

lieutenants, and about one hundred private soldiers, part of six hundred who had been sent out in tartanes the preceding day, to reinforce the enemy's squadron. This soon re-appearing, the line of battle was formed on each side; and about two o'clock admiral Byng threw out a signal to bear away two points from the wind and engage. At this time his distance from the enemy was so great, that rear-admiral West, perceiving it impossible to comply with both orders, bore away with his division seven points from the wind, and, closing down upon the enemy, attacked them with such impetuosity, that the ships which opposed him were in a little time driven out of the line. Had he been properly sustained by the van, in all probability the British fleet would have obtained a complete victory: but the other division did not bear down, and the enemy's centre keeping their station, rear-admiral West could not pursue his advantage without running the risque of seeing his communication with the rest of the line entirely cut off. In the beginning of the action the *Intrepid*, in Mr. Byng's division, was so disabled in her rigging, that she could not be managed, and drove on the ship that was next in position: a circumstance which obliged several others to throw all a-back, in order to avoid confusion, and for some time retarded the action. Certain it is, that Mr. Byng, though accommodated with a noble ship of ninety guns, made little or no use of his artillery; but kept aloof, either from an overstrained observance of discipline, or timidity. When his captain exhorted him to bear down upon the enemy, he very coolly replied, that he would avoid the error of admiral Matthews, who, in his engagement with the French and Spanish squadrons off Toulon, during the preceding war, had broke the line by his own precipitation, and exposed himself singly to a fire that he could not sustain. Mr. Byng, on the contrary, was determined against acting, except with the line intire; and, on pretence of rectifying the disorder which had happened among some of the ships, hesitated so long, and kept at such a wary distance, that he was never properly engaged, though he received some few shots in his hull. Mr. de la Galissoniere seemed equally averse to

the continuation had been for was rather and weighed sequence of val operations Byng's hesitated to join his British admiral ing clean, so they retreated on the enemy of sight. the distance cruisers to him according on of the to forty-two and about ed. Their in their many regard were ill, diverted in this situation he permitted to in weighed the advantage from where reinforced practical they ought tar, which council course a sure would the engagement he ought and regarded His retreat