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DOWNING STREET, APRIL 11, 1808.

Dispatches, of which the following are Copies, were yesterday received by Viscount CASTLEREAGH, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, from Major-General SHERBROOKE, commanding his Majesty's troops in Sicily.

MY LORD, *Messina, February 8, 1808.*

As an opportunity offers of writing to England by a private ship, which runs without convoy, I profit of the conveyance to inform your Lordship, that his Sicilian Majesty's garrison of Reggio surrendered to the French on the 3d instant. General Regnier's operations in Calabria will now, consequently, be directed against Scylla alone; which place has been invested for nearly six weeks. He has been so fortunate as to possess himself of four Sicilian gun-boats, each carrying a twenty-four-pounder, all of which he has landed. Our greatest efforts have, for a length of time past, been made to prevent his bringing battering cannon into this part of Calabria; but fortune, by throwing those into his hands, has rendered our endeavours nugatory.

As in my former letters I have given your Lordship my opinion of what the probable fate of Scylla must be, when the enemy can bring guns of heavy metal into batteries against it at breaking distance, it is needless for me now to say more upon the subject.

I am extremely sorry to inform your Lordship, that endeavouring to recover the Sicilian gun-boats which fell into the enemy's hands, on the evening of the 30th ultimo, the Delight sloop of war most unfortunately got on shore on the Calabrian coast. It being found impossible to get her off, she was next day burnt, to prevent her being of further use to the enemy.

It is with the most heartfelt concern I add, that on this melancholy occasion Captain Hand-

field, (with several of his ship's company), was killed; and that Captain Seccombe, of the Glatton, (who was at the time on board the Delight), was very dangerously wounded, and, with the remainder, made prisoners. Captain Seccombe was permitted, the next day, to come over to Messina on his parole; but on the 3d instant he died of his wounds.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) J. C. SHERBROOKE, Maj. Gen.

MY LORD, *Messina, February 23, 1808.*

I have the honour to state for your Lordship's information, that I have found it expedient, and, to the best of my judgment, for the good of his Majesty's service, to withdraw the British troops from the castle of Scylla, which was evacuated accordingly by my order on the 17th instant; the place was immediately entered by the French troops; and it is now in their possession.

I beg leave also to lay before your Lordship the inclosed report made to me by Lieutenant-Colonel Robertson, late Commandant of Scylla, as it contains a detailed account of the events as they occurred, from the 31st December last, (the day on which the enemy came before the place), until the time of its evacuation; which measure, I am led to hope, will not only appear to your Lordship to have been absolutely necessary under the existing circumstances, but that our troops were not withdrawn until no other means remained of preventing the brave garrison falling into the enemy's hands. I likewise transmit a return of the killed and wounded of the detachments forming the British garrison of Scylla during the siege.

Having already, on a former occasion, had the honour of submitting my opinion, that the castle of Scylla would be no longer tenable whenever the enemy should succeed in bringing battering guns against it, the fall of this place

will excite no surprise in your Lordship's mind, when you perceive the very formidable force with which it was attacked, and the very ample means with which the enemy was provided to possess himself of it.

Much reliance has been heretofore placed upon the assistance which might be afforded by the gun and mortar-boats in the defence of Scylla, and of the annoyance they might give the enemy in carrying on his approaches; but, unfortunately, the weather from the 11th to the 17th was so stormy, that it was quite impossible for them to be employed with any hopes of advantage.

On the morning of the 15th instant, Lieutenant-Colonel Robertson having informed me, by telegraph, that the parapet of the work was destroyed, and that all his guns were either dismounted or disabled, I felt very anxious indeed to withdraw the troops, but a continuance of the gale rendered this impracticable till the 17th, when, during temporary lull, (every necessary arrangement having been previously made), the transports' boats, protected by the men of war's launches, ran over from the Faros, and succeeded in bringing away the whole of the garrison, who effected their retreat by the sea staircase to the boats, when they were exposed to a most tremendous galling fire both of grape and musketry from the enemy, till such time as they could pull out of the reach of it. I am happy to add, that the loss of the troops in this exposed situation was only four killed and five wounded, and that of the seamen, one killed and ten wounded.

Captain Otway of the navy, who commands the ships of war stationed here, intrusted the execution of this dangerous piece of service to Captain Trollope, of the Electra. More judgment, coolness, and intrepidity was never displayed on any occasion; and I feel myself par-

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