

THAT before Admiral *Hawke* sailed for the Bay the 27th of *February*, with fourteen ships of the line and one frigate, the government had advice that *d' Aubigny* sailed the 30th of *January* with one ship of the line and two frigates for *Martinico*, and that the six men of war, they sent *Hawke* after, sailed the 19th of *February* for *Domingo*; consequently no prospect of Mr. *Hawke's* intercepting them by cruising in the Bay so long after their departure. And by the departure of those two squadrons, there remained but eleven ships of the line at *Brest* and *Rochfort* in distress for cannon, as *Du Guay's* squadron was obliged to be laid up in order to furnish the nine ships sailed as above with part of the cannon they wanted: the attention to which eleven ships in port, by this fleet of Mr. *Hawke's*, when by the intelligence they could not be ready till *May*, and *Minorca* was in the utmost danger, is most absurd; especially as they were not designed to cover an embarkation against *Great Britain*, but by repeated accounts, received before Mr. *Hawke* sailed, were bound to *Canada* with 6000 troops: intercepting of which was by no means an object of any consequence in comparison with the preservation of *Minorca*. And if it had been, or this squadron was to have covered the landing of troops in this kingdom, we had by this time so many ships; besides Mr. *Hawke's* fleet, ready; that his whole fleet might have been spared, with safety to his country for the security of
Minorca,