

THE STORY OF THE SIEGE AND RELIEF OF GIBRALTAR.

BY W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

"Through Calpe's straits survey the steepy shore;
Europe and Afric on each other gaze!
Lands of the dark-eyed maid and dusky Moor
Alike beheld beneath pale Hecate's blaze;
How softly on the Spanish shore she plays,
Disclosing rock, and slope, and forest brown,
Distinct, though darkening with her waning
phase;
But Mauritania's giant-shadows frown,
From mountain-cliff to coast descending down."

Byron.

I INCLUDE the story of the famous siege of Gibraltar in these "Naval Episodes," because its successful termination was mainly due to the relief afforded by our fleets; and so long as England maintains her supremacy at sea, and is thus enabled to supply its garrison with stores and reinforcements, there is no reason to doubt that the fortress of the Mediterranean will always be as impregnable to hostile attack as it was in the years 1779 and 1782.

The importance of this military position can hardly be exaggerated. It is the key of the Mediterranean. Our fleets can shelter under its guns, our traders take refuge in its bay, and it secures the safe passage of the wealth of India, which chiefly reaches us by way of Suez. It is at once a great naval station and a valuable *dépôt* for those articles of British produce intended for the supply of the adjacent parts of the Spanish and African mainlands. Its possession by England has always been the subject of jealousy to the other maritime nations of Europe; but as the trade of India is in our hands, and as we monopolise the commerce of the Levant, we cannot afford to surrender it to any other power. The nation at large is keenly sensible of its value, and, despite the self-denying theories of Mr. Goldwin Smith and others, I believe that the mere hint of its contemplated cession would kindle a burning feeling of wrath and indignation from John o' Groat's house to Land's End.

Gibraltar is situated on the mainland of Spain, fifty-nine miles to the south-east of Cadiz. It stands on the west side of a mountainous promontory which flings a steep,

narrow spur into the sea—called Europa Point—and is connected with the mainland by a flat and sandy isthmus. The length of this peculiar tongue of land is three miles from north to south, and its breadth from half to three-quarters of a mile from east to west. The north and east sides of the rock are perpendicular precipices, and almost inaccessible; the south and west fall seaward in rude, rugged slopes, occasionally broken by flats or terraces. The highest point is 1,439 feet above the ocean level. The town—which is a sort of neutral ground of nations, of Jew and Moor, Spaniard, Greek, and English—lies at the north-western foot of the rock, and consists chiefly of one principal street, about a mile in length. Strong fortifications command the isthmus which links the rock of Gibraltar to the Spanish mainland; batteries bristle on every vantage-point of the promontory; the rock is hollowed with a network of galleries, and honey-combed with embrasures, whence frown the heaviest cannon; ravelins and casemates, bastions and curtains, surround the whole with an impregnable wall of fire; and the most consummate military art has been employed for years in strengthening the rocky fastness which Nature, for defensive purposes, had already made so strong.

Gibraltar was captured by the English, under Sir George Rooke and the Prince of Hesse, in 1704. The courts of Madrid and Paris were so grievously concerned at its loss that they at once attempted its recovery, and a French fleet and a Spanish army made a combined attack in October of the same year. The siege lasted until March, 1705, and cost the enemy no fewer than 10,000 men, including those who died of sickness. A second attempt was made in 1727, which was attended with equally disastrous results.

The prolonged and arduous contest maintained by Great Britain with her revolted colonies in North America, and the war into which she had entered with France, afforded Spain, in 1779, an opportunity of renewing her attempts upon Gibraltar with some pro-

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bability of success. The court of Madrid, therefore, espoused the cause of France, and in the month of June commenced hostilities against Great Britain.

At this time the government of Gibraltar was in the hands of a gallant and experienced officer, who had fought at Minden and seen much brilliant service in the Seven Years' War—General George Augustus Elliott. He was a man as humane as he was brave, very fertile in resources, of inexhaustible energy and determined will, a strict but not pedantic disciplinarian, and very successful in securing the confidence and attachment of his subordinates. His garrison consisted of 5,382 men: viz., General G. A. Elliott, Governor; Lieutenant-General R. Boyd, Lieutenant-Governor; Major-General de la Motte, commanding the Hanoverian Brigade.

