

Chapter III

1793 - 1795

The Agamemnon sent to the Mediterranean —Commencement of Nelson's Acquaintance with Sir W. Hamilton—He is sent to Corsica, to cooperate with Paoli—State of Affairs in that Island—Nelson undertakes the Siege of Bastia, and reduces it—Takes a distinguished Part in the Siege of Calvi, where he loses an Eye—Admiral Hotham's Action—The Agamemnon ordered to Genoa, to co-operate with the Austrian and Sardinian Forces—Gross Misconduct of the Austrian General.

"There are three things, young gentleman," said Nelson to one of his midshipmen, "which you are constantly to bear in mind. First, you must always implicitly obey orders, without attempting to form any opinion of your own respecting their propriety; secondly, you must consider every man your enemy who speaks ill of your king; and, thirdly, you must hate a Frenchman as you do the devil." With these feelings he engaged in the war. Josiah, his son-in-law, went with him as a midshipman.

The *Agamemnon* was ordered to the Mediterranean under Lord Hood. The fleet arrived in those seas at a time when the south of France would willingly have formed itself into a separate republic, under the protection of England. But good principles had been at that time perilously abused by ignorant and profligate men; and, in its fear and hatred of democracy, the English Government abhorred whatever was republican. Lord Hood could not take advantage of the fair occasion which presented itself; and which, if it had been seized with vigour, might have ended in dividing France:—but he negotiated with the people of Toulon, to take possession provisionally of their port and city; which, fatally for themselves, was done. Before the British fleet entered, Nelson was sent with despatches to Sir William Hamilton, our envoy at the Court of Naples. Sir William, after his first interview with him, told Lady Hamilton he was about to introduce a little man to her, who could not boast of being very handsome; but such a man as, he believed, would one day astonish the world. "I have never before," he continued, "entertained an officer at my house; but I am determined to bring him here. Let him be put in the room prepared for Prince Augustus." Thus that acquaintance began which ended in the destruction of Nelson's domestic happiness. It seemed to threaten no such consequences at its commencement. He spoke of Lady Hamilton, in a letter to his wife, as a young woman of amiable manners, who did honour to the station to which she had been raised; and he remarked, that she had been exceedingly kind to Josiah. The activity with which the envoy exerted himself in procuring troops from Naples, to assist in garrisoning Toulon, so delighted him, that he is said to have exclaimed, "Sir William, you are a man after my own heart!—you do business in my own way:" and then to have added, "I am now only a captain; but I will, if I live, be at the top of the tree." Here, also, that acquaintance with the Neapolitan court commenced, which led to the only blot upon Nelson's public character. The king, who was sincere at that time in his enmity to the French, called the English the saviours of Italy, and of his dominions in particular. He paid the most flattering attentions to Nelson, made him dine with him, and seated him at his right hand.

Having accomplished this mission, Nelson received orders to join Commodore Linzee at Tunis. On the way, five sail of the enemy were discovered off the coast of Sardinia, and he chased them. They proved to be three forty-four gun frigates, with a corvette of twenty-four and a brig of twelve. The *Agamemnon* had only 345 men at quarters, having landed part of her crew at Toulon, and others being absent in prizes. He came near enough one of the frigates to engage her, but at great disadvantage, the

Frenchman manoeuvring well and sailing greatly better. A running fight of three hours ensued, during which the other ships, which were at some distance, made all speed to come up. By this time the enemy was almost silenced, when a favourable change of wind enabled her to get out of reach of the *Agamemnon's* guns; and that ship had received so much damage in the rigging that she could not follow her. Nelson, conceiving that this was but the forerunner of a far more serious engagement, called his officers together, and asked them if the ship was fit to go into action against such a superior force without some small refit and refreshment for the men. Their answer was, that she certainly was not. He then gave these orders,—“Veer the ship, and lay her head to the westward: let some of the best men be employed in refitting the rigging, and the carpenter in getting crows and capstan-bars to prevent our wounded spars from coming down: and get the wine up for the people, with some bread, for it may be half an hour good before we are again in action.” But when the French came up, their comrade made signals of distress, and they all hoisted out their boats to go to her assistance, leaving the *Agamemnon* unmolested.

Nelson found Commodore Linzee at Tunis, where he had been sent to expostulate with the dey upon the impolicy of his supporting the revolutionary government of France. Nelson represented to him the atrocity of that government. Such arguments were of little avail in Barbary; and when the Dey was told that the French had put their sovereign to death, he drily replied, that “Nothing could be more heinous; and yet, if historians told the truth, the English had once done the same.” This answer had doubtless been suggested by the French about him: they had completely gained the ascendancy, and all negotiation on our part proved fruitless. Shortly afterward, Nelson was detached with a small squadron, to co-operate with General Paoli and the Anti-Gallican party in Corsica.

Some thirty years before this time the heroic patriotism of the Corsicans, and of their leader Paoli, had been the admiration of England. The history of these brave people is but a melancholy tale. The island which they inhabit has been abundantly blessed by nature; it has many excellent harbours; and though the *Malaria*, or pestilential atmosphere, which is so deadly in many parts of Italy and of the Italian islands, prevails on the eastern coast, the greater part of the country is mountainous and healthy. It is about 150 miles long, and from 40 to 50 broad; in circumference, some 320; a country large enough, and sufficiently distant from the nearest shores, to have subsisted as an independent state, if the welfare and happiness of the human race had ever been considered as the end and aim of policy. The Moors, the Pisans, the kings of Aragon, and the Genoese, successively attempted, and each for a time effected its conquest. The yoke of the Genoese continued longest, and was the heaviest. These petty tyrants ruled with an iron rod; and when at any time a patriot rose to resist their oppressions, if they failed to subdue him by force they resorted to assassination. At the commencement of the last century they quelled one revolt by the aid of German auxiliaries, whom the Emperor Charles VI. sent against a people who had never offended him, and who were fighting for whatever is most dear to man. In 1734 the war was renewed; and Theodore, a Westphalian baron, then appeared upon the stage. In that age men were not accustomed to see adventurers play for kingdoms, and Theodore became the common talk of Europe. He had served in the French armies; and having afterwards been noticed both by Ripperda and Alberoni, their example, perhaps, inflamed a spirit as ambitious and as unprincipled as their own. He employed the whole of his means in raising money and procuring arms; then wrote to the leaders of the Corsican patriots, to offer them considerable assistance, if they would erect Corsica into an independent kingdom, and elect him king. When he landed among them, they were struck with his stately person, his dignified manners, and imposing talents. They believed the magnificent promises of foreign assistance which he held out, and elected him king accordingly. Had his means been as he represented them, they could not have acted more wisely than in thus at once fixing the government of their country, and putting an end to those rivalries among the leading families, which

