

Supplement a la GAZETTE de FRANCE.

Paris, Friday, November 8, 1782.

Copy of a letter from the Sieur de la Touche, Capitaine de Vaisseau, commanding his Majesty's Frigate L'Agile (the Eagle) to the Marquis de Castries, dated September 5th, 1782.

"I HAVE the honour to inform you, that in the night between the 4th and 5th of September, latitude 39. 10. longitude 67. 53. I descried a vessel to leeward, steering as myself close to the wind, starboard tacks aboard, the wind west and pretty fresh. I bore down upon him the better to reconnoitre. Having approached within half cannon shot, I was not at a loss to judge, from the elevation of his decks, that he was a ship of two tier of guns.

"The frigate La Gloire, commanded by the Chevalier de Vallongue, was to leeward of me, and much nearer to the ship in sight. I judged from the lanterns which I saw lighting in the batteries of this vessel, that they intended to engage; and not thinking the match equal, and reflecting on the importance of the commission with which I was charged, I hauled my wind, and made sail. I expected the Gloire would make the same movement, without my having recourse to the night signals to direct him to follow my manoeuvre; but the Chevalier de Vallongue found himself at that time within half musket shot of the enemy, who hailed him; they were speaking each other when I made the signal for following me. The Chevalier de Vallongue, thinking that the enemy would not fail to profit of, and give him a broadside, during the advantageous position in which the frigate would present herself to him, whilst he was executing my orders, boldly resolved to bear down upon him, and rake him a-head; the enemy returned his fire, and the engagement began within pistol shot. The first shot fired at the Gloire, put an end to all the reflections which I was making re-

it up, and made the people of that fort prisoners of war also. The Prince Rupert was chased by one of the French frigates for 19 hours, and very narrowly escaped being taken."

The principal settlements belonging to our Hudson's Bay Company at present are, Forts Churchill, Nelson, New Severn, and Albany, on the west side of the Bay, and Forts Charles and Rupert, on the bottom of the Bay. This Company, which does not consist of above nine or ten merchants, obtained their first charter from Charles the Second, in the year 1669, by which the sole property of all the lands, trade, royal fishery, and mines within Hudson's Straits, not actually possessed by any Christian Prince was vested in them. Their imports are, deer-skins, furs, castoreum and beaver-skins, feathers, whalebone and blubber.

pecting the event of an engagement, which I thought very unequal. I wore to join the frigate and to second her. After the Gloire and the enemy had exchanged some broadsides, the firing between them ceased; the two captans hailed each other again, interrogated one another respecting their colours, and the engagement immediately begun afresh. It was at this instant that I placed myself between the Gloire and the enemy, and began to fire from all my artillery, which appeared to me to produce a great effect. The fire from the ship was not so brisk as I had reason to expect; he hauled to windward in such a manner, that I could not doubt his intention was to board me. I knew from the calibre of the bullets which came on board, of 36, 18, and eight pounds, that I was engaged with a ship of 74 guns, and having no other chance than that which he now offered me, I resolved not to refuse it, having on board 500 combatants spirited by the example of the Sieurs Baron de Viomenil, Duc de Lauzun, Marquis de Laval, Marquis de Champepenetz, Marquis de Mahon, Sheldon, the Comtes de Chabanne, de Tallyrand, de Rice, and de Langeron the son, the Sieur de Brentano, and other officers, whose courage and great valour animated my crew. The enemy's spritsail* was caught in my fore-shrouds; in this position I gave him a complete broadside, and made my men huzza, "board, and God save the King." The Baron de Viomenil was prepared to leap on board the enemy, followed by all the above named officers, when the ship manoeuvred to get clear without firing a single shot, which I attributed to the terror that my resolution had infused into her crew, who in all probability were not numerous. The men who loaded the guns in the enemy's lower battery, and those in mine, struck each other with their gun rammers. The ships being separated from each other, we renewed the combat at the distance of musket shot, and the enemy's fire diminished in a most extraordinary degree. At day-break the Gloire, which had taken a favourable position re-engaged, and raked the enemy fore and aft, he was unrigged, and manoeuvred with great difficulty. I should have continued the engagement, the issue of which would, in all appearance, have been in our favour, when my men on the look out called to me that they saw several sail, one of which I could myself perceive to be a vessel with three masts, and having all the appearance of a ship of the line. I feared with reason the 74 gun ship we were engaged with, was part of a squadron, to which the sails in sight might belong; having therefore fulfilled my duty respecting the honour of the flag, I made a signal to the Gloire to crowd sail and follow me. The enemy's ship made no move-

* The yard and sail which hangs under the bowsprit.