FALL OF ALMEIDA.

FROM THE NEW-YORK MERCANTILE ADVERTISER.

From the Lisbon Gazette of Sept. 3.
Extracts from dispatches from his excellency marshal Beresford to the minister of war.

AUGUST 27 & 28.

In the morning of the 26th. our army learned that the enemy were firing upon Almeida. In the afternoon of the 25th, and in the morning of the 26th we could not discover what was passing at Almeida on account of the obscurity of the atmosphere. From 2 until 3 in the afternoon of the 26th, when the weather became more clear, a very brisk firing on both sides was distinguished.—On the 27th, it was observed that the firing continued, but with less activity, until near 2 in the afternoon. It afterwards ceased: between 10 o'clock and midnight it was repeated with great violence, after which we did not hear another shot.

29th.—Almeida fell into the hands of the enemy on the 28th: until the 26th the enemy made no general movement. In the night between the 25th and 26th, the grand magazine of powder in Almeida blew up, and there were some other explosions of powder, in consequence of the bombs thrown by the enemy. That accident destroyed half the town, and killed many artillerists, and it is probable that a considerable part of the garrison was also destroyed. All this caused such a general consternation, that the governor for want of powder was obliged to treat with the enemy on the 27th.—He demanded that the garrison should join our army, and that the inhabitants should also be permitted to leave the place; but Massena refused those conditions, and threatened to repeat the fire if they did not surrender prisoners of war. In fact the firing was repeated that night. The place surrendered in the morning of the 28th, after the garrison had expended the rest of their powder. The enemy offered them the choice of entering into the service of the emperor, or being sent to France as prisoners.—There was not a single man who did not prefer going to France as a prisoner. This is a noble example, and does much honour to the nation, especially when we consider that the greater part of them were militia. All this information we have obtained from prisoners who were afterwards taken. Thus was Almeida lost by an accident, and not through the fault of the garrison, or the valour of the enemy. That event could not have happened but for the coincidence, as extraordinary as it was unforeseen, of the misfortune of the explosion, and the state of the atmosphere for exactly the two days of the firing: for otherwise Lord Wellington would have known that extraordinary circumstance, which made it necessary that the place should be immediately relieved (which he could not suppose to be the case without such an occurrence) and having already advanced with the whole army on the preceding days, it is probable that he would have obliged the enemy to raise the siege.

From the Lisbon Gazette of the 3d Sept.
Copy of a dispatch from his excellency Lord Viscount Wellington to his excellency Don Miguel Pereira Forjaz.

Most illustrious and excellent sir,

The enemy opened their fire upon Almeida late on Saturday night, or rather in the morning of Sunday last the 26th inst. and I regret that I have to add, that they obtained possession of the place in the course of the night of the 27th inst.

I cannot conceal from your excellency, that this unfortunate event affects me sensibly; so contrary is it to what I had reason to anticipate, considering the manner in which the garrison was provided with every thing necessary for the defence of the place, the respectable condition of its fortifications, and the spirit and courage which, as I had understood from the governor, the garrison exhibited; for all these reasons I expected that the place would have held out to the last extremity, should I have no opportunity to relieve it; and that, at all events, the enemy would be delayed until a late period of the season.

I have no intelligence, upon which I can rely, relative to the cause of its surrender. Some prisoners taken yesterday relate, that the castle (which however was bomb-proof) blew up on Saturday night; that on Monday the governor requested to capitulate, with the conditions that the place should be delivered to the enemy, but that the garrison and inhabitants should be permitted to join this army; which proposal having been refused, and the firing recommenced, the governor held out as long as he had any ammunition remaining, until upon its being wholly expended, he surrendered yesterday morning; after this the enemy having offered to the soldiers of the garrison either to take them into the service of the emperor, or to send them to France as prisoners of war, the latter offer was accepted by the garrison.

This account deserves credit, as coming from an enemy; and it is partly confirmed, as I had an opportunity of observing that there was a cessation of hostilities from one in the afternoon until nine at night on Monday, and that after that hour the firing recommenced, and continued until two in the morning, when it again totally ceased.