had so often proved pernicious to the public weal. He struck money, conferred titles, blocked up the fortified towns which were held by the Genoese, and amused the people with promises of assistance for about eight months: then, perceiving that they cooled in their affections towards him in proportion as their expectations were disappointed, he left the island, under the plea of expediting himself the succours which he had so long awaited. Such was his address, that he prevailed upon several rich merchants in Holland, particularly the Jews, to trust him with cannon and warlike stores to a great amount. They shipped these under the charge of a supercargo. Theodore returned with this supercargo to Corsica, and put him to death on his arrival, as the shortest way of settling the account. The remainder of his life was a series of deserved afflictions. He threw in the stores which he had thus fraudulently obtained; but he did not dare to land, for Genoa had now called in the French to their assistance, and a price had been set upon his head. His dreams of royalty were now at an end; he took refuge in London, contracted debts, and was thrown into the King's Bench. After lingering there many years, he was released under an act of insolvency, in consequence of which he made over the kingdom of Corsica for the use of his creditors, and died shortly after his deliverance.

The French, who have never acted a generous part in the history of the world, readily entered into the views of the Genoese, which accorded with their own policy: for such was their ascendancy at Genoa, that in subduing Corsica for these allies, they were in fact subduing it for themselves. They entered into the contest, therefore, with their usual vigour, and their usual cruelty. It was in vain that the Corsicans addressed a most affecting memorial to the court of Versailles; that remorseless government persisted in its flagitious project. They poured in troops; dressed a part of them like the people of the country, by which means they deceived and destroyed many of the patriots; cut down the standing corn, the vines, and the olives; set fire to the villages, and hung all the most able and active men who fell into their hands. A war of this kind may be carried on with success against a country so small and so thinly peopled as Corsica. Having reduced the island to perfect servitude, which they called peace, the French withdrew their forces. As soon as they were gone, men, women, and boys rose at once against their oppressors. The circumstances of the times were now favourable to them; and some British ships, acting as allies of Sardinia, bombarded Bastia and San Fiorenzo, and delivered them into the hands of the patriots. This service was long remembered with gratitude: the impression made upon our own countrymen was less favourable. They had witnessed the heartburnings of rival chiefs, and the dissensions among the patriots; and perceiving the state of barbarism to which continual oppression, and habits of lawless turbulence, had reduced the nation, did not recollect that the vices of the people were owing to their unhappy circumstances, but that the virtues which they displayed arose from their own nature. This feeling, perhaps, influenced the British court, when, in 1746, Corsica offered to put herself under the protection of Great Britain: an answer was returned, expressing satisfaction at such a communication, hoping that the Corsicans would preserve the same sentiments, but signifying also that the present was not the time for such a measure.

These brave islanders then formed a government for themselves, under two leaders, Gaffori and Matra, who had the title of protectors. The latter is represented as a partisan of Genoa, favouring the views of the oppressors of his country by the most treasonable means. Gaffori was a hero worthy of old times. His eloquence was long remembered with admiration. A band of assassins was once advancing against him; he heard of their approach, went out to meet them; and, with a serene dignity which overawed them, requested them to hear him. He then spake to them so forcibly of the distresses of their country, her intolerable wrongs, and the hopes and views of their brethren in arms, that the very men who had been hired to murder him, fell at his feet, implored his forgiveness, and joined his banner. While he was besieging the Genoese in Corte, a part of the garrison perceiving the nurse with his eldest son, then an infant in arms, straying at a little distance from the camp, suddenly sallied out and seized them.

The use they made of their persons was in conformity to their usual execrable conduct. When Gaffori advanced to batter the walls, they held up the child directly over that part of the wall at which the guns were pointed. The Corsicans stopped: but Gaffori stood at their head, and ordered them to continue the fire. Providentially the child escaped, and lived to relate, with becoming feeling, a fact so honourable to his father. That father conducted the affairs of the island till 1753, when he was assassinated by some wretches, set on, it is believed, by Genoa, but certainly pensioned by that abominable government after the deed. He left the country in such a state that it was enabled to continue the war two years after his death without a leader: the Corsicans then found one worthy of their cause in Pasquale de Paoli.

Paoli's father was one of the patriots who effected their escape from Corsica when the French reduced it to obedience. He retired to Naples, and brought up his youngest son in the Neapolitan service. The Corsicans heard of young Paoli's abilities, and solicited him to come over to his native country, and take the command. He did not hesitate long: his father, who was too far advanced in years to take an active part himself, encouraged him to go; and when they separated, the old man fell on his neck, and kissed him, and gave him his blessing. "My son," said he, "perhaps I may never see you more; but in my mind I shall ever be present with you. Your design is great and noble; and I doubt not but God will bless you in it. I shall devote to your cause the little remainder of my life in offering up my prayers for your success." When Paoli assumed the command, he found all things in confusion: he formed a democratical government, of which he was chosen chief: restored the authority of the laws; established a university; and took such measures, both for repressing abuses and moulding the rising generation, that, if France had not interfered, upon its wicked and detestable principle of usurpation, Corsica might at this day have been as free, and flourishing and happy a commonwealth as any of the Grecian states in the days of their prosperity. The Genoese were at this time driven out of their fortified towns, and must in a short time have been expelled. France was indebted some millions of livres to Genoa: it was not convenient to pay this money; so the French minister proposed to the Genoese, that she should discharge the debt by sending six battalions to serve in Corsica for four years. The indignation which this conduct excited in all generous hearts was forcibly expressed by Rousseau, who, with all his errors, was seldom deficient in feeling for the wrongs of humanity. "You Frenchmen," said he, writing to one of that people, "are a thoroughly servile nation, thoroughly sold to tyranny, thoroughly cruel and relentless in persecuting the unhappy. If you knew of a freeman at the other end of the world, I believe you would go thither for the mere pleasure of extirpating him."

