, on the 9th, 10th, and 11th, the enemy still in sight; on the 11th, having made the coast of Ceylon, about 60 leagues to windward of Trincomalé, I bore away for that place. On the 12th, at day-light, the position of the enemy's squadron being altered by my bearing away, so as to give them the wind of ours, I discovered them crowding all the sail they could set after us; and their copper-bottomed ships coming fast up with the ships in our rear, I therefore determined to engage them.

At nine in the forenoon, I made the signal for the ships in our squadron to form the line of battle ahead on the starboard tack, at two cables length distance from each other. The enemy then bearing N. by E. distant about six miles, and the wind at N. by E., they continued maneouvring their ships, and changing their positions in their line, till fifteen minutes past noon, when they bore away to engage us; five sail of their van stretching along to engage the ships of our van, and the other seven sail steering directly on our centre ships, the Superbe, the Monmouth her second ahead, and the Monarca her second after.

At half past one, the engagement began in the van of both squadrons, three minutes after I made the signal for battle. The French Admiral in the Hero, and his second after, the L'Orient, bore down on the Superbe within pistol-shot. The Hero continued her position, giving and receiving a severe fire for nine minutes; and then stood on, greatly damaged, to attack the Monmouth, at that time engaged with another of the enemy's ships, making room for the ships in his rear to come up to the attack.
of our centre, where the engagement was hottest. At three, the Montnouth had her mizen-mast shot away, and, in a few minutes after, her main-mast, and bore out of the line to leeward. At forty minutes past three, the wind unexpectedly continuing far northerly, without any sea-breeze, and being careful not to entangle our ships with the shore, I made the signal for the squadron to wear, and haul their wind in a line of battle, ahead, on the larboard tack, still engaging the enemy. At forty minutes past five, being in fifteen fathom water, and apprehensive left the Monmouth might, in her disabled state, drift too near the shore, I made the signal for the squadron to prepare to anchor. At forty minutes past six, the enemy's squadron drew off in great disorder to the eastward, and the engagement ceased; their Admiral having shifted his flag from the Hero to the French Hannibal, on account of the Hero's disabled state; and soon after I anchored with the squadron, the Superbe close to the Monmouth, in order to repair our damages, which, on board the Superbe and Monmouth, were very great in the hulls, masts, sails, and rigging; and almost all the ships had suffered considerably in their masts, sails, and rigging.

Much about this time, the French frigate La Fine, being ordered, I suppose, to tow and assist their disabled ship the Hero, fell on board his Majesty's ship the Isis, and had actually struck his colours to her; but taking advantage of the darkness of the night, and the state the Isis was in, just come out of action, in which she had a number of men killed and wounded, and otherwise ill manned, the frigate got clear of the Isis and escaped.
SIR E. HUGHES'S ENGAGEMENT.

An account of the officers and men killed and wounded, on board the several ships of the squadron, is herewith enclosed.

On the morning of the 13th, at day-light, I found the enemy's squadron had anchored about five miles without us, in much disorder and apparent distress, but they had lost no lower masts.

Both squadrons were busily employed in repairing damages, drawing into order for defence, the enemy seeming to apprehend an attack from us; and I myself uncertain if they would not renew the engagement in order to get hold of the Monmouth.

In these situations, both squadrons continued at anchor till the 19th, in the morning, when the enemy's got under sail with the land wind, and stood out to sea close hauled; and at noon tacked with the sea breeze, and stood in for the body of our squadron, as if with intent to attack; but after coming within two miles of us, finding us prepared to receive them, they again tacked, and stood to the eastward by the wind; and I have not since been able to learn certainly where they are gone. Having resitted the Monmouth in the best manner our situation would admit, with jury, main, and mizen-masts, I sailed with his Majesty's squadron for this place on the 22d, and anchored here on the evening of the same day, immediately landing the reinforcement and military stores destined for the garrison, and the sick and wounded.

In this situation of the squadron and its men, I thought it best for his Majesty's service, to remain at anchor here, and to set about the repairs of the hulls, masts, and rigging of the several ships.
NAVAL TACTICS.

ships, while the sick enjoy every benefit of fresh meat, vegetables, and wine, on shore for their recovery.