A great explosion was also heard at our advanced posts, and I observed on Monday that the steeple of the church in that place was destroyed, and many of the houses unroofed.

I hope that this account may prove correct in all its most essential points, and may give me the satisfaction to find that the loss of Almeida, and the acquisition by the enemy of the military stores and provisions which the place contains, has not been occasioned by the fault of the governor, or of the garrison.

I had a telegraphic communication with the governor: but unfortunately the badness of the weather did not permit us to avail ourselves of it on Sunday, nor during the greater part of Monday, and when the atmosphere cleared on the latter day, I was informed that the governor was communicating with the enemy.

Considering the position which I had taken with the army so near to the place, I have to lament that I had not an opportunity of ascertaining its situation, after the loss of the magazine.

The enemy twice yesterday attacked our piquets; but they made that attack weakly; in both they were repulsed; in the afternoon they obliged general sir Stephen Cotton to call in his posts to this side of Freizedas: in these skirmishes the capt. of the light dragoons No. 16, named Lygon, was wounded, and also two soldiers of the regiment of royal dragoons.

A piquet of this regiment made a valiant and bold attack on a party of the enemy's infantry and cavalry; the result was successful, and they made some prisoners.

The 2d corps commanded by general Regnier has not made any movement of importance since the last dispatch that I transmitted to your excellency. A patrol belonging to that corps encountered a squadron of dragoons which consisted of a part of the British regiment No. 13, and of the Portuguase regiment No. 4, belonging to the army under the command of general Hill, and was commanded by captain White of the same regiment No. 13; this encounter took place on the 22d inst. and the result of it was that the enemy's patrol was wholly taken, with the exception of the captain and one soldier, who I have since heard were killed. I transmit a copy of the dispatch which brigadier general Fane sent to general Hill relative to this skirmish, which is doubtless greatly to the credit, and proves the bravery of capt. White and the allied troops, who had a share in it.

There has been no movement or occurrence of importance in Estremadura since my last dispatch which I forwarded to your excellency respecting the transactions in this part of the country.

In the north of Spain the enemy marched on the 20th instant, a small body of infantry and cavalry towards Alcanizas; but general Silveira marched from Braganza in that direction; in consequence of which the enemy immediately retreated.

My last accounts from Cadiz are to the 16th inst. I learn by them that gen. Graham, was on the point of sending from Cadiz 2000 men towards the Tagus. Nothing extraordinary had occurred in that quarter.

I have the honour to be, &c.

WELLINGTON.

Alverca, Aug. 29.

The loss of Almeida was unexpected by us; but we are in the situation of Philip II, who, he when he lost by tempests the grand armada, denominated the Invincible, said that he did not combat with the elements. There are disasters which can be neither foreseen nor avoided: such is ours: the principal magazine of the place being, and there being no more powder, defence was impossible. But to explain the magazine taking fire, though bomb proof, is what we are not yet able to do. The regret we feel, however, is only on account of the place itself, and the manner in which it was lost; for in regard to the defence of the kingdom, the possession or the loss of it is of little importance. It is situated beyond the river Coa, and all our positions; and appears rather a place to defend Spain and Portugal.—In the force and discipline of the armies, in the hatred which the people have to the yoke of the tyrant, and in the love of liberty, our defence and our safety consist. We are in the same circumstances as Spain;—a war by the troops and by the inhabitants, carried on by skirmishes, the removing or burning the means of subsistence, are the infallible methods of destroying the enemy, they cannot advance into the interior of our country without great danger; because the Spanish provinces in their rear, being completely in a state of insurrection, render the carrying of provisions almost impracticable—and in their front is a formidable army. Disasters do not depress, but animate brave souls. We expect shortly to be able to announce events which shall counterbalance, and more than compensate for the loss of Almeida.

SOUTH AMERICA.

Extract of a letter addressed to the Editor of the Ame. Daily Adv. dated

"CARTHAGENA, 10th Sept. 1810.

"I sent you, by the last vessel for Philadelphia, several documents referring to the revolution in this country.