The immediate object of the French happened to be purely mercenary: they wanted to clear off their debt to Genoa; and as the presence of their troops in the island effected this, they aimed at doing the people no farther mischief. Would that the conduct of England had been at this time free from reproach! but a proclamation was issued by the English government, after the peace of Paris, prohibiting any intercourse with the rebels of Corsica. Paoli said, he did not expect this from Great Britain. This great man was deservedly proud of his country. "I defy Rome, Sparta, or Thebes," he would say, "to show me thirty years of such patriotism as Corsica can boast!" Availing himself of the respite which the inactivity of the French and the weakness of the Genoese allowed, he prosecuted his plans of civilising the people. He used to say, that though he had an unspeakable pride in the prospect of the fame to which he aspired; yet if he could but render his countrymen happy, he could be content to be forgotten. His own importance he never affected to undervalue. "We are now to our country," said he, "like the prophet Elisha stretched over the dead child of the Shunamite,—eye to eye, nose to nose, mouth to mouth. It begins to recover warmth, and to revive: I hope it will yet regain full health and vigour."

But when the four years were expired, France purchased the sovereignty of Corsica from the Genoese for forty millions of livres; as if the Genoese had been entitled to sell it; as if any bargain and sale could justify one country in taking possession of another against the will of the inhabitants, and butchering all who oppose the usurpation! Among the enormities which France has committed, this action seems but as a speck; yet the foulest murderer that ever suffered by the hand of the executioner has infinitely less guilt upon his soul than the statesman who concluded this treaty, and the monarch who sanctioned and confirmed it. A desperate and glorious resistance was made, but it was in vain; no power interposed in behalf of these injured islanders, and the French poured in as many troops as were required. They offered to confirm Paoli in the supreme authority, only on condition that he would hold it under their government. His answer was, that "the rocks which surrounded him should melt away before he would betray a cause which he held in common with the poorest Corsican." This people then set a price upon his head. During two campaigns he kept them at bay: they overpowered him at length; he was driven to the shore, and having escaped on shipboard, took refuge in England. It is said that Lord Shelburne resigned his seat in the cabinet because the ministry looked on without attempting to prevent France from succeeding in this abominable and important act of aggrandizement. In one respect, however, our country acted as became her. Paoli was welcomed with the honours which he deserved, a pension of L1200 was immediately granted him, and provision was liberally made for his elder brother and his nephew.

About twenty years Paoli remained in England, enjoying the friendship of the wise and the admiration of the good. But when the French Revolution began, it seemed as if the restoration of Corsica was at hand. The whole country, as if animated by one spirit, rose and demanded liberty; and the National Assembly passed a decree recognising the island as a department of France, and therefore entitled to all the privileges of the new French constitution. This satisfied the Corsicans, which it ought not to have done; and Paoli, in whom the ardour of youth was passed, seeing that his countrymen were contented, and believing that they were about to enjoy a state of freedom, naturally wished to return to his native country. He resigned his pension in the year 1790, and appeared at the bar of the Assembly with the Corsican deputies, when they took the oath of fidelity to France. But the course of events in France soon dispelled those hopes of a new and better order of things, which Paoli, in common with so many of the friends of human-kind, had indulged; and perceiving, after the execution of the king, that a civil war was about to ensue, of which no man could foresee the issue, he prepared to break the connection between Corsica and the French Republic. The convention suspecting such a design, and perhaps occasioning it by their suspicions, ordered him to their bar. That way he well knew led to the guillotine; and returning a respectful answer, he declared that he would never be found wanting in his duty, but pleaded age and infirmity as a reason for disobeying the summons. Their second order was more summary; and the French troops, who were in Corsica, aided by those of the natives, who were either influenced by hereditary party feelings, or who were sincere in Jacobinism, took the field against him. But the people were with him. He repaired to Corte, the capital of the island, and was again invested with the authority which he had held in the noonday of his fame. The convention upon this denounced him as a rebel, and set a price upon his head. It was not the first time that France had proscribed Paoli.

Paoli now opened a correspondence with Lord Hood, promising, if the English would make an attack upon St. Fiorenzo from the sea, he would at the same time attack it by land. This promise he was unable to perform; and Commodore Linzee, who, in reliance upon it, was sent upon this service, was repulsed with some loss. Lord Hood, who had now been compelled to evacuate Toulon, suspected Paoli of intentionally deceiving him. This was an injurious suspicion. Shortly afterwards he dispatched Lieutenant-Colonel (afterward Sir John) Moore and Major Koehler to confer with him upon a plan of

operations. Sir Gilbert Elliot accompanied them; and it was agreed that, in consideration of the succours, both military and naval, which his Britannic Majesty should afford for the purpose of expelling the French, the island of Corsica should be delivered into the immediate possession of his Majesty, and bind itself to acquiesce in any settlement he might approve of concerning its government, and its future relation with Great Britain. While this negotiation was going on, Nelson cruised off the island with a small squadron, to prevent the enemy from throwing in supplies. Close to St. Fiorenzo the French had a storehouse of flour near their only mill: he watched an opportunity, and landed 120 men, who threw the flour into the sea, burnt the mill, and re-embarked before 1000 men, who were sent against him, could occasion them the loss of a single man. While he exerted himself thus, keeping out all supplies, intercepting despatches, attacking their outposts and forts, and cutting out vessels from the bay,—a species of warfare which depresses the spirit of an enemy even more than it injures them, because of the sense of individual superiority which it indicates in the assailants—troops were landed, and St. Fiorenzo was besieged. The French finding themselves unable to maintain their post sunk one of their frigates, burnt another, and retreated to Bastia. Lord Hood submitted to General Dundas, who commanded the land forces, a plan for the reduction of this place: the general declined co-operating, thinking the attempt impracticable without a reinforcement of 2000 men, which he expected from Gibraltar. Upon this Lord Hood determined to reduce it with the naval force under his command; and leaving part of his fleet off Toulon, he came with the rest to Bastia.