	OFFICERS.	STAFF.	SERJTS.	DRUM- MERS.	RANK & FILIP.				
Artillery	25	...	0	...	17	...	15	...	428
12th Regiment	26	...	3	...	29	...	22	...	519
39th "	25	...	4	...	29	...	22	...	503
56th "	23	...	4	...	30	...	22	...	508
58th "	25	...	3	...	23	...	22	...	526
72nd "	29	...	4	...	47	...	22	...	944
Hardensy's*	16	...	13	...	42	...	14	...	367
Reden's*	15	...	12	...	42	...	14	...	361
De la Motte's*	17	...	16	...	42	...	14	...	367
Engineers & Artificers }	8	...	0	...	6	...	2	...	106
	209	...	59	...	313	...	169	...	4,632

In all, 5,382.

Even before the open declaration of war the Spanish government had been taking measures for the reduction of the wonderful rock. A treaty had been entered into with the Moors which cut Gibraltar off from its principal supplies, and large amounts of stores were collected in the Spanish arsenals. On the 21st of June, 1779, an order from Madrid closed the communication between Spain and the garrison, and General Elliott, taking the alarm, vigorously prepared for the defence of the important stronghold committed to his care. Fresh provisions were obtained from Tangier, the outworks were strengthened and repaired, materials were accumulated for the completion of the fortifications, the artillery was augmented by a detachment from the regiments of the line, and the great guns were daily practised. On the 6th of July intelligence was received from England of the outbreak of hostilities

* Hanoveriana.

between Great Britain and Spain, and the siege may be considered to have formally begun.

On the 16th the enemy blocked up the port with a squadron of men-of-war, consisting of two 74's, two frigates, five xebecs, and a number of galleys. This was their first overt movement, but their camp on the isthmus was daily receiving reinforcements of cavalry and infantry, and daily the blockade became more stringent, the object being to reduce the garrison by famine. Meanwhile a general activity reigned throughout the garrison, who were not a little encouraged by the example of the governor; he personally superintended every operation of importance, and was usually present when the workmen paraded at dawn of day. The stores of provisions were unhappily small, for the inhabitants had neglected the orders and warnings of the governor, and, as they could not be supplied from the military rations, they were compelled to quit the place in large numbers to seek subsistence.

The garrison opened fire on Sunday morning, the 12th of September, and in a short time compelled the enemy's advanced guards to retire, and the workmen assembled in the lines to disperse. The forts were too distant to be materially injured, and, the governor's intention being only to disturb their workmen, the firing after a few hours slackened, and a shot was only discharged as the enemy presented themselves. The cannonade was continued the subsequent days as circumstances directed. But the Spaniards soon resumed their works—chiefly at night, to avoid the English fire—and pressed them on with such expedition that their lines by the close of October presented a very formidable appearance.

"Provisions of every kind," says the historian of the siege, "were now becoming very scarce and exorbitantly dear: mutton, 3s. and 3s. 6d. per pound; veal, 4s.; pork, 2s. and 2s. 6d.; a pig's head, 19s.; ducks, from 14s. to 18s. a couple; and a goose a guinea. Fish was equally high, and vegetables were with difficulty to be got for any money; but bread, the great essential of life and health, was the article most wanted. It was about this period that the governor made trial what quantity of rice would suffice a single person for twenty-four hours, and actually lived himself eight days on four

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ounces of rice per day. General Elliott was remarkable for an abstemious mode of living, seldom tasting anything but vegetables, simple puddings, and water, and yet was very hale, and used constant exercise; but the small portion just mentioned would be far from sufficient for a working man kept continually employed, and in a climate where the heat necessarily demands very refreshing nourishment to support nature under fatigue.”

During the remainder of the year the two antagonists continued on much the same footing, both busily engaged in the construction or enlargement of their fortifications—the one for defence, the other for attack; but the scarcity of provisions within



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the garrison increased so much daily that serious apprehensions of a famine began to be entertained. The bakers had long been limited to the quantity of bread to be issued daily to the inhabitants, and sentries were stationed at the wickets where it was delivered, to prevent confusion and riot. The strongest, nevertheless, would gain the advantage, so that numbers of women, children, and persons enfeebled by age or disease frequently returned to their miserable habitations without securing the smallest supply

of that provision which is so needful to human life. Nor were the inhabitants the only sufferers in this scene of distress; many officers and soldiers had families to support out of the rations issued by the victualling office. A soldier, with his wife and three children, would inevitably have been starved to death had it not been for the generous contributions of his corps. One woman actually died through want, and many sank into so pitiable a weakness that it was with difficulty they were recovered. Thistles,

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dandelions, leeks, &c., afforded for some time the nourishment of numbers.

