

8 NAVAL HISTORY

The *English* had certainly the wind, and might therefore have avoided fighting, if they had so pleased ; but this was by no means agreeable to admiral *Herbert's* temper : he therefore endeavoured all he could to get into the bay, that he might come to a close engagement ; but the *French* saved him the labour, by bearing down upon him in three divisions, about ten in the morning on the first of *May*. The first division consisted of eight ships, under the command of Mr. *Gaberet* ; the second, of the like force, was commanded by admiral *Chateau-Renault* ; the third, which was also of eight ships, had for its commander Mr. *Forant* ; the fight was pretty warm for about two hours ; but then slackened, because a great part of the *English* fleet could not come up ; but they continued firing on both sides, till about five in the afternoon, admiral *Herbert* keeping out all the time to sea, because he found the dispute very unequal, and that there was no other way by which he could possibly gain the wind, and thereby an opportunity of bringing his whole fleet to engage. But, about the hour before-mentioned, the *French* fleet stood into the Bay, which put an end to the fight. The *English* writers ascribe this either to want of courage, or to the admiral's being restrained by his orders ; but the *French* inform us, that he retired in order to take care of the ships under his convoy ; and that after they had entirely debarked the supply they had brought, he disposed every thing in order to put to sea the next morning, which he did ^k.

THIS

der their convoy, of fifteen third, and nine fourth rates ; and in this, all the *French* writers agree.

^k It must be acknowledged, that the *French* speak in too high terms of this trivial success : the fleet, says M. *Quincy*, was out but