He showed a proper sense of respect for Nelson's services, and of confidence in his talents, by taking care not to bring with him any older captain. A few days before their arrival, Nelson had had what he called a brush with the enemy. "If I had had with me 500 troops," he said, "to a certainty I should have stormed the town; and I believe it might have been carried. Armies go so slow that seamen think they never mean to get forward; but I daresay they act on a surer principle, although we seldom fail." During this partial action our army appeared upon the heights; and having reconnoitered the place, returned to St. Fiorenzo. "What the general could have seen to make a retreat necessary," said Nelson, "I cannot comprehend. A thousand men would certainly take Bastia: with five hundred and the *Agamemnon* I would attempt it. My seamen are now what British seamen ought to be—almost invincible. They really mind shot no more than peas." General Dundas had not the same confidence. "After mature consideration," he said in a letter to Lord Hood, "and a personal inspection for several days of all circumstances, local as well as others, I consider the siege of Bastia, with our present means and force, to be a most visionary and rash attempt; such as no officer would be justified in undertaking." Lord Hood replied that nothing would be more gratifying to his feelings than to have the whole responsibility upon himself; and that he was ready and willing to undertake the reduction of the place at his own risk with the force and means at present there. General D'Aubant, who succeeded at this time to the command of the army, coincided in opinion with his predecessor, and did not think it right to furnish his lordship with a single soldier, cannon, or any stores. Lord Hood could only obtain a few artillerymen; and ordering on board that part of the troops who, having been embarked as marines, "were borne on the ships" books as part of their respective complements, he began the siege with 1183 soldiers, artillerymen, and marines, and 250 sailors. "We are but few," said Nelson, "but of the right sort; our general at St. Fiorenzo not giving us one of the five regiments he has there lying idle."

These men were landed on the 4th of April, under Lieutenant-Colonel Villettes and Nelson, who had now acquired from the army the title of brigadier. Guns were dragged by the sailors up heights where it appeared almost impossible to convey them—a work of the greatest difficulty, and which Nelson said could never, in his opinion, have been accomplished by any but British seamen. The soldiers, though less dexterous in such service, because not accustomed, like sailors, to habitual dexterity, behaved with equal spirit. "Their zeal," said the brigadier, "is almost unexampled. There is not a man

but considers himself as personally interested in the event, and deserted by the general. It has, I am persuaded, made them equal to double their numbers." This is one proof, of many, that for our soldiers to equal our seamen, it is only necessary for them to be equally well commanded. They have the same heart and soul, as well as the same flesh and blood. Too much may, indeed, be exacted from them in a retreat; but set their face toward a foe, and there is nothing within the reach of human achievement which they cannot perform. The French had improved the leisure which our military commander had allowed them; and before Lord Hood commenced his operations, he had the mortification of seeing that the enemy were every day erecting new works, strengthening old ones, and rendering the attempt more difficult. La Combe St. Michel, the commissioner from the national convention, who was in the city, replied in these terms to the summons of the British admiral—"I have hot shot for your ships, and bayonets for your troops. When two-thirds of our men are killed, I will then trust to the generosity of the English." The siege, however, was not sustained with the firmness which such a reply seemed to augur. On the 19th of May a treaty of capitulation was begun; that same evening the troops from St. Fiorenzo made their appearance on the hills; and, on the following morning, General d'Aubant arrived with the whole army to take possession of Bastia.

The event of the siege had justified the confidence of the sailors; but they themselves excused the opinion of the generals when they saw what they had done. "I am all astonishment," said Nelson, "when I reflect on what we have achieved; 1000 regulars, 1,500 national guards, and a large party of Corsican troops, 4,000 in all, laying down their arms to 1200 soldiers, marines, and seamen! I always was of opinion, have ever acted up to it, and never had any reason to repent it, that one Englishman was equal to three Frenchmen. Had this been an English town, I am sure it would not have been taken by them." When it had been resolved to attack the place, the enemy were supposed to be far inferior in number; and it was not till the whole had been arranged, and the siege publicly undertaken, that Nelson received certain information of the great superiority of the garrison. This intelligence he kept secret, fearing lest, if so fair a pretext were afforded, the attempt would be abandoned. "My own honour," said he to his wife, "Lord Hood's honour, and the honour of our country, must have been sacrificed had I mentioned what I knew; therefore you will believe what must have been my feelings during the whole siege, when I had often proposals made to me to write to Lord Hood to raise it." Those very persons who thus advised him, were rewarded for their conduct at the siege of Bastia: Nelson, by whom it may truly be affirmed that Bastia was taken, received no reward. Lord Hood's thanks to him, both public and private, were, as he himself said, the handsomest which man could give; but his signal merits were not so mentioned in the despatches as to make them sufficiently known to the nation, nor to obtain for him from government those honours to which they so amply entitled him. This could only have arisen from the haste in which the despatches were written; certainly not from any deliberate purpose, for Lord Hood was uniformly his steady and sincere friend.