So extreme a want of provisions not unnaturally stimulated invention to supply the deficiency by artificial means. A singular mode of hatching chickens was introduced by the Hanoverians. The eggs were placed, with some cotton, wool, or other warm substance, in a tin case so constructed as to be heated either by a lamp or hot water, and, by a proper regulation of temperature, the eggs were generally hatched in the usual time of a hen's sitting. "A capon (however strange it may appear) was then taught to rear them. To reconcile him to this trust, the feathers were plucked from his breast and belly; he was then gently scoured with a bunch of nettles and placed upon the young hatch, whose downy warmth afforded such comfort to the bared and smarting parts, that he, from that period, reared them up with the care and tenderness of a mother."

Meanwhile the English government was not unmindful of the necessity of affording the beleaguered garrison a speedy relief. Sir George Rodney, who had recently been appointed to the chief naval command in the West Indies, was therefore ordered, on his way thither, to take charge of a large convoy. His fleet consisted of twenty-one sail of the line and nine frigates. While on his outward voyage he captured, on the 1st of January, a Spanish convoy of six ships of war and fifteen merchantmen. Having arrived off Cadiz, he received information that a Spanish fleet of eleven sail of the line, commanded by Admiral Don Juan de Lángara, was cruising in the vicinity of Cape St. Vincent, and, with his usual promptitude, Rodney prepared for action.

The Spanish government had been led to believe that the English admiral, after escorting his storeships to a certain latitude, would proceed with the main body of his fleet to the West Indies, and had, therefore, concluded that the convoy would fall an easy prey to Don Juan's squadron. Bitter, then, was the disappointment of the Spanish grandee when, on coming in sight of the British, his look-out men counted one-and-twenty stately ships of war. Immediately he crowded on all sail to escape, and Rodney as promptly made the signal for a general

chase. The wind blew freshly from the westward, with misty weather, and the fast ships of the British fleet gained rapidly in pursuit. Soon after 4 P.M. four 74-gun ships began firing their bow-chasers on the flying enemy. An hour later, the *Bien-faisant*, a fine 64, got up with the *San Domingo*, of 70 guns, and cannonaded her with such vehemence that the Spaniard soon blew up with a terrible explosion, and every man on board perished. Some other of the British ships came up—Rodney having skilfully placed his fleet between the Spaniards and the shore—and the action continued with great fury. Night soon fell—a dark and tempestuous night; the storm increased in violence, and the shore was one justly dreaded by sailors, being the shoal of San Lucan; but the fight did not slacken until two in the morning, when the fleet had run into shoal water, and it became necessary to get the ships' heads off shore. But the victory was complete. The admiral's ship, of 80 guns, was taken, five 70-gun ships were also captured, one was blown up, and of the whole Spanish fleet only four vessels escaped into Cadiz.

Rodney proceeded triumphantly to the relief of Gibraltar. One ship, the *Edgar*, appeared in the bay early on the 19th, escorting the *Phoenix* prize of 80 guns, which bore the flag of the Spanish admiral. At night, Admiral Digby, in the *Prince George*, worked round Europa Point with eleven or twelve men-of-war, while Sir George remained with the crippled prizes and the main body of the fleet off the Spanish town of Marbella, some sixteen leagues to the eastward of Gibraltar.

Prince William Henry (William IV.) was serving as a midshipman on board Admiral Digby's flag-ship, and often visited the governor and garrison while the fleet continued in the bay. One morning the Spanish admiral visited Admiral Digby, and was of course intrusted to his royal highness. During the conference between the admirals Prince William retired; and when it was intimated that Don Juan desired to return, the royal midshipman appeared, and respectfully informed the admiral that the boat was ready. The Spaniard, astonished to see the son of a monarch acting as a petty officer, immediately exclaimed, "Well does

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Great Britain merit the empire of the sea, when the humblest stations in her navy are supported by princes of the blood!"

Rodney proceeded on his voyage to the West Indies on the 13th of February, leaving a small squadron in the bay under the command of Captain Elliott, of the *Edgar*. On the departure of the British fleet, the Spanish admiral Barulo renewed his blockade of the port, and the governor accordingly commanded a regular daily issue of provisions so as to extend the supplies over as long a period as possible. Each soldier was victualled monthly (bread excepted) in the following proportion:—

Each first and third week, 1 lb. of pork, 2½ lbs. of salt fish, 2 pints of pease, 1 lb. of flour, ¼ lb. of raisins, 1 lb. of rice, 5 oz. of butter, and 1½ pint of oatmeal.

