

On the 24th of may, the admiral desired the attendance of the rear admiral, &c. &c. at a council of war held on board the *Ramillies*, to ask their opinions concerning the future operations of the fleet; at which were present the admirals, and all the captains of the ships, and general officers of the land forces. The questions which were debated and the council's resolutions are as follows:

I. Whether an attack upon the french fleet gives any prospect of relieving Minorca?

Ans. It would not.

II. Whether, if there was no french fleet cruising off Minorca, the english fleet could raise the siege?

Ans. It could not.

III. Whether Gibraltar would not be in danger by any accident that may befall this fleet?

Ans. It would be in danger.

IV. Whether an attack with our fleet in the present state of it upon that of the french, will not endanger the safety of Gibraltar, and expose the trade of the Mediterranean to great hazard?

Ans. That it would.

V. Whether it is not most for his majesty's service that the fleet should immediately proceed for Gibraltar?

Ans. That it should proceed for Gibraltar.

These resolutions were unanimously agreed to, and signed by all the members of the council. And to the astonishment of all Europe, a fleet in every respect equal to that of the enemy, and, considering the superior courage and dexterity of the common sailors, much superior to it, should fly from that of the enemy, leaving them all the consequences of a victory, riding triumphantly before Mahon, and gaining respect to the french flag throughout all the ports in the Mediterranean. Admiral Byng, on the 25th, set sail, and on the 19th of june arrived at Gibraltar.