"There exists some apprehension that England may oppose the withdrawing of this Country from the Regency, and on that account the Junta of Carthagena, has made no such declaration yet; there is, however, no doubt, that they are determined on their independence from Spain; and England, by opposing it or putting obstacles in the way would lose the friendship of this country.—It is known here that when the accounts from Caraccas came to Vera Cruz, the authorities there, had the declaration of independence burnt by the hangman; the accounts reaching Mexico, it caused a fermentation, which at the moment was subdued by the natives of Spain; the Arch-bishop, however, who, since last year, had also been nominated vice-king, would not continue in the command, and gave up to the Royal Audiencia. We have no exact accounts of the situation of Peru and Buenos Ayres, but, it is said, that they are in a state of revolution. Mexico will probably be the LAST, as the proportion of native Spaniards is greater in that country than in the others.

"There were eleven innocent sufferers remaining here in irons, who, without knowing to what place they were bound, embarked in Miranda's expedition, for whom I. F. ECKARD, Esquire, of your city, with his characteristic benevolence, presented a petition on their behalf, and had them liberated. The prisoners obtained from him a copy of the petition and decree, which has enabled me to enclose one for you."

"P. S.—15th Sept.—The vessel being still here, I have to mention, that a dreadful scene of blood has taken place in Quito. This province, being much oppressed, tried last year what Caracas effected in the present, but the neighbouring provinces not being ripe yet to join them, they were induced again to acknowledge the authority of the Vice-king of Santa Fe, who had not only promised them to forget their opposition, but also that they should retain a provincial Junta. But the Vice-King again reinstated, kept no promise, had them all imprisoned and many condemned to death. On the second of August some of the prisoners rose against their guards; a bloody conflict ensued—a battallion of troops from Lima which had been at Quito, since last year, was let loose upon the people, and they have murdered of men, women and children, about four thousand, and plundered the stores of the Quintonian merchants.—On the 5th of September one thousand armed volunteers set off for the assistance of Quito, and an equal number had gone from the intermediate provinces between Santa Fe and Quito, viz. Popayan and Pastor. Three days of public mourning were observed at Santa Fe, and the same will take place here, for their Brethren, destroyed at Quito. The Vice-King of Santa Fe and several of his council are at present here in prison. No blood has been shed either here or in Santa Fe."

"Petition of the Americans in prison and condemned to hard labour, at Carthagena, presented by I. F. ECKARD, Esq.

"*To His Excellency the President and Honorable Member of the Supreme Provincial Junta of Carthagena.*

"Your petitioners are some of those unfortunate men who in the year 1806 embarked, at New York on board of Francisco Miranda's vessel. They beg leave most humbly to state, that they were unacquainted with the intention of the voyage, but embarked as mariners are used to do, to gain a maintenance by the hard labours to which the sea-faring life is exposed, and that, as far as criminality might be attached to the intentions of Miranda, your petitioners had no share in them. Moreover, they most humbly conceive, as they were subsequently informed, that Francisco Miranda and the officers of his confidence, went not for the purpose of inimical attacks, and that his expedition was by far too inconsiderable for such intention, but rather to offer friendly assistance. Your unfortunate petitioners however, were not consulted and had no actual share in his views. They have been suffering now for four long years, loaded with irons and hard labor, in a foreign climate which in their native country is considered equal to the punishment of death—they therefore dare to hope, that their past sufferings will be deemed full atonement for any errors they might have committed, and the more so, as these were done without actual evil intention on their part, and as the degree of criminality is deduced from the intention.

"A happy result having also crowned the meritorious, patriotic exertions of the Honorable Members of the Supreme Junta of Carthagena, to establish a just Government for the happiness of the people, similar to the Government of their native Country, your Petitioners pray, that an act of munificence and generosity may be exemplified in their behalf; and, in consequence of what they have represented, most humbly pray and hope, that a pardon will be granted them, for the further time which they were sentenced still to suffer, and that they may be permitted to return to their own country, to their distressed and wretched wives and children and relatives—who will join forever in the prayer of your Petitioners.