I have the satisfaction to inform their Lordships, that I shall be able to re-mast the Monmouth by the end of this month, from the spare stores on board of the several ships; and that the damage they sustained in the last engagement will be every way made good about that time.

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ABSTRACT OF THE OFFICERS AND MEN KILLED AND WOUNDED ON BOARD SEVERAL SHIPS OF THE BRITISH SQUADRON.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Wounded</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superbe</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exeter</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnanime</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouth</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monarca</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burford</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hero</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sultan</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the killed were the following Officers:

Superbe, two Lieutenants.—Master.
Monmouth, one Lieutenant of Marines.
Worcester, one Lieutenant.
Burford, one Lieutenant of Marines.—Names not mentioned.
SIR E. HUGHES'S ENGAGEMENT.


The French squadron, consisting of twelve ships and frigates, commanded by M. Suffrein; the British squadron, consisting of eleven ships and frigates, commanded by Sir Edward Hughes.

Sir Edward Hughes, in his letter of the 10th May, acquaints us, that while he was on his way down the coast of Coromandel, from the northward to Trincomalé Bay, he came 'in sight of the enemy's squadron, consisting of 18 sail, in the north-east quarter, about noon, on the 8th of April: That he continued his course; but the enemy following, kept in sight of him during the 9th, 10th, and 11th; and having made the coast of the island of Ceylon on the 11th, about 15 leagues off Trincomalé, he bore away for that place.

On the morning of the 12th of April, at day-light, perceiving that the enemy had got the wind of his squadron, by reason of his bearing away during the night; and perceiving also that, by crowding every sail, their copper-bottomed ships were coming fast up with the ships in his rear, he therefore came to the resolution to wait for and engage him.

At nine in the forenoon, a signal was made for the British squadron to form the line of battle ahead, on the starboard tack,
at two cables length distance from each other; the enemy being directly to windward, distant about six miles, and the wind N. by E.

The enemy continued manœuvring their ships, and changing their positions in the line, till fifteen minutes past noon, when they bore away to engage us; five sail of their van stretching along to engage the ships of our van, while the other seven sail steered directly on the ships of our centre.

Plate XXI. fig. 1. A, The British squadron on the starboard tack, formed in line of battle ahead, at two cables astern.

F, The enemy right to windward, bearing N. by E. distant six miles, by crowding sail fast coming on.

Fig. 2. B, The van of the British, consisting of four ships.
A, The centre, consisting of three ships.
C, The rear, consisting of four ships.
G, The van of the enemy, consisting of five ships, stretching along to engage the four ships in the van of the British.

F, The French Admiral, with the other seven ships of their line, steering directly on to the centre of the British, consisting of the Superbe and her two seconds, viz. the Monmouth ahead, and the Monarca astern.

Fig. 3. F, The French Admiral in the Hero, with the L'Orient his second astern, bearing to attack the Superbe. It is said the Hero came within pistol-shot.
H H, The other five ships of the enemy supporting the Hero in the attack of the centre.

A, The British Admiral, in the Superbe, receiving the fire of the Hero, within pistol-shot, as it is said.

B, The four ships in the van of the British, sustaining the attack from the five sail of the enemy.

C, The four ships in the rear of the British which seem not to have been much engaged.

G, The five ships in the van of the enemy attacking the van.

Plate XXII. Fig. 4. F, Suffrein in the Hero, after having been greatly damaged by the fire of the British Admiral, A, stood on to the attack of the Monmouth, E, who was engaged with another of the seven ships; making room at the same time for others of the ships in his rear to get up in succession to the attack of the centre, and where it is said the engagement was the hottest.

C, The Monmouth, about three o'clock falling out of the line, after having lost her mizen-mast and her main-mast.

B, The four ships in the van, sustaining the attack from the five ships of the enemy.

Fig. 5. At forty minutes past five, the wind unexpectedly continuing far northerly, without any prospect of a sea breeze, and careful therefore not to entangle our ships with the shore of Ceylon, Sir Edward Hughes made signal for the squadron to wear and haul their wind in a line of battle ahead on the larboard tack, the engagement continuing all the while.
At forty minutes past five, being in fifteen fathoms water, and apprehensive lest the Monmouth, in the disabled state she was, might drift too near the shore, the signal was made for the squadron to prepare to come to an anchor.