Each second and fourth week, 1½ lb. of beef, 2 lbs. of fish, 2 pints of pease, 1 lb. of rice, 5 oz. of butter, 1½ lb. of wheat, and ¼ lb. of raisins.

Another enemy, however, now threatened the garrison—owing, probably, to the consumption of the salt fish and want of vegetables—the dreadful disease of the scurvy—but its ravages were in some measure subdued by an abundant use of lemon-juice.

April passed and May came, May passed and June came, and still the tedium of the siege remained unbroken by any incident more stirring than the occasional breaking of the blockade by a provision-ship, or the escape of some wretched fugitives from the Spanish lines. On the night of the 7th an attempt was made by six fire-ships to burn the English shipping lying in the bay. The boats of the Panther man-of-war and other vessels immediately pushed off, and, with the usual courage of English seamen, grappled the ships, and, notwithstanding the violence of the flames, towed them into a secure position, where they were afterwards extinguished.

"The navy on this occasion," says Colonel Drinkwater, "cannot be too highly commended for their courage, conduct, and alertness. Their intrepidity overcame every obstacle; and though three of the ships were linked with chains and strong cables, and every precaution was taken to render them successful, yet, with uncommon resolution and activity, the British seamen separated

the vessels, and towed them ashore with no other injury to themselves than a few burns and bruises. The design altogether, to do justice to the ingenuity of Don Barulo, was well projected, and his squadron judiciously stationed at the entrance of the bay, to intercept our men-of-war in case they had attempted to escape from the fire-ships."

Month after month waned away in this curious state of armed inaction, and the garrison once more experienced the evils of scarcity. In the spring of 1781 they had increased to a terrible extent; and the poorer soldiers, who could not afford to purchase the luxuries occasionally introduced by some small boat that had run the blockade, endured the extremest hardships. Bread especially was sought for at ruinous prices, and biscuit-crumbs sold for 10d. and 1s. per lb. The rations supplied were necessarily very limited, and of wretched quality; the meat almost putrid, and the butter little better than "rancid congealed oil." It was with intense delight, then, that the garrison beheld, from the crest of their bristling rock, the fluttering ensigns and swelling canvas of a British fleet, under Admiral Darby, protecting a convoy of nearly one hundred vessels. The convoy entered the bay attended by some ships of the line and frigates, while Darby, with the rest of his fleet, cruised between Cadiz Bay and the mouth of the straits, watching the Spanish admiral Cordova, who lay under the guns of Cadiz, though his force was much superior.

The one hundred vessels, with bread—mighty bread!—on board, were welcomed with shouts of grateful joy by the half-starved soldiers clustered on the rocky heights; and as they became discernible to those below, three hearty English cheers ran from battery to battery, from the Devil's Tower on the isthmus to the sea-washed shore of Europa Point. But, as if stung into a more active wrath by the relief thus afforded to the besieged, the Spaniards now opened a terrible bombardment; one hundred and fourteen pieces of artillery, all of heavy metal, hurled fire upon the garrison, and shot and shell rained down with ceaseless ferocity. Both from batteries on land and huge gunboats in the bay poured forth the destructive storm. The garrison returned a severe and well-directed fire, blew up

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entire batteries and levelled various parts of the works, but the Spaniards persevered in their approaches and nearly completed their fourth line. Elliott, however, with characteristic energy, continued to repair and restore his own formidable works—which were stronger at the end of the siege than at the beginning—notwithstanding all the bombardment of the enemy, whose shot and shell could do little but fly harmlessly against the face of the rock.

Late in November (1781) a deserter from the Spanish lines communicated to the governor the unpreparedness of the guards in the fourth parallel, the Spaniards never deeming it possible that the British would hazard a sortie. Accordingly, on the 26th, Elliott ordered all his grenadiers and light infantry, the veterans of the 12th and the German regiment of Hardenberg, with detachments from the line, amounting in the whole to 2,004 men—or one-third of the entire garrison—to assemble on the Red Sands, just outside the rock, at midnight, where, being joined by one hundred sailors, they were divided into three columns, under the command of Brigadier-General Ross. Accompanied by the brave old governor, the detachment marched silently through the soft sand, in the dim, hazy light of the slowly-breaking morning; and although some of the Spanish sentries fired their pieces and gave the alarm, in a very few minutes they were within the lines almost unopposed, and actively dismantling the works. The exertions of the soldiers are described by an eye-witness as wonderful. In less than an hour the artillery was spiked, mines were dug and trains laid, the batteries set on fire, and soon the flames spread with astonishing rapidity into every part. Thus was the object of this brilliant sortie most successfully effected, and with no greater loss to the British than four men killed, twenty-six wounded, and one missing. This terrible destruction—the ruin of the entire fourth line of their attack—checked the exertions of the besiegers for some time, the Spaniards not even attempting to clear the smoking *débris*; their batteries continued in flames, nor were any efforts made to extinguish the fire.

