

time sufficient to put it out of their power to return for that season; and, therefore, his continuing there six months, as he did, till his squadron, that had been the terror, become the jest of the Spaniards, was altogether needless. A little before Christmas he weighed, and sailed for Jamaica, after such a loss of men, and in so wretched a condition, that I cannot prevail upon myself to enter into the particulars of a disaster, which I heartily wish could be blotted out of the annals, and out of the remembrance of this nation^o.

It happened very luckily for him, that there were at that time in the island of Jamaica, a great number of seamen out of employment, so that in two months time his squadron was once more manned, and in a condition to put to sea; which he did, and stood over to Carthagena, where he was able to do little or nothing; for the Spaniards had by this time recovered their spirits, and began to make reprisals, seizing the Prince Frederic, a South-sea ship, then at La Vera Cruz, with all the vessels and effects belonging to that company, which admiral Hosier did indeed demand, but to no purpose. He continued cruizing in those seas, and some of his ships took several Spanish prizes, most of which were afterwards restored; and in this situation things continued till the vice-admiral breathed his last, on the 23d of August, 1727. But that, and what followed, being without the limits of this work, I have nothing farther to say of this expedition, which, whether well or ill concerted at home, was undoubtedly executed with great courage and conduct by this unfortunate commander, who lost his seamen twice over, and whose ships were totally ruined by the worms in those seas, which created a mighty clamour at home, and was, without doubt, a prodigious loss to the nation.

The Spaniards, intending to shew that they were not intimidated by these mighty naval armaments, proceeded in the scheme they had formed, of attacking the important fortress of Gibraltar; and towards the close of the year 1726, their army, under the count de las Torres, actually came before the place. Our ministry at home having had previous intelligence of this

^o Lediard's naval history, vol. ii. p. 900. Oldmixon. Mercure historique et politique, tome lxxii. p. 69.