Carthagena, Aug. 22, 1810.

[SIGNED BY ELEVEN PRISONERS.]

"*Translation of the Decree of the Junta.*

"*Government Hall of the Supreme Junta of Carthagena, August 23d,* 1810.

"The present government considering, that His Majesty has conceded equal grace to other individuals who were in the same state as the supplicants, which even have suffered much more; and on the other part how just and suitable it is in this government, to manifest to the Government of the United States, their desires to conserve the best harmony and consideration, with the inhabitants of North America——it hereby grants the Liberty for which the Subscribers petition in this memorial.

"JOSE MA. GARCIA DE TOLEDO, President.

"JOSE MA. BENITO REBELAO, Secretary and member.

CHARLESTON, OCT. 10.

DREADFUL CONFLAGRATION.

On Sunday night last, at half past 11 o'clock, a fire broke out in a small wooden house in Church street, between St. Philips Church and Amen street. As the whole of this part of the city consisted of wooden buildings, the flames soon spread to the adjoining houses, and raged with uncontrolable fury. No rain having fallen since the 12th of last month, the houses caught like tinder. The fire spread along Church street to Amen st. and down this street to Motte street. At this time the wind, which at the commencement of the fire was about N. W. shifted to the eastward of N. which drove the flames along Motte street, consuming the houses on each side, except one, down to Queen street; through each side of this street to near the Bay; and down Union street to Broad street, burning both sides. The wind now shifted to the N. and then the westward of N. and blew very fresh. It broke through the Bay at Mr. Hart's new brick house, which it consumed. From Union street it extended round Broad street and the Bay to Mr. Hart's. Many of the wooden buildings were blown up to arrest the progress of the devouring element.—The destruction of the house occupied by Mr. Chupein, in Broad street, above Union street, was the means of preventing the further extension of the flames up Broad street. The houses on the opposite side of the street, near the Bay, were several times on fire, but the wind shifting more to the westward, saved them. While the fire was ravaging this part of the city, the flakes, which were blown to a considerable distance, caught the roof of a wooden house on the Bay, two doors below Tradd street, occupied by Mr. Baker, and entirely consumed it; but the high brick houses on either side, prevented it from spreading farther.

About 9 o'clock in the morning of Monday, the progress of the flames appeared to have been arrested; but at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, a large back store of Mrs Ryan's, near Lodge Alley, on the Bay, was discovered to be on fire. The exertions of the citizens saved the contiguous buildings, and confined the conflagration to the store in which it began.

The water in the wells held out much better than could have been expected, considering the drowth of the season.

The fire masters, and indeed every class of our citizens, deserve the highest praise for their great and unremitted exertions, and the labour which they sustained for nearly 24 hours.

The fire company of axe-men, composed of hardy and active citizens, were of infinite service on this awful occasion, in pulling down houses, fences, &c. which contributed greatly to circumscribe the extent of the conflagration.

The officers of the artillery are entitled to high commendation for their intrepidity and their success in blowing up the several houses that were deemed necessary.

A strong detachment of cavalry and infantry, mounted guard, on Monday night to watch over the security of the city.

The bones of a female were yesterday discovered among the ruins of Union street. Several persons received injury in pulling down the houses, fences, &c but we have not heard of any that were severely wounded.

The loss of property cannot, as yet, be accurately ascertained, but it is supposed that it will not be less than *half a million* of dollars. The number of houses which were burnt and blown up, are about 250

None of the newspapers were published yesterday, as all the paper offices were exposed to danger, and their materials very much deranged and injured.

Bread and meat were yesterday distributed among the poor sufferers, and subscriptions set on foot for their relief.

A large proportion of the houses destroyed were either owned or occupied by persons in the humbler walks of life, many of whom have been deprived, by this awful calamity, of their little all.—We sincerely hope, and earnestly entreat that those who are blessed by Providence with more than their common wants require, will generously come forward to relieve those who have been deprived of both house and home, and the means of immediately supporting their families by the most dreadful of all visitations, and thereby enable them to rejoice in the happiness of being members of a benevolent and feeling community.