In the month of April, 1782, the besiegers received an important reinforcement in the

person of the Duc de Crillon, who arrived to take the chief command. Preparations were immediately made for a combined attack, which it was thought could not fail to subdue the obdurate rock. The beleaguering force was augmented to 27,000 men; the engineering operations were placed under the direction of Monsieur d'Arcon, a man of high repute and great skill; and a formidable fleet of ten sail of the line, besides floating batteries, gunboats, and mortar-boats, under Admiral Don Bonaventura Moreno, was destined to co-operate. Princes of the blood, of the house of Bourbon, with long retinues of French and Spanish nobles, arrived at St. Roque and the Spanish lines, to encourage the exertions of the besiegers, and to share in their anticipated triumph. Skilful engineers and artillerymen were brought from every country in Europe, attracted by an extravagant rate of pay and the promise of immense rewards. Forty thousand men, and more artillery than had ever before been collected on so narrow a point, seemed to justify the most sanguine hopes of success; and Charles III., King of Spain, now commenced to ask his attendants, every morning on waking, "Is it taken?"—never failing to reply to the negative he received from them, "Well, but it must soon be ours!"

Thousands of inventions were proposed, and many tried, against the unyielding fastness, but it still presented an undaunted front to the exasperated besiegers. At length the Chevalier d'Arcon devised a plan which it was thought could not but succeed. This was to construct, out of large ships, immense floating batteries that could neither be sunk nor set on fire by the red-hot shot which the British garrison, through long practice, employed with wonderful rapidity and precision.

These machines were to be secured against sinking by the extraordinary thickness of the timbers with which their keels and bottoms would be doubled, and rendered fire-proof by sides of timber and cork, with wet sand forced in some consistency between the interstices. A constant supply of water would keep all the parts wet, the cork retaining the moisture like a sponge. Of these formidable monsters ten were constructed; their sides were six or seven feet thick; they carried guns of heavy metal, and were

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bomb-proof on the top, with sloping roofs for the shells to slide off. These roofs, contrived of strong rope-work netting, with a thick covering of wet hides, could be worked up and down at pleasure by machinery. To increase their terrors D'Arcon constructed a sort of match or train, which, it was said, would discharge a whole broadside at once. Two hundred thousand cubic feet of timber were employed in their construction, and the neighbouring country was swept bare of cow-hides, bull-hides, and horse-hides.

These new leviathans of the deep, "too huge and heavy to move through the water with any alacrity," were towed abreast of the British batteries, and supported by forty gunboats armed with long guns, forty bomb-boats mounted with 12-inch mortars, five large bomb-ketches, and an immense raft armed like a battery. Numerous frigates and small vessels acted as tenders, and from 200 to 300 row-boats prepared to supply them with fresh stores of ammunition and reinforcements of men. The combined fleet of France and Spain, forty-seven sail of the line, dropped anchor in the bay, near its head, but out of range of the British red-hot balls, until the decisive moment, when every craft, great or small, "was to join in the 'crack of doom,'" and assist in disembarking the land troops on the shattered and mouldering works.

"Such a naval and military spectacle," says Colonel Driakwater, "most certainly is not to be equalled in the annals of war," or was only rivalled in the great siege of Sebastopol. "From such a combination of power, and favourable concurrent circumstances, it was natural enough that the Spanish nation should anticipate the most glorious consequences. Indeed, their confidence in the effect to be produced by the battering-ships passed all bounds; and, in the enthusiasm excited by the magnitude of their preparations, it was thought highly criminal, as we afterwards learned, even to whisper a doubt of the success."