One of the cartel's ships, which carried the garrison of Bastia to Toulon, brought back intelligence that the French were about to sail from that port;-such exertions had they made to repair the damage done at the evacuation, and to fit out a fleet. The intelligence was speedily verified. Lord Hood sailed in quest of them toward the islands of Hieres. The *Agamemnon* was with him. "I pray God," said Nelson, writing to his wife, "that we may meet their fleet. If any accident should happen to me, I am sure my conduct will be such as will entitle you to the royal favour; not that I have the least idea but I shall return to you, and full of honour: if not, the Lord's will be done. My name shall never be a disgrace to those who may belong to me. The little I have, I have given to you, except a small annuity—I wish it was more; but I have never got a farthing dishonestly: it descends from clean hands. Whatever fate awaits me, I pray God to bless you, and preserve you, for your son's sake." With a mind thus prepared, and thus confident, his hopes and wishes seemed on the point of being gratified, when the enemy were

discovered close under the land, near St. Tropez. The wind fell, and prevented Lord Hood from getting between them and the shore, as he designed: boats came out from Antibes and other places to their assistance, and towed them within the shoals in Gourjean Roads, where they were protected by the batteries on isles St. Honore and St. Marguerite, and on Cape Garousse. Here the English admiral planned a new mode of attack, meaning to double on five of the nearest ships; but the wind again died away, and it was found that they had anchored in compact order, guarding the only passage for large ships. There was no way of effecting this passage, except by towing or warping the vessels; and this rendered the attempt impracticable. For this time the enemy escaped; but Nelson bore in mind the admirable plan of attack which Lord Hood had devised, and there came a day when they felt its tremendous effects.

The *Agamemnon* was now despatched to co-operate at the siege of Calvi with General Sir Charles Stuart; an officer who, unfortunately for his country, never had an adequate field allotted him for the display of those eminent talents which were, to all who knew him, so conspicuous. Nelson had less responsibility here than at Bastia; and was acting with a man after his own heart, who was never sparing of himself, and slept every night in the advanced battery. But the service was not less hard than that of the former siege. "We will fag ourselves to death," said he to Lord Hood, "before any blame shall lie at our doors. I trust it will not be forgotten, that twenty-five pieces of heavy ordnance have been dragged to the different batteries, mounted, and, all but three, fought by seamen, except one artilleryman to point the guns." The climate proved more destructive than the service; for this was during the lion sun, as they call our season of the dog-days. Of 2000 men, above half were sick, and the rest like so many phantoms. Nelson described himself as the reed among the oaks, bowing before the storm when they were laid low by it. "All the prevailing disorders have attacked me," said he, "but I have not strength enough for them to fasten on." The loss from the enemy was not great; but Nelson received a serious injury: a shot struck the ground near him, and drove the sand and small gravel into one of his eyes. He spoke of it slightly at the time: writing the same day to Lord Hood, he only said that he had got a little hurt that morning, not much; and the next day, he said, he should be able to attend his duty in the evening. In fact, he suffered it to confine him only one day; but the sight was lost.

After the fall of Calvi, his services were, by a strange omission, altogether overlooked; and his name was not even mentioned in the list of wounded. This was no ways imputable to the admiral, for he sent home to government Nelson's journal of the siege, that they might fully understand the nature of his indefatigable and unequalled exertions. If those exertions were not rewarded in the conspicuous manner which they deserved, the fault was in the administration of the day, not in Lord Hood. Nelson felt himself neglected. "One hundred and ten days," said he, "I have been actually engaged at sea and on shore against the enemy; three actions against ships, two against Bastia in my ship, four boat actions, and two villages taken, and twelve sail of vessels burnt. I do not know that any one has done more. I have had the comfort to be always applauded by my Commander-in-Chief, but never to be rewarded; and, what is more mortifying, for services in which I have been wounded, others have been praised, who, at the same time, were actually in bed, far from the scene of action. They have not done me justice. But never mind, I'll have a *Gazette* of my own." How amply was this second-sight of glory realised!

The health of his ship's company had now, in his own words, been miserably torn to pieces by as hard service as a ship's crew ever performed: 150 were in their beds when he left Calvi; of them he lost 54 and believed that the constitutions of the rest were entirely destroyed. He was now sent with despatches to Mr. Drake, at Genoa, and had his first interview with the Doge. The French had, at this

time, taken possession of Vado Bay, in the Genoese territory; and Nelson foresaw that, if their thoughts were bent on the invasion of Italy, they would accomplish it the ensuing spring. "The allied powers," he said, "were jealous of each other; and none but England was hearty in the cause." His wish was for peace on fair terms, because England he thought was draining herself to maintain allies who would not fight for themselves. Lord Hood had now returned to England, and the command devolved on Admiral Hotham. The affairs of the Mediterranean wore at this time a gloomy aspect. The arts, as well as the arms of the enemy, were gaining the ascendancy there. Tuscany concluded peace relying upon the faith of France, which was, in fact, placing itself at her mercy. Corsica was in danger. We had taken that island for ourselves, annexed it formally to the crown of Great Britain, and given it a constitution as free as our own. This was done with the consent of the majority of the inhabitants; and no transaction between two countries was ever more fairly or legitimately conducted: yet our conduct was unwise;—the island is large enough to form an independent state, and such we should have made it, under our protection, as long as protection might be needed; the Corsicans would then have felt as a nation; but when one party had given up the country to England, the natural consequence was that the other looked to France. The question proposed to the people was, to which would they belong? Our language and our religion were against us; our unaccommodating manners, it is to be feared, still more so. The French were better politicians. In intrigue they have ever been unrivalled; and it now became apparent that, in spite of old wrongs, which ought never to have been forgotten nor forgiven, their partisans were daily acquiring strength. It is part of the policy of France, and a wise policy it is, to impress upon other powers the opinion of its strength, by lofty language: and by threatening before it strikes; a system which, while it keeps up the spirit of its allies, and perpetually stimulates their hopes, tends also to dismay its enemies. Corsica was now loudly threatened. "The French, who had not yet been taught to feel their own inferiority upon the seas, braved us in contempt upon that element." They had a superior fleet in the Mediterranean, and they sent it out with express orders to seek the English and engage them. Accordingly, the Toulon fleet, consisting of seventeen ships of the line and five smaller vessels, put to sea. Admiral Hotham received this information at Leghorn, and sailed immediately in search of them. He had with him fourteen sail of the line, and one Neapolitan seventy-four; but his ships were only half-manned, containing but 7,650 men, whereas the enemy had 16,900. He soon came in sight of them: a general action was expected; and Nelson, as was his custom on such occasions, wrote a hasty letter to his wife, as that which might possibly contain his last farewell. "The lives of all," said he, "are in the hand of Him who knows best whether to preserve mine or not; my character and good name are in my own keeping."