The following are the number of dwelling houses *fronting* on the several streets which were destroyed during the conflagration:—

On Church street	10
Motte street	35
Kinloch's court	9
Amen street	21
Lodge alley	8
Union street	44
East Bay street	14
Queen street	26
Chalmer's alley	8
Unity alley	3
Broad street	11
Total	194

[COURIER.]

LONDON, SEPT. 4.

Extract of a letter from a British naval officer, dated Cadiz Bay, 12*th August.*

The siege is carried on very slowly. The French are, either from the want of heavy mortars, or ammunition, very quiet except at night, when they blaze away from Matagorda batteries, to prevent our boats from passing Puntales Point, whither we send them, under cover of night, to the watering place; they unfortunately hit one of our boats a few nights since, and killed two seamen. Puntales and Matagorda are continually amusing each other. The French are every day strengthening the latter place, by the completion of different batteries; and I dare say, when they are all finished, we shall not have much rest from that point. We lie out of shell range of Matagorda, but not of St. Catharine. The enemy have no mortars at the latter place as yet: otherwise we should not lie so quiet. Our bombs and mortar boats have made several attacks on it; but have not been able to do it much damage: we must either destroy that fort, or be obliged to shift farther out.

The French force here, including a reinforcement of 4,000 that have lately joined, amounts to about 19,000 men, a number not more than a quarter sufficient to reduce Cadiz; if the Spaniards here stand true to their cause. We have 1,000 British, 1,500 Portuguese, & 17,000 Spanish regular troops, on the Isle of Leon, besides their militia, volunteers, and a great many thousand *lookers on*—in the whole, a number more than sufficient to *eat* the force opposed to them, but I do not think they are *prime*. General Graham has proposed several times to attack the French in their intrenchments, but the Junta are so timid, they are afraid to try the issue.

The enemy appear to suffer more from the Spanish peasantry than from their regular force, and are more afraid of them. Last week they were obliged to send a large force to escort a courier through the country; the peasants never spare them when they can lay hold of them, which the French know full well.

Our picquets, and those of the enemy, have frequent skirmishes, which are not attended with any serious consequences.

The fall of this place certainly depends on the success of Massena over lord Wellington (in which case he would be able to detach 30 or 40,000 men here) or the escape of the Toulon fleet; were they to escape the vigilence of Sir Charles Cotton, and come here with troops, *I do not think the Spaniards would fire a shot at them!* they would be so panic struck, not one would know how to act. There is a very strong French party still existing here—but, in spite of their influence, we shall get all the Spanish ships away into places of safety; most of them are already gone;—and, owing to the great exertions made by our new Admiral Sir R. Keats, the remainder will be ready to sail this evening—I expect they will sail for England: we furnish an officer and 60 men for each ship, to assist in getting them out.

We have no amusements here. The bull-fights and operas are all stopped on account of the seige. Trade is rather active, considering the state of the war.—Provisions are plentiful, and all the monasteries are converted into magazines, which are well stored with American flour and other produce; therefore, while we have the command at sea, and keep the port open, no apprehension need be entertained of a want of provisions.

The Cortes are to assemble on the 15th, when the Junta will be dissolved.

NEW STEAM-BOATS

FOR LAKE CHAMPLAIN.

We are happy to hear that Messrs. Livingston and Fulton are making preparations to build two Steam Boats on Lake Champlain, which are to be finished in a stile superior to those in the North River, both in their machinery and interior arrangements. This enterprise will establish an elegant communication between New York and Montreal. A capital of $50,000 is to be raised by subscription, and ther is little doubt that the profits will amply pay the stockholders, for the present boat on the lake, although badly organized and wretched accommodations as may be considered an imposition on the public, will at least clear 9000 dollars this year. This boat being an exact imitation of the North River Steam Boat, and a violation of Mr. Fulton's patent, a suit has been commenced to stop her, and thereby render justice to the patentee—and to the public by establishing a more commodious and complete conveyance.