

WAR DEPARTMENT.

Downing-Street, January 25, 1812.

A DISPATCH, of which the following is a copy, has been received at the Office of the Earl of Liverpool, addressed to his Lordship by Lieutenant-General E. Maitland.

MY LORD, *Messina, November 10, 1811.*

ON the 26th of October, I received information from Captain Duncan, of His Majesty's ship *Imperieuse*, that a small convoy of the enemy had taken refuge at *Palinuro*, where it was protected by some works, and a body of troops posted upon a commanding ground; Captain Duncan requested a detachment of His Majesty's troops to co-operate with His Majesty's ships *Imperieuse* and *Thames* to take or destroy this convoy, which consisted of nine gun-boats and twenty merchant vessels, laden with naval stores for the enemy's ships of war at *Naples*.

A detachment of the 62^d regiment was, therefore, embarked on board of His Majesty's ship *Thames*, consisting of two hundred and fifty men, under the command of Major Darley; and I have the satisfaction to report to your Lordship, that this little expedition has had complete success.

I enclose Major Darley's report of this service; and with the greatest satisfaction I express the high opinion I entertain of the intrepidity and judgment of Major Darley, and of the perfect good conduct of all the officers and men employed.

Major Darley states also, that the able manner in which Captain Duncan, in the *Imperieuse*, engaged the enemy's battery and gun-boats (which he silenced) was the prelude to their success, and reflects the highest credit upon that officer; that Captain Napier, of His Majesty's ship *Thames*, landed with His Majesty's troops and marines, and most gallantly set an example to them all, and contributed greatly to the fortunate issue of the attack.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) F. MATTLAND, Lieut. Gen.
To the Right Honourable the Earl of
Liverpool, &c. &c. &c.

SIR, *Melazzo, Nov. 8, 1811.*

IN compliance with your desire, I beg leave to transmit a statement of the enemy's forces at *Palinuro*, under the command of General *Pignatelli Cercaro*, together with a brief account of the action that took place upon our landing.

The force we had to contend with, as far as

could be scrutinized into from the questioning of prisoners, &c. were as follows: three companies of the 2^d or *Queen's* regiment, two of which were rifle, and amounting to three hundred and fifty men; *Corsican* regulars, sixty; artillery, forty-five; civic guard, eighty; with at least four hundred peasantry, armed as light troops, and particularly serviceable over the kind of ground they had to act, thereby making the total amount, nine hundred and thirty-five men.

This force was acknowledged; but from the reinforcements known to be continually accumulating, the enemy are supposed to have been stronger.

I disembarked with fifty of the royal marines, the grenadiers and skirmishers of the 62^d regiment, at about half past three o'clock, P. M. on the 1st instant, leaving Captains *Pollack* and *Irving's* companies to follow. Upon landing, I immediately commenced ascending the heights, when Captain *Oldham* was unfortunately severely wounded; and after some firing, in the hope of opposing our progress, we completely succeeded in gaining them; whereupon I threw out my skirmishers, and formed the remainder to advance upon the enemy, reserving a part to attack (and storm, if possible) the telegraph tower, and another division to keep in check the enemy, who menaced my left, as also to maintain the commanding position on the heights.

The telegraph tower, and fine adjacent position, we shortly got possession of; when my attention was particularly drawn towards the front of our advance, where the enemy had concentrated his main force, and, under a heavy fire, was endeavoring to force his way to the heights, huzzaing and drumming as he advanced, while his riflemen had the same object in view on our left; but the steadiness and superiorly gallant conduct of the officers and men defied the most daring intrepidity; and, after allowing the enemy to advance within a very few yards, and whilst coolly lying on the ground to receive him like British soldiers, the enemy was charged, and routed most completely; when ended the action, without his having the temerity to renew it again. About this period I had to lament the severe loss of Lieutenant *Kay*, 62^d, who was gallantly fighting his skirmishers; and shortly after, Lieutenant *Popon*, of the royal marines.

The loss of the enemy is supposed to be between sixty and seventy in killed and wounded; but I am rather inclined to imagine it more. Lieutenant-Colonel *Matsciola* was severely wounded, with little hopes of recovery.