

and especially the capital. On his march he learned that a detachment of Americans was posted at Congaroo Creek, and he immediately hastened to the spot. The enemy, by breaking down a bridge, endeavoured to impede the progress of the British troops; but the latter advanced with surprising quickness: a party of them waded through the river, drove the enemy from its banks, and secured a passage for the rest of the army. After this, lord Rawdon made many attempts to bring Greene to action; but the cautious American, instructed by experience, skilfully avoided an encounter. Lord Rawdon's health soon after this obliged him to return to England, when the command in South Carolina devolved on colonel Stuart. In a little time, Greene, having both reinforced his army in number, and improved his troops by discipline, resolved to attack the British forces. On the 8th of September, he put his design in execution, and attacked colonel Stuart at the Eutaws.—Great numbers were killed on both sides, but without producing any decisive event, though the result, upon the whole, was in favour of the enemy; and the British, from this time, were reduced to the necessity of confining their operations to the vicinity of Charleston.

After the battle of Guilford, lord Cornwallis had marched to Wilmington, in North Carolina, from whence he proceeded in his intended expedition into Virginia. His progress was for some time unresisted, and signalized by the destruction of all the stores and military resources by which the enemy had organized their resistance in that province. At Halifax he defeated some of the enemy's troops, and in less than a month he made good his march from Wilmington to Petersburg. On the 20th of May, he formed a junction with the army which Philips had commanded, and had the farther gratification of finding it reinforced by one thousand eight hundred men, from the head-quarters of general Clinton. The only force which his lordship had to encounter in Virginia was that under the command of La Fayette—a force so indifferently appointed that in writing his military despatches, his lordship expressed the most unqualified assurance of being able to overtake and subdue them. The marquis, however, not only eluded pursuit, but contrived incessantly to harass the outposts of the British, till the accumulating misfortunes of the British cause enabled him to change his desultory warfare into a more effective plan of hostilities.

But it was reserved for the genius of Washington, by one important blow, to put an end to this harassing and tedious campaign. Sir Henry Clinton, instead of reinforcing the British army in Virginia, bent his whole attention to the defence of New-York, against which he apprehended an attack from the combined armies of France and America. To confirm him in this apprehension, the genius of Washington devised a stratagem, which successfully imposed on the sagacity, or rather credulity, of the British commander-in-chief. General Clinton had intercepted many of the American despatches in the course of his command, and published them in the New-York papers. Washington, now, to impose upon him, wrote letters to various officers, declaring that the only effectual way of saving Virginia was by attacking New-York, in conjunction with the French troops, which he asserted would be soon attempted; for that he was much alarmed at the success of a general, whom, from experience, he knew to be so fertile in resources, so vigorous in decision, and so prompt and expeditious in improving every advantage! These letters were, according to the writer's intention, also intercepted, and completely imposed upon the British commander-in-chief. Still farther to encourage the deception, Washington, accompanied by the principal officers of his staff, and attended by the engineers, reconnoitred the island of New-York closely on both sides from the opposite shore; and to render appearances more certain, took plans of all the works, under the fire of their batteries. At this time, the arrival of the count de Grasse was hourly looked for by the combined generals, who resolved to proceed by forced marches to Virginia, not doubting that the mass of land and sea-forces, which would then be united would overwhelm lord Cornwallis, unassisted as he must be by the commander-in-chief. On the 19th of August, they commenced their

march; and Clinton considered their departure merely in the light of a feint to cover their designs on New-York. They, however, proceeded to Virginia, where they formed a junction with the army of La Fayette. About the same time, de Grasse arrived with his fleet from Europe, and blocked up York river with the ships, while his land-forces effected a junction with the Americans.