But however confident the French government might be of their naval superiority, the officers had no such feeling; and after manoeuvring for a day in sight of the English fleet, they suffered themselves to be chased. One of their ships, the *Ça Ira*, of eighty-four guns, carried away her main and fore top-masts. The *Inconstant* frigate fired at the disabled ship, but received so many shot that she was obliged to leave her. Soon afterwards a French frigate took the *Ça Ira* in tow; and the *Sans-Culottes*, one hundred and twenty, and the *Jean Barras*, seventy-four, kept about gunshot distance on her weather bow. The *Agamemnon* stood towards her, having no ship of the line to support her within several miles. As she drew near, the *Ça Ira* fired her stern guns so truly, that not a shot missed some part of the ship; and latterly, the masts were struck by every shot. It had been Nelson's intention not to fire before he touched her stern; but seeing how impossible it was that he should be supported, and how certainly the *Agamemnon* must be severely cut up if her masts were disabled, he altered his plan according to the occasion. As soon, therefore, as he was within a hundred yards of her stern, he ordered the helm to be put a-starboard, and the driver and after-sails to be brailled up and shivered; and, as the ship fell off, gave the enemy her whole broadside. They instantly braced up the after-yards, put the helm a-port, and stood after her again. This manoeuvre he practised for two hours and a quarter,

never allowing the *Ça Ira* to get a single gun from either side to bear on him; and when the French fired their after-guns now, it was no longer with coolness and precision, for every shot went far ahead. By this time her sails were hanging in tatters, her mizen-top-mast, mizen-top-sail, and cross-jack-yards shot away. But the frigate which had her in tow hove in stays, and got her round. Both these French ships now brought their guns to bear, and opened their fire. The *Agamemnon* passed them within half-pistol shot; almost every shot passed over her, for the French had elevated their guns for the rigging, and for distant firing, and did not think of altering the elevation. As soon as the *Agamemnon's* after-guns ceased to bear, she hove in stays, keeping a constant fire as she came round; and being worked, said Nelson, with as much exactness as if she had been turning into Spithead. On getting round, he saw that the *Sans-Culottes*, which had wore, with many of the enemy's ships, was under his lee bow, and standing to leeward. The admiral, at the same time, made the signal for the van ships to join him. Upon this Nelson bore away, and prepared to set all sail; and the enemy, having saved their ship, hauled close to the wind, and opened upon him a distant and ineffectual fire. Only seven of the *Agamemnon's* men were hurt—a thing which Nelson himself remarked as wonderful: her sails and rigging were very much cut, and she had many shots in her hull, and some between wind and water. The *Ça Ira* lost 110 men that day, and was so cut up that she could not get a top-mast aloft during the night.

At daylight on the following morning, the English ships were taken aback with a fine breeze at N.W., while the enemy's fleet kept the southerly wind. The body of their fleet was about five miles distant; the *Ça Ira* and the *Censeur*, seventy-four, which had her in tow, about three and a half. All sail was made to cut these ships off; and as the French attempted to save them, a partial action was brought on. The *Agamemnon* was again engaged with her yesterday's antagonist; but she had to fight on both sides the ship at the same time. The *Ça Ira* and the *Censeur* fought most gallantly: the first lost nearly 300 men, in addition to her former loss; the last, 350. Both at length struck; and Lieutenant Andrews, of the *Agamemnon*, brother to the lady to whom Nelson had become attached in France, and, in Nelson's own words, "as gallant an officer as ever stepped a quarter-deck," hoisted English colours on board them both. The rest of the enemy's ships' behaved very ill. As soon as these vessels had struck, Nelson went to Admiral Hotham and proposed that the two prizes should be left with the *Illustrious* and *Courageux*, which had been crippled in the action, and with four frigates, and that the rest of the fleet should pursue the enemy, and follow up the advantage to the utmost. But his reply was—"We must be contented: we have done very well."—"Now," said Nelson, "had we taken ten sail, and allowed the eleventh to escape, when it had been possible to have got at her, I could never have called it well done. Goodall backed me; I got him to write to the admiral; but it would not do. We should have had such a day as, I believe, the annals of England never produced." In this letter the character of Nelson fully manifests itself. "I wish," said he, "to be an admiral, and in the command of the English fleet: I should very soon either do much, or be ruined: my disposition cannot bear tame and slow measures. Sure I am, had I commanded on the 14th, that either the whole French fleet would have graced my triumph, or I should have been in a confounded scrape." What the event would have been, he knew from his prophetic feelings and his own consciousness of power; and we also know it now, for Aboukir and Trafalgar have told it.

The *Ça Ira* and *Censeur* probably defended themselves with more obstinacy in this action, from a persuasion that, if they struck, no quarter would be given; because they had fired red-hot shot, and had also a preparation sent, as they said, by the convention from Paris, which seems to have been of the nature of the Greek fire; for it became liquid when it was discharged, and water would not extinguish its flames. This combustible was concealed with great care in the captured ships; like the red-hot shot, it had been found useless in battle. Admiral Hotham's action saved Corsica for the time; but the victory had been incomplete, and the arrival at Toulon of six sail of the line, two frigates, and two cutters from

Brest, gave the French a superiority which, had they known how to use it, would materially have endangered the British Mediterranean fleet. That fleet had been greatly neglected at the Admiralty during Lord Chatham's administration: and it did not, for some time, feel the beneficial effect of his removal. Lord Hood had gone home to represent the real state of affairs, and solicit reinforcements adequate to the exigencies of the time, and the importance of the scene of action. But that fatal error of under-proportioning the force to the service; that ruinous economy, which, by sparing a little, renders all that is spent useless, infected the British councils; and Lord Hood, not being able to obtain such reinforcements as he knew were necessary, resigned the command. "Surely," said Nelson, "the people at home have forgotten us." Another Neapolitan seventy-four joined Admiral Hotham, and Nelson observed with sorrow that this was matter of exultation to an English fleet. When the store-ships and victuallers from Gibraltar arrived, their escape from the enemy was thought wonderful; and yet, had they not escaped, "the game," said Nelson, "was up here. At this moment our operations are at a stand for want of ships to support the Austrians in getting possession of the sea-coast of the king of Sardinia; and behold our admiral does not feel himself equal to show himself, much less to give assistance in their operations." It was reported that the French were again out with 18 or 20 sail. The combined British and Neapolitan were but sixteen; should the enemy be only eighteen, Nelson made no doubt of a complete victory; but if they were twenty, he said, it was not to be expected; and a battle, without complete victory, would have been destruction, because another mast was not to be got on that side Gibraltar. At length Admiral Man arrived with a squadron from England. "What they can mean by sending him with only five sail of the line," said Nelson, "is truly astonishing; but all men are alike, and we in this country do not find any amendment or alteration from the old Board of Admiralty. They should know that half the ships in the fleet require to go to England; and that long ago they ought to have reinforced us."

