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FROM TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22. TO FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25. 1801.

WHITEHALL, DEC. 21.

The King was this day pleased to present Doctor Andrew Brown to the church and parish of Tranent, in the presbytery and county of Haddington, vacant by the death of Mr Hugh Cunynghame, late Minister there.

ADMIRALTY-OFFICE, DEC. 22.

Copy of a letter from the Right Hon. Lord Keith, K. B. Commander in Chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels in the Mediterranean, to Evan Nepean, Esq. dated at sea, the 14th Sept. 1801.

SIR,

It is with great concern that I acquaint you, for the information of their Lordships, of the capture of his Majesty's ship the Swiftsure, by Gantheaume's squadron, on his return to France, after his unsuccessful attempt to debark troops on the coast of Egypt; I enclose a copy of Captain Halliwell's communication of that unfortunate event; and have the honour to be,

Sir, &c. KEITH.

On board L'Indivisible, in Toulon Road, 24th July 1801.

My Lord,

It is with infinite concern, I have to inform your Lordship, of the capture of his Majesty's late ship Swiftsure, by a Squadron of French ships under the command of Rear-Admiral Gantheaume.

Having separated from my convoy, consisting of carrels and light transports, on the 22d ult. I was making the best of my way to Malta, when on the morning of the 24th, at half past three, the wind at N. W. Cape Derne, bearing S. W. distant about seven leagues, we discovered five sail to leeward of us nearly hull-down.

As Lieutenant Sheppard, of the Pigmy cutter, had informed me on the 19th that an enemy's Squa-

dron had quitted Durasso on the 7th, where they had attempted to land their troops, I concluded the ships in sight were those of which he had given me intelligence, and made all the sail possible to get from them: at sunrise my suspicions were realized: we clearly distinguished four of them to be of the line, the other a large frigate, and their signal flags soon pointed them out to be enemies. At half past five two of the line of battle ships tacked, by signal, and stood on till they fetched into our wake, while the other two and the frigate stood upon the same tack with us. At eight o'clock the two ships and frigate having fore-reached considerably on us, tacked and stood towards us until they got on our lee quarter, when they tacked again. From their great superiority of sailing they closed with us so fast as to be nearly within gun-shot by two P. M., and as the ships astern were coming up very fast, I determined on bearing down and engaging the two ships and frigate to leeward, hoping to disable one of them before the whole squadron could be brought into action, and thereby effect our escape by getting to leeward of them: three o'clock I bore up and steered to pass astern of the sternmost ship, all our steering sails set on the starboard side, when the enemy tacked and stood towards us. At half past three the Indivisible, of 80 guns, bearing Rear-Admiral Gantheaume's flag, and the Dix Aout, of 74 guns, being in close order, and within half-gun-shot of us, opened their fire, which was instantly answered, and a warm action ensued. Their great superiority in point of sailing gave them every advantage of position, and baffled all our attempts to get to leeward of them. At 37 minutes past 4, the Jean Bart and Constitution, of 74 guns, being within gun-shot, and closing upon our starboard quarter very fast, the Indivisible almost on board of us on our larboard bow, and the

Dix Aout on our larboard quarter, our fore-yard and fore-top-sail-yard shot away, all our gunning and part of our standing rigging cut to pieces, the fore-mast, mizen-mast, and main-yard badly wounded, our deck lumbered with the wreck and sails, all hopes of making our escape or falling in with any succour being cut off, and only one of the enemy's ships apparently much damaged, I thought farther resistance, in our crippled state, would be exposing the lives of valuable men without any advantage to their country resulting from it, with pain, therefore, I ordered his Majesty's colours to be struck, after an action of one hour and seven minutes.

Most sincerely, my Lord, do I lament our having been opposed to so very superior a force, as from the steady and gallant conduct of the officers and men I had the honour to command on this occasion and with whom I had been acting nearly four years on various services, I have not a doubt of what would have been the issue of a contest on more equal terms. Our loss has been principally in masts, yards, sails, and rigging, having only two men killed, Lieutenant Davis, and seven men wounded (two of whom are since dead of their wounds,) the enemy's intention being to disable us in our rigging, in which they succeeded too well; at the commencement of this unequal contest, we were eighty-six men short of complement, and had sixty-nine sick, those who returned from the army before Alexanaria, having introduced a bad fever into the ship.

Four hundred men were put on board the Swiftsure on the evening of her capture, many of the prisoners removed, and the ship in so crippled a state as to render it necessary to take her in tow; the next day carpenters and seamen from all the ships were sent on board to repair her damages, and soldiers to complete her number to seven hundred;

[Price Sixpence.]