Intelligence had been despatched by sir George Rodney to admiral Graves, that the French fleet was destined for the Chesapeake, and that sir Samuel Hood was on his way to the same place, in expectation of meeting with admiral Graves and the New-York squadron; but the despatches having been unfortunately intercepted, did not reach the admiral. Sir Samuel Hood arrived off the Chesapeake on the 25th of August, and being disappointed in his expectations of finding admiral Graves there, proceeded to New-York, which he reached on the 28th; and three days after the united squadrons sailed for the Chesapeake, where they arrived on the 5th of September, with nineteen ships of the line, when they discovered the French fleet at anchor, amounting to twenty-four sail of the line. A partial engagement took place, in which several British ships were considerably damaged, but without any decisive event on either side. The hostile armaments continued in sight of each other for five successive days; but tempestuous weather having considerably increased the damage of the British fleet, they returned to New-York to refit. Meanwhile, Barras, who had succeeded M. de Torney in commanding the French naval force on the North American station, formed a junction with de Grasse, by which means the British army under lord Cornwallis was enclosed and surrounded by an immense naval force, and an army of twenty-one thousand men, while his own corps did not exceed six thousand.

Conceiving it impossible that sir Henry Clinton could be so completely outwitted as he evidently was, lord Cornwallis expected speedy succours, and made the most vigorous dispositions for defending himself till they should arrive: he contracted his posts, and concentrated his means of defence, while the enemy instantaneously occupied those positions which the British general had abandoned. The trenches were opened by both armies in the night between the 6th and 7th of October; the batteries were covered with little less than one hundred pieces of heavy ordnance; and their attacks were carried on with the utmost energy. In a few days, most of the British guns were silenced, and the defence rendered hopeless. An express, however, having arrived from New-York, informing lord Cornwallis that he might rely on receiving immediate succours, he strenuously persevered in his resistance. Two redoubts on the left of the British greatly impeded the progress of the siege. The second parallel of the enemy being now finished, they resolved to open their batteries on those works on the 14th of October. The British forces employed every effort to defend the fortifications, but were overborne by the immense superiority of number. Lord Cornwallis saw that it would be impossible to withstand a general assault, for which the enemy was now prepared. Finding no succours likely to arrive, and himself surrounded on every side, he conceived a design of forcing his way through a part of the enemy, and making his escape; but, on mature deliberation, he found it would be impossible to effect it. Thus hemmed in by a very superior army, through no rashness of his own, but in the skilful and vigorous execution of his part of a concerted plan, this brave general had no alternative, but either to sacrifice his gallant army without answering any purpose, or to surrender. On the latter of these he at last resolved; and on the 19th of October surrendered by an honourable capitulation. The army, consisting of between five and six thousand men, capitulated to general Washington; but such was the number of sick and wounded, that there were only three thousand eight hundred capable of bearing arms: the vessels in the harbour surrendered to count de Grasse. At length, sir Henry Clinton set out from New-York to attempt the relief of lord Cornwallis, two months after the departure of Washington and Rochambeau had left him at liberty to proceed to the relief of the distressed army. He brought with him seven thousand land-forces, with a fleet which was now reinforced by admiral

Digby, consisting of twenty-five ships of the line. He had previously informed lord Cornwallis, that the fleet might be expected to sail from New-York on or about the 5th of October; and afterward from the assurances given him by the admiral, that it might pass the bar by the 12th of October, wind and weather permitting. Yet the fleet did not finally leave Sandy Hook till the 19th, the day on which lord Cornwallis surrendered! The troops were embarked, and the fleet put to sea; but it was with extreme mortification that, when it arrived off the capes of Virginia on the 24th of the month, they received such accounts as led them to believe that the fate of the unfortunate army was already decided. They, however, lingered off the mouth of the Chesapeake until the fact was placed beyond all dispute; and as the relief of lord Cornwallis and his army had been the sole object of the expedition, the admiral determined to return to New-York. The last letter written by lord Cornwallis to the commander-in-chief, acquainting him with the surrender of the posts of York and Gloucester, and relating the cause that led to that event, with the motives which had influenced his own conduct, produced a difference between them, which terminated in an appeal to the public.