About this time Nelson was made colonel of marines; a mark of approbation which he had long wished for rather than expected. It came in good season, for his spirits were oppressed by the thought that his services had not been acknowledged as they deserved; and it abated the resentful feeling which would else have been excited by the answer to an application to the War-office. During his four months' land service in Corsica, he had lost all his ship furniture, owing to the movements of a camp. Upon this he wrote to the Secretary at War, briefly stating what his services on shore had been, and saying, he trusted it was not asking an improper thing to request that the same allowance might be made to him which would be made to a land officer of his rank, which, situated as he was, would be that of a brigadier-general: if this could not be accorded, he hoped that his additional expenses would be paid him. The answer which he received was, that "no pay had ever been issued under the direction of the War-office to officers of the navy serving with the army on shore."

He now entered upon a new line of service. The Austrian and Sardinian armies, under General de Vins, required a British squadron to co-operate with them in driving the French from the Riviera di Genoa; and as Nelson had been so much in the habit of soldiering, it was immediately fixed that the brigadier should go. He sailed from St. Fiorenzo on this destination; but fell in, off Cape del Mele, with the enemy's fleet, who immediately gave his squadron chase. The chase lasted four-and-twenty hours; and, owing to the fickleness of the wind, the British ships were sometimes hard pressed; but the want of skill on the part of the French gave Nelson many advantages. Nelson bent his way back to St. Fiorenzo, where the fleet, which was in the midst of watering and refitting, had, for seven hours, the mortification of seeing him almost in possession of the enemy, before the wind would allow them to put out to his assistance. The French, however, at evening, went off, not choosing to approach nearer the shore. During the night, Admiral Hotham, by great exertions, got under weigh; and, having sought the enemy four days, came in sight of them on the fifth. Baffling winds and vexatious calms, so

common in the Mediterranean, rendered it impossible to close with them; only a partial action could be brought on; and then the firing made a perfect calm. The French being to windward, drew inshore; and the English fleet was becalmed six or seven miles to the westward. *L'Alcide*, of seventy-four guns, struck; but before she could be taken possession of, a box of combustibles in her fore-top took fire, and the unhappy crew experienced how far more perilous their inventions were to themselves than to their enemies. So rapid was the conflagration, that the French in their official account say, the hull, the masts, and sails, all seemed to take fire at the same moment; and though the English boats were put out to the assistance of the poor wretches on board, not more than 200 could be saved. The *Agamemnon*, and Captain Rowley in the *Cumberland*, were just getting into close action a second time, when the admiral called them off, the wind now blowing directly into the Gulf of Frejus, where the enemy anchored after the evening closed.

Nelson now proceeded to his station with eight sail of frigates under his command. Arriving at Genoa, he had a conference with Mr. Drake, the British envoy to that state; the result of which was, that the object of the British must be to put an entire stop to all trade between Genoa, France, and the places occupied by the French troops; for unless this trade were stopped, it would be scarcely possible for the allied armies to hold their situation, and impossible for them to make any progress in driving the enemy out of the Riviera di Genoa. Mr. Drake was of opinion that even Nice might fall for want of supplies, if the trade with Genoa were cut off. This sort of blockade Nelson could not carry on without great risk to himself. A captain in the navy, as he represented to the envoy, is liable to prosecution for detention and damages. This danger was increased by an order which had then lately been issued; by which, when a neutral ship was detained, a complete specification of her cargo was directed to be sent to the secretary of the Admiralty, and no legal process instituted against her till the pleasure of that board should be communicated. This was requiring an impossibility. The cargoes of ships detained upon this station, consisting chiefly of corn, would be spoiled long before the orders of the Admiralty could be known; and then, if they should happen to release the vessel, the owners would look to the captain for damages. Even the only precaution which could be taken against this danger, involved another danger not less to be apprehended: for if the captain should direct the cargo to be taken out, the freight paid for, and the vessel released, the agent employed might prove fraudulent, and become bankrupt; and in that case the captain became responsible. Such things had happened: Nelson therefore required, as the only means for carrying on that service, which was judged essential to the common cause, without exposing the officers to ruin, that the British envoy should appoint agents to pay the freight, release the vessels, sell the cargo, and hold the amount till process was had upon it: government thus securing its officers. "I am acting," said Nelson. "not only without the orders of my commander-in-chief, but, in some measure, contrary to him. However, I have not only the support of his Majesty's ministers, both at Turin and Genoa, but a consciousness that I am doing what is right and proper for the service of our king and country. Political courage, in an officer abroad, is as highly necessary as military courage."

This quality, which is as much rarer than military courage as it is more valuable, and without which the soldier's bravery is often of little avail, Nelson possessed in an eminent degree. His representations were attended to as they deserved. Admiral Hotham commended him for what he had done; and the attention of government was awakened to the injury which the cause of the allies continually suffered from the frauds of neutral vessels. "What changes in my life of activity!" said the indefatigable man. "Here I am, having commenced a co-operation with an old Austrian general, almost fancying myself charging at the head of a troop of horse! I do not write less than from ten to twenty letters every day; which, with the Austrian general and aides-de-camp, and my own little squadron, fully employ my time. This I like; active service or none." It was Nelson's mind which supported his feeble body

through these exertions. He was at this time almost blind, and wrote with very great pain. "Poor *Agamemnon*," he sometimes said, "was as nearly worn out as her captain; and both must soon be laid up to repair."

When Nelson first saw General de Vins, he thought him an able man, who was willing to act with vigour. The general charged his inactivity upon the Piedmontese and Neapolitans, whom, he said, nothing could induce to act; and he concerted a plan with Nelson for embarking a part of the Austrian army, and landing it in the rear of the French. But the English commodore soon began to suspect that the Austrian general was little disposed to any active operations. In the hope of spurring him on, he wrote to him, telling him that he had surveyed the coast to the W. as far as Nice, and would undertake to embark 4,000 or 5,000 men, with their arms and a few days' provisions, on board the squadron, and land them within two miles of St. Remo, with their field-pieces. Respecting further provisions for the Austrian army, he would provide convoys, that they should arrive in safety; and if a re-embarkation should be found necessary, he would cover it with the squadron. The possession of St. Remo, as headquarters for magazines of every kind, would enable the Austrian general to turn his army to the eastward or westward. The enemy at Oneglia would be cut off from provisions, and men could be landed to attack that place whenever it was judged necessary. St. Remo was the only place between Vado and Ville Franche where the squadron could lie in safety, and anchor in almost all winds. The bay was not so good as Vado for large ships; but it had a mole, which Vado had not, where all small vessels could lie, and load and unload their cargoes. This bay being in possession of the allies, Nice could be completely blockaded by sea. General de Vins affecting, in his reply, to consider that Nelson's proposal had no other end than that of obtaining the bay of St. Remo as a station for the ships, told him, what he well knew, and had expressed before, that Vado Bay was a better anchorage; nevertheless, if *Monsieur le Commandant Nelson* was well assured that part of the fleet could winter there, there was no risk to which he would not expose himself with pleasure, for the sake of procuring a safe station for the vessels of his Britannic Majesty. Nelson soon assured the Austrian commander that this was not the object of his memorial. He now began to suspect that both the Austrian Court and their general had other ends in view than the cause of the allies. "This army," said he, "is slow beyond all description; and I begin to think that the Emperor is anxious to touch another £4,000,000 of English money. As for the German generals, war is their trade, and peace is ruin to them; therefore we cannot expect that they should have any wish to finish the war. The politics of courts are so mean, that private people would be ashamed to act in the same way; all is trick and finesse, to which the common cause is sacrificed. The general wants a loop-hole; it has for some time appeared to me that he means to go no further than his present position, and to lay the miscarriage of the enterprise against Nice, which has always been held out as the great object of his army, to the non-cooperation of the British fleet and of the Sardinians."

To prevent this plea, Nelson again addressed De Vins, requesting only to know the time, and the number of troops ready to embark; then he would, he said, dispatch a ship to Admiral Hotham, requesting transports, having no doubt of obtaining them, and trusting that the plan would be successful to its fullest extent. Nelson thought at the time that, if the whole fleet were offered him for transports, he would find some other excuse; and Mr. Drake, who was now appointed to reside at the Austrian headquarters, entertained the same idea of the general's sincerity. It was not, however, put so clearly to the proof as it ought to have been. He replied that, as soon as Nelson could declare himself ready with the vessels necessary for conveying 10,000 men, with their artillery and baggage, he would put the army in motion. But Nelson was not enabled to do this: Admiral Hotham, who was highly meritorious in leaving such a man so much at his own discretion, pursued a cautious system, ill according with the bold and comprehensive views of Nelson, who continually regretted Lord Hood,

saying that the nation had suffered much by his resignation of the Mediterranean command. The plan which had been concerted, he said, would astonish the French, and perhaps the English.

There was no unity in the views of the allied powers, no cordiality in their co-operation, no energy in their councils. The neutral powers assisted France more effectually than the allies assisted each other. The Genoese ports were at this time filled with French privateers, which swarmed out every night, and covered the gulf; and French vessels were allowed to tow out of the port of Genoa itself, board vessels which were coming in, and then return into the mole. This was allowed without a remonstrance; while, though Nelson abstained most carefully from offering any offence to the Genoese territory or flag, complaints were so repeatedly made against his squadron, that, he says, it seemed a trial who should be tired first; they of complaining, or he of answering their complaints. But the question of neutrality was soon at an end. An Austrian commissary was travelling from Genoa towards Vado; it was known that he was to sleep at Voltri, and that he had £10,000 with him—a booty which the French minister in that city, and the captain of a French frigate in that port, considered as far more important than the word of honour of the one, the duties of the other, and the laws of neutrality. The boats of the frigate went out with some privateers, landed, robbed the commissary, and brought back the money to Genoa. The next day men were publicly enlisted in that city for the French army: 700 men were embarked, with 7,000 stand of arms, on board the frigates and other vessels, who were to land between Voltri and Savona. There a detachment from the French army was to join them, and the Genoese peasantry were to be invited to insurrection—a measure for which everything had been prepared. The night of the 13th was fixed for the sailing of this expedition; the Austrians called loudly for Nelson to prevent it; and he, on the evening of the 13th, arrived at Genoa. His presence checked the plan: the frigate, knowing her deserts, got within the merchant-ships, in the inner mole; and the Genoese government did not now even demand of Nelson respect to the neutral port, knowing that they had allowed, if not connived at, a flagrant breach of neutrality, and expecting the answer which he was prepared to return, that it was useless and impossible for him to respect it longer.

But though this movement produced the immediate effect which was designed, it led to ill consequences, which Nelson foresaw, but for want of sufficient force was unable to prevent. His squadron was too small for the service which it had to perform. He required two seventy-fours and eight or ten frigates and sloops; but when he demanded this reinforcement, Admiral Hotham had left the command. Sir Hyde Parker had succeeded till the new commander should arrive; and he immediately reduced it to almost nothing, leaving him only one frigate and a brig. This was a fatal error. While the Austrian and Sardinian troops, whether from the imbecility or the treachery of their leaders, remained inactive, the French were preparing for the invasion of Italy. Not many days before Nelson was thus summoned to Genoa, he chased a large convoy into Allassio. Twelve vessels he had formerly destroