

P R E F A C E.

The keeping a powerful Squadron before an Enemy's Port, is both dangerous and expensive, especially in Winter, and often doth not answer the End; for there are many Difficulties and Disappointments attending a Fleet at Sea, whose Business is to keep near an Enemy's Coast: And Experience teaches that Ships may escape out of Port, notwithstanding the greatest Diligence in a Fleet at Sea to keep them in; I must acknowledge I cannot help being somewhat positive that Means may be used (by a Nation that is so greatly superior at Sea as Britain is to France) to go into Brest, or any Port in the World, and destroy the Ships there, at a much less Expence of Blood and Treasure than the keeping Fleets at Sea to block up Ports.

It is evident that Britain (at present) has the Means to protect any thing upon the Sea; and can, in some Measure, block up the Enemy's Fleets in their Harbours; but by many Years Experience it is known, their Ships have often found Opportunities to slip to Sea, notwithstanding a powerful Squadron employed to block them up in the Port; and I think there are few Instances of our Fleet intercepting the Enemy's Fleet, particularly the Brest Squadron.

If there was indeed a good Road where our Ships could lye safely all Weathers, at the Entrance of the Enemy's Harbours, they might keep them blocked up; but, except in fine Weather