Such was the fate of the gallant southern army and its brave commander, from whose skilful enterprises and well-earned reputation the most sanguine hopes were entertained, that the most valuable of the colonies would be recovered, and that the war with them would be brought to a successful termination. The experience which he had derived during his residence there, fully satisfied him, that the information on which the minister and his adherents relied, respecting the friendly disposition of the Americans towards his country, was utterly unfounded; that every attempt to recover the country through the Americans themselves was chimerical, as much as every idea of reducing it by force. He was now convinced, that the plan had been concerted upon mistaken principles; and he had himself fatally learned, that though he, and the troops under his command, had done their utmost, there was almost an equal deficiency of support and co-operation for its execution. The surrender at Yorktown was the concluding scene of offensive war with America. All the profuse expenditure of British wealth, all the mighty efforts of British power, all the splendid achievements of British valour, though guided by British talents and skill, proved ineffectual: the momentous exertions of a war so wasteful of blood and treasure were for ever lost.

The naval occurrences of the year 1781, which now demand our attention, were not inferior in moment to those of a military cast which have just been detailed. Early in the year an expedition was fitted out from the Havana, under the command of Don Galvez, intended against Pensacola; but a violent hurricane, in which four capital ships, with several of inferior consideration, were lost, compelled him to return to port. The fleet was however refitted, and on the 9th of March appeared before Pensacola, with seven or eight thousand troops. After a gallant defence by general Campbell, the place capitulated; and with it fell into the possession of Spain the province of West Florida, one of the principal acquisitions by the treaty of Paris.

It has been already mentioned, that admiral Darby having effected the relief of Gibraltar, endeavoured in vain to bring the Spanish fleet to action; he therefore returned to protect the English channel. In the interim, M. de Guichen, perceiving that the British fleet no longer interposed between Brest and Cadiz, sailed with eighteen ships of the line to join the Spanish fleet, and to support it in the invasion of Minorca, which, next to Gibraltar, was the principal European object of Spanish ambition. They sailed for Cadiz the end of July, having ten thousand troops on board: proceeding with these to the Mediterranean, they left them at Minorca, and returning to the Atlantic, shaped their course to the English channel, with forty-nine ships of the line—a force so formidable, as to threaten at once the interception of our commerce from the West Indies, and even the destruction of the British navy. By this bold manœuvre they hoped at once to prevent succours from being thrown into Minorca, and to intercept our homeward-bound fleets, which were

expected at this time to return, and a large outward-bound convoy, which was on the eve of sailing from Cork; and so little had our ministry either foreseen or suspected their design, that the combined fleets had formed a line from Ushant to the Scilly islands, thus barring the entrance into the English channel, before it was known by the admiralty that they were out at sea. By the timely information of a neutral vessel, admiral Darby, then in the channel, happily escaped falling in with them. The British admiral, therefore, who had only twenty ships of the line under his command, returned to Torbay, there to wait for reinforcements and instructions from the admiralty. Having mustered a fleet of thirty sail of the line, he received orders to put to sea for the protection of our homeward-bound merchantmen; but as the enemy was so much superior to him in numbers, he was instructed to avoid an engagement, unless it were found necessary for the preservation of the convoy.

While the English fleet lay in Torbay waiting reinforcements, the French admiral conceived the project of attacking them in that station, but was overruled by his Spanish colleague. The latter represented the state both of the ships and men, of whom, and of the Spaniards in particular, great numbers were sick, as depriving them in reality of that superiority which they possessed in appearance. They therefore directed their attention solely to the interception of British merchandise, an object which the vigilance of admiral Darby, as soon as he began his cruise upon the coast, sufficiently prevented; and the equinoctial gales coming on soon afterward, the combined fleets were glad to separate, the French returning to Brest, and the Spaniards to their own coasts. The British fleet returned to Plymouth in November, having safely conducted our homeward-bound convoy from the Atlantic.

The French lost no time in refitting their ships; and, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, they proposed to reinforce the count de Grasse with both troops and ships of war in the West, and to support him with stores; to reinforce and supply Suffrein in the East; and to rejoin the Spanish fleet, that they might prevent England from relieving Minorca. The several squadrons and convoys were ordered to sail together, as far as their course lay in the same direction. Admiral Darby heard of these preparations and their object, but without being correctly informed of the force which was to carry them into effect, and which proved to be nineteen sail of the line. He, however, despatched admiral Kempenfeldt with twelve ships of the line, one fifty-gun ship, and four frigates, to intercept the French squadron and convoy. On the 12th of December he descried the enemy, at which time the fleet and convoy were dispersed by a gale of wind, and the latter considerably behind.

The British admiral instantly determined to avail himself of this situation, by first cutting off the convoy, and then engaging the ships of war. For the intended service Kempenfeldt's number of frigates was far too small; yet he succeeded so far as to capture twenty transports and storeships, in which were eleven hundred land-forces, seven hundred seamen, a great quantity of ordnance, arms, warlike stores, camp equipage, clothing, and provisions: many ships, however, were dispersed, and escaped seizure. The French admiral, in the mean time, endeavoured to collect his fleet, and form a line; but night came on before he could accomplish his purpose. Kempenfeldt, still ignorant of the force of the enemy, made preparations for engaging them the following morning; and at daylight, perceiving them at leeward, he formed his line; but on a nearer approach, discovering their strength, he considered it most prudent to decline an engagement. Nor were the French so confident in their superior numbers as to urge the British to battle: both fleets, therefore, parted as by mutual consent. The capture which Kempenfeldt had made was considered to be important; but much dissatisfaction was expressed against the admiralty, for not furnishing that gallant commander with a force sufficient to enable him to seize the convoy, and, at the same time, vanquish the fleet; especially as there were ships lying idle in our harbours, which ought to have been employed in this service.

The war, though by this time very adverse to Holland in other quarters,

had not produced in Europe any decisive engagement with that power. To watch their motions, and annoy their commerce in the North, admiral Parker was despatched from Portsmouth with four ships of the line, and one of fifty guns. After sailing, he was farther joined by several other ships, which augmented his force to six sail of the line, viz. one of eighty guns, two of seventy-four, one sixty-four, one sixty, one of fifty and a frigate of forty-four guns, which the admiral was obliged through necessity, to admit as a ship of the line. The Dutch admiral, Zoutman, with a valuable convoy for the North, had sailed from the Texel with eight ships of the line, mounting from seventy-four to fifty-four guns, and ten frigates. He was also joined by a large American frigate, carrying on one deck thirty-six forty-two pounders, and as large in length as a ship of the line. Early in the morning of the 5th of August, 1781, the hostile fleets came in sight of each other on the Doggerbank, and, without any manœuvring or delay, approximated within pistol-shot to one of the bloodiest actions that ever was fought between the same number of ships. After a cannonade of three hours and forty minutes, both fleets lay like logs in the water, incapable of action or mutual annoyance; and it could only be determined which of them had the preferable claim to victory, by comparing the destruction of ships and havoc of men on either side. The English counted one hundred and four killed, and three hundred and fifty-nine wounded. The Dutch did not acknowledge their full loss; but it appeared, by authentic private intelligence, that it exceeded eleven hundred men, in killed, wounded, and drowned. One of their sixty-eight gun ships sunk in the night after the engagement; and by the circumstance of the English having brought off her colours, it appears that the action off the Doggerbank was, on the whole, in favour of the English arms. The other large ships belonging to the Dutch squadron were rendered almost unfit for repair. Admiral Zoutman returned to the Texel; but neither himself nor his convoy presumed afterward to proceed on their destination. Though in this, as in Kempenfeldt's affair, the public applauded the valour of their seamen, yet they were extremely dissatisfied with the conduct of the admiralty, in allotting to admiral Parker so small a force, when the object was so important, and the acquisition might have been rendered so secure and easy. The admiral himself justly complained of this circumstance, and, openly censuring the admiralty, resigned his command.

A squadron of British ships, under the command of commodore Johnstone, had been appointed in the spring of this year to annoy the Dutch in another quarter. They were to attack the cape of Good Hope, a settlement extremely valuable to the United Provinces; and having done that, the expedition was to proceed to the Spanish settlement of Buenos Ayres, in South America, where an insurrection of a formidable nature had taken place, which had given great alarm to the court of Madrid. The Dutch, aware of their inability to defend the cape, applied for assistance to France. The latter being also deeply interested in preventing England from obtaining so important a possession, ordered M. de Suffrein, in his way to India, to watch the motions of the British squadron. The force under commodore Johnstone consisted of one ship of seventy-four guns, one of sixty-four, and three of fifty guns each, besides several frigates, a bomb vessel, a fireship, and some sloops of war. The land-force which he took out consisted of three new regiments of a thousand men each. Several outward-bound East Indiamen and store ordnance vessels proceeded under the escort of this convoy; and the whole fleet, including transports and armed ships, amounted to more than forty sail. With these commodore Johnstone stopped at the Cape de Verde islands, for water and fresh provisions; and for the purpose of collecting these supplies, a great part of the crews, suspecting no enemy at hand, were dispersed on shore. At this moment, the French squadron, which consisted of five ships of the line, with a body of land-forces, having obtained information of the situation of the British, expected to take them by surprise. On the 16th of April, the French admiral, leaving his convoy at a distance, attacked the British squadron in port Prava, in the island of St. Jago. He advanced

as if to certain victory, but was speedily convinced of his mistake. The British force, though surprised, was so far from being intimidated, that they not only rallied, but entirely beat off the enemy, with considerable loss of men and damage to the shipping. Suffrein, disappointed in this attempt, made the best of his way to the cape, where, by means of a junction with the Dutch garrison, he knew he should be able to defend it against the British force; and commodore Johnstone, finding, on his arrival, that success would be impracticable, forbore the attempt. Soon after, meeting with five richly laden Dutch East Indiamen, homeward-bound, he captured four of them, and burned the other; after which, perceiving that he could not accomplish the original purpose of his expedition, he returned to England with his prizes.

LETTER XIV.

Naval Exploits of Great Britain—Proceedings in the British Parliament—Resignation of Lord North—Success of Lord Rodney in the West Indies—Defeat of the combined Fleets—Relief of Gibraltar—Preliminaries of Peace signed at Versailles. A. D. 1782—1784.

THE French ministry, during the campaign of 1781, appear to have pursued the same plan of operation that had been defeated in the preceding; namely, to overpower the English force in the West Indies, and afterward compel Britain to relinquish her transatlantic colonies. There were already eight sail of the line at St. Domingo and Martinique, with a considerable body of land-forces. On the 22d of March, count de Grasse, with twenty ships of the line, one of fifty-four guns, and six thousand troops, sailed for the West Indies, with an immense convoy, amounting to no less than two hundred and fifty ships, and arrived off Martinique. In the end of April, admiral Rodney, having despatched three of his ships, under admiral Hotham, to escort the St. Eustatius booty to Britain, had only twenty-one ships of the line remaining, while de Grasse, being reinforced from Martinique, had twenty-four. Rodney, himself remaining with general Vaughan at St. Eustatius, despatched sir Samuel Hood towards Martinique, in order to intercept de Grasse's fleet and convoy. On the 28th of April, admiral Hood was informed, by his advanced cruisers, that the enemy were approaching in the channel between St. Lucia and Martinique. The next morning, he descried the fleet before the convoy; and though he had only eighteen ships of the line to encounter twenty-four, and the French had the wind in their favour, the British commander determined to hazard an engagement. With great skill and dexterity he endeavoured to gain the wind, and come to close action. De Grasse, however, declined a decisive engagement; and, from his windward position, being enabled to preserve the distance which he chose, he began to cannonade so far from the British ships, as to admit of little execution on either side. During the first conflict, the British van, however, and the foremost ships of the centre, after repeated endeavours, at last succeeded in approaching nearer to the enemy; and having received a very heavy fire, were considerably damaged in their masts, hulls, and rigging, before the rest of our ships came up to their assistance. Finding his wounded ships in a very shattered condition, admiral Hood thought it prudent during the night to sail for Antigua. In the absence of our fleet, the marquis de Bouillé attempted to reduce St. Lucia on the 10th of May; but by the vigorous resistance of the garrison he was compelled to relinquish the design. Admiral Rodney now found it necessary, instead of spending more time at St. Eustatius, to employ his whole force against the French armament: he therefore sailed to Antigua, and as soon as the ships were prepared, proceeded towards Barbadoes.

At the instant that admiral Rodney, with the fleets from Antigua, arrived at Barbadoes, a French squadron, with a considerable body of land-forces, under the command of M. de Blanchelande, late governor of St. Vincents, appeared off the island of Tobago. On the 23d of May, the day on which