At forty minutes past six, the enemy's squadron drawing off to the eastward in great disorder, the engagement ceased. M. Surpréin, on account of the disabled state of the Hero, shifting his flag from that ship to the French Hannibal.

A, The ships of the British squadron in the act of wearing, and while exposed to a raking fire from the enemy, after having quitted their starboard position. B B B.

F, the enemy's squadron.

W, The wind at north.

Fig. 6. The British ships having wore, and withdrawn to leeward, in manner like the system of defence already observed to have often been practised by the enemy, are now with their heads to the east at A, when the action was renewed from the larboard guns, and continued above an hour; but the apprehension of the Monmouth's getting ashore still continuing, the signal was made for the squadron to come to an anchor.

F, The French Admiral not choosing to renew an attack, which, according to the above mentioned system, might have been attended at this time with much loss, drew off his ships in great disorder to the eastward, after having quitted their starboard position, G G; but whether this was effected by wearing or tacking the squadron, is not mentioned.
REMARKABLE PARTICULARS OF THE BATTLE OFF CEYLON,
12TH APRIL 1782.

That it was on the same day in which Lord Rodney fought and beat Count de Grasse, in the battle between Dominica and Guadaloupe, in the West Indies, the opposite quarter of the globe.

That the protection of his slow-sailing vessels, who were in danger of being overtaken by the swift-sailing vessels of an enemy who had been in pursuit of his squadron for four days, was the reason which induced Sir Edward Hughes to abide an engagement, which otherwise (in this case as well as in his former battle) he was inclined to have avoided; and it sufficiently illustrates the difficulty and danger, not to say impracticability, of a fleet making off to leeward, as has been before demonstrated.

M. Suffrein not having had the hoped for success in the attack upon the rear of the British squadron the 17th February, his attempt upon the van, equally well concerted on this occasion, evidently proves him to be an officer of genius and great enterprise.

If M. Suffrein had wind enough first to bring down the van of his fleet to the attack of the British, and afterwards to bring up the rear division to support it, even within pistol shot of the British centre; and if the ships in the British rear, could not in time get up to annoy a crippled enemy, this the more particularly illustrates
illuminates the propriety and practicability of bringing up and
directing the whole, or any part of a force, against a smaller
part of the force of an enemy; and that the effect ought to have
important consequences, in battles at sea, as well as in battles at
land.

But at the same time that it proves the above, it also proves
this, that though the British squadron was at first inclined to avoid
battle, yet those ships which were attacked, being once engaged,
threw no inclination to quit the field to a superior force, or to
give room to the fresh ships astern, even though they could have
got up to their assistance.

The apprehension of the danger of a lee-throe, though it may
excite Sir Edward for wearing with his squadron while un-
der the attack, and in the face of the enemy, as in fig. 5.; and
though he renewed the action on the contrary tack, as in fig. 6.;
yet the enemy may say, (as many British commanders on the
like occasion have said of the enemy), that Sir Edward was beat,
as his fleet had been completely driven out of their first line.

To which it will be answered: If Sir Edward, from the im-
potential danger of a lee-throe, was forced to this manœuvre of
wearing, he did thereby renew his line of battle in strong position
to leeward, and in the same manner which the French fleets have
done on every former occasion, whenever they have been attacked
from the windward; and, as it was in M. Suffren’s option, and
he did not think it fit to come down and renew the action, it may
be admitted that this may be called a drawn battle. But in another
view, if it is considered that the British squadron came to an
anchor

* The Island of Ceylon.
anchor on the spot, that they kept position of the field of battle, and that M. Suffren's fairly drew off his ships; by the laws of war, the victory should be adjudged to Sir Edward Hughes, the British Admiral. Again, to return to M. Suffren's first battle, that of the 17th February: By the British squadron putting about their ships' heads to the enemy, and thereby forcing him to go off when he might have continued the engagement; the victory, therefore, on this occasion, also ought to be determined for the British squadron.

In considering the power of cannon that, and bringing to our recollection the little effect sometimes of a cannonade, after having been kept up for above three hours, we cannot help remarking, on this occasion, the cannonade, of nine minutes duration only, which so much disabled the Hero, M. Suffren's ship. Her opponent, the Superbe, the British Admiral, during the engagement, had 51 men killed and 96 wounded; and the Mompounth, her second, 25 men killed and 102 wounded.

FINIS.