In drawing these flattering conclusions, the enemy, however, seemed entirely to have overlooked the nature of the force opposed to them—the seven thousand veterans of the garrison, whom long practice had rendered peculiarly skilful in the management of artillery; the formidable

nature of the defences; the courage, prudence, and ability of the British officers, and the indomitable will of the gallant old Elliott. He, firm as the immovable rock which he commanded, was not a whit daunted by the tremendous preparations of the enemy. Certainly he arranged his little army in the most favourable positions, and made a more abundant distribution of furnaces and grates for heating his cannon-balls—"roasted potatoes," as his soldiers called them with grim British humour.

It was in the morning of the 13th of September that D'Arcon's floating batteries got under way, and, a little past nine o'clock, bore down in admirable order for their several stations; the admiral, in a two-decker, mooring about 900 yards off the King's Bastion, the others successively taking their places to the right and left of the flag-ship in a skilful manner, the most distant being about 1,100 or 1,200 yards from the garrison.

Elliott allowed the enemy to take up their positions without molestation, but as soon as the first ship dropped her anchor, which was about a quarter before ten o'clock, that instant the British cannon poured forth their thunder! The allies returned it with a tremendous discharge of artillery, and the showers of shot and shell that crossed each other—the whirling, flashing flames—the heavy thud of the cannon-balls—the reverberations of the echoing rock—the shouts of the courageous Britons—combined to form a scene of the most terrific grandeur.

After some hours' cannonade, the battering ships were found almost as formidable as they had been represented. The heaviest shells often rebounded from their tops, whilst the 32-pound shot seemed unable to make any visible impression upon their hulls. Frequently, says the historian of the siege, we flattered ourselves they were on fire; but no sooner did any smoke appear than, with the most persevering intrepidity, men were observed with water subduing the conflagration. Even the British gunners themselves, at this period, had their doubts of the effects of the red-hot shot, which was first used about twelve o'clock, but was not generally resorted to until between one and two. The enemy's cannon at the commencement were much too elevated, but about noon they got the exact

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range, and their fire grew very heavy. The casualties of the garrison were then numerous, particularly on the batteries north of the King's Bastion, which were warmly annoyed by the fire from the enemy's land fortifications. But the artillery gave no heed to the attack from the isthmus. They directed their entire attention to the battering-ships, whose furious cannonade excited the besieged to renewed exertions. A fire more tremendous, if possible, than before was maintained by the garrison. Incessant showers of hot balls, carcasses, and shells flew from all quarters, and concentrated their deadly missiles on the floating batteries; and as the masts of several of these were shot away, and the rigging of all shattered and torn, the hopes of the British revived, and their energy never flagged.

"The floating batteries," says an Italian officer engaged in the attack, "were so constructed that the shot which pierced their sides or roofs would at the same time pass through a tube which would discharge a quantity of water to extinguish the fire it might create; but this hope proved fallacious. From nine till two they kept up a constant and well-directed fire, with very little damage on their part; but their hopes of ultimate success became less sanguine when, at two o'clock, the floating battery commanded by the Prince of Nassau, on board of which was also the engineer (D'Arcon) who had invented the machinery, began to smoke on the side exposed to the garrison, and it was apprehended she had taken fire. The firing, however, continued until we could perceive the fortifications had sustained some damage; but at seven o'clock all our hopes vanished. The fire from our floating batteries entirely ceased, and rockets were thrown up as signals of distress. In short, the red-hot balls from the garrison had by this time taken such good effect that nothing now was thought of but saving the crews, and the boats of the combined fleet were immediately sent on that service."

But this was no easy task. The floating monsters were not to be lightly moved from their moorings, and the boats, when they got within range of the British batteries, were exposed to almost certain destruction.

So the Leviathans lay upon the gleaming waters immovable and helpless, until a little after midnight the floating battery which had first shown symptoms of conflagration burst out into flames; whereupon the fire from the rock was increased with terrible vengeance. The light from the burning ship was equal to day, and enabled the British to point their guns with the utmost precision, "whilst the rock and neighbouring objects were highly illuminated, forming, with the constant flashes of our cannon, a mingled scene of sublimity and terror."

Captain Curtis, who commanded a marine brigade of gunboats, being informed that the enemy's ships were in flames, and that the sea was calm enough for his craft to act, pushed out into the *mêlée*, and by his level fire, almost *à fleur de l'eau*, took the floating batteries in the whole extent of their line, and sank or swept off all the French and Spanish boats that approached to their rescue. The whole of them were now in flames, and had ceased their fire; their crews rent the air with yells and shrieks; and General Elliott, convinced that the defeat of the enemy was decisive, ordered his gunners to be silent, while Curtis, with his gallant little band, dashed among the burning wrecks to rescue the sinking Spaniards. The noble humanity of the English called forth the highest eulogiums from its eye-witnesses. To save their enemies they willingly perilled their own lives, and so vigorously did they labour that no less than three hundred and fifty-seven were rescued from a dreadful death. "Curtis was repeatedly in the most imminent danger. A pinnace into which he had thrown himself was close to one of the floating batteries when she blew up, and was involved by the explosion in one vast cloud of fire and smoke and masses of burning wood. General Elliott and the garrison, who saw the explosion, never expected to see Curtis again; but as the smoke cleared away the pinnace became visible on the face of the water; the coxswain was killed, several of her crew were wounded, one of the burning pieces of timber had fallen into her and gone through her bottom, and she was only saved from sinking by the sailors stuffing their jackets into the hole."

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Thus ended the last great effort of the combined forces of France and Spain. An immense sum of money had been fruitlessly expended; one hundred and fifty brass cannon of heavy calibre were at the bottom of the sea; and between killed, wounded, and prisoners, nearly two thousand men were sacrificed. "I have burnt the Temple of Ephesus," wrote the dismayed and despairing D'Arcon to the French ambassador at Madrid; "everything is lost, and through my fault. What comforts me under my misfortune is that the honour of the two kings remains untarnished."

The garrison lost one officer, two sergeants, and thirteen rank and file *killed*;

NAMES.	GUNS IN USE.			GUNS IN RESERVE.			MEN.		COMMANDERS.
<i>Two-deckers.</i>									
Pastora ...	21	.....	10	.....	760	.....	Rear-Adm. Buonaventura Morens.		
Tailla Piedra ...	21	.....	10	.....	760	.....	Prince of Nassau-Siegen.		
Paula Prima ...	21	.....	10	.....	760	.....	Don Gayetana Langara.		
El Rosario ...	19	.....	10	.....	700	.....	Don Francisco Munos.		
San Christoval	13	.....	10	.....	650	.....	Don Frederico Gravino		
<i>One-deckers.</i>									
Principe Cartos	11	.....	4	.....	400	.....	Don Antonio Basurta.		
San Juan ...	9	.....	4	.....	340	.....	Don Joseph Angelu.		
Paula Secunda	9	.....	4	.....	340	.....	Don Pablo de Cosa.		
Santa Anna ...	7	.....	4	.....	300	.....	Don Joseph Goicochea.		
Los Dolores ...	6	.....	4	.....	250	.....	Don Pedro Sanchez.		
	142		70		5,260				

The siege was now reduced to a blockade. It was known that a fleet and convoy were on their way from England, under Earl Howe, and the French and Spanish squadrons therefore remained in the straits, relying on their superiority in ships and weight of metal, and hoping that the result of an action at sea might enable them to resume, with better chances of success, the attack upon Gibraltar. The gallant Howe, a sailor of the most brilliant courage and of the highest professional skill, was delayed by contrary winds until the 9th of October. He had with him thirty-four sail of the line, six frigates, and three fire-ships, and an immense convoy of trading vessels and transports—150 sail in all. His flag-officers were Vice-Admirals Barrington and Milbank, Rear-Admirals Hood and Hughes, and Commodore Hotham. Before reaching Cape Finisterre the convoy was scattered by a gale of wind, but, through the skill of Lord Howe and the vigilance of his subordinates, it was speedily re-assembled, and on the 11th of October glided, in a well-ordered mass,

five officers and fifty-three rank and file *wounded*. The damage done to the fortifications was repaired in a few hours, and the whole sea-line of the defences before night was again in serviceable order.

The enemy in this action had 328 pieces of heavy ordnance in play, whilst the garrison could only oppose 80 cannon, 7 mortars, and 9 howitzers. Upwards of 8,300 rounds—more than half of which were red-hot shot—and 716 barrels of powder were expended by the British. What quantity was used by the enemy could never be ascertained.

As nothing connected with this memorable siege can be uninteresting, I append a list of the floating batteries:—

between the shores of Europe and Africa, past the Pillars of Hercules of the ancient world.

The combined fleet, which he expected to dispute his passage, amounted to fifty sail of the line, besides frigates, corvettes, sloops, and gunboats. Howe, nevertheless, kept on his course undaunted. The convoy went first, escorted by two 60-gun ships, the Buffalo and the Panther. The fleet followed in three divisions, the third squadron and the centre being in line of battle ahead, and the second squadron in reserve. The wind blowing from the west, and the current in the straits running with great force, the transports were carried past the mouth of the bay, and driven behind the rock, only four of them succeeding in reaching the appointed anchorage-ground near the old mole. There they landed their cargoes unimpeded by the combined fleet, which lay at anchor between Algeiras and the Orange Grove. Howe, in his noble 100-gun ship the Victory, passed Europa Point, and then lay-to, that he might cover the passage of

THE SIEGE AND RELIEF OF GIBRALTAR.

the convoy, when the weather should serve, back into the bay.

On the morning of the 12th, Captain Curtis, who commanded the brigade of gun-boats, was despatched by General Elliott to inform the admiral that, on the night of the 10th, a gale of wind had done much damage to the closely-packed ships of the combined fleet, that three had been driven ashore, and two forced to run up the Mediterranean. On the 13th the combined fleet put to sea, with the double purpose of affording protection to the two vessels driven into the Mediterranean, and cutting off the supplies for the relief of the garrison before they could be brought round into the bay. The British ships, however, were all kept in too compact an array for any stragglers to be caught up by the enemy, whom the wind and the current bore far behind the rock and beyond the secure anchorage of Howe's fleet. Then came a calm, which detained them all motionless off Malaga. At dawn on the 14th the wind veered round to the east, to the great joy of the British admiral, and straightway his entire armada—men-of-war and transports—swept round Europa Point, streamed gallantly into the bay, and dropped anchor before the rock, amid the shouts and acclamations of the whole population of Gibraltar. Two new regiments and an abundant supply of provisions and *matériel* were thrown into the place; and while these operations proceeded, Howe drew up his battle-ships in gallant order, from Europa Point to the African coast, like a line of floating forts. Each store-ship, as she landed her cargo, cleared out of the bay, ran into the straits, and beat slowly into the Atlantic.

By the evening of the 18th the work of disembarkation was skilfully and successfully completed, and on the following morning Howe repossessed the straits, closely followed by the combined fleet, which was now assisted by the same easterly breeze that had formerly proved so propitious to the British. On the morning of the 20th both fleets had got out into the open sea, and, as the French and Spaniards gained upon him in the course of the day, Howe formed in order of battle to leeward. After much hesitation, the allies, who numbered forty-six sail of the line to the British thirty-four, began a distant and comparatively ineffectual

cannonade, and continued it until ten at night, when they hauled their wind and abandoned all further pursuit. As it was not Howe's business to fight so superior a force, he proceeded on his homeward voyage, having lost in this partial action only 68 killed and 208 wounded, while he had certainly inflicted on the enemy an equal, if not a greater, amount of damage.

With this last great effort on the part of France and Spain the siege of Gibraltar virtually came to an end, though, to save their pride, the Spaniards continued a formal blockade until the conclusion of peace in January, 1783. As they had gone to war to recover the rock, and as there was no longer any prospect of its recovery, they had no reason to continue hostilities; and negotiations with England were resumed in a very compliant and pacific spirit. The siege had been a severe blow to the pride of Spain, and entailed a pitiful expenditure of her resources. The sacrifices which she had made were felt by an impoverished government and declining country for long years after, while, on the other hand, the gallant and successful defence maintained by the British garrison in the face of an overwhelming force greatly increased the influence and enhanced the prestige of England.

Elliott was created Baron Heathfield, and rewarded with the Order of the Bath by a grateful sovereign. Honours were distributed among his principal officers; the thanks of both Houses of Parliament were unanimously voted to "the officers, soldiers, and sailors employed in the siege of Gibraltar," and pecuniary recompense was adjudged for their sufferings. The story of their heroism still remains one of the brightest pages in our national history, and will certainly endure as long as the British flag waves in triumphant security from the summit of the famous rock. It is by such deeds that nations become great, and their tradition keeps alive the national spirit, animates the heart of the people, and inspires with energy and exultation their eloquence, their art, their song. What were a country—what were England—"without its past?" That past influences our present, and radiates in light and glory towards the coming years, so that each one of us and each one of our sons' sons are the happier, the better, and the freer for the heroism which shone conspicuous in the four years' defence of the Rock of Gibraltar.

ABSTRACT OF THE TOTAL LOSS OF THE GARRISON. (1779—1783.)

Killed, and dead of wounds	233
Disabled by wounds (discharged)	138
Dead of sickness	566
Discharged, from incurable complaints	181
Deserted	43
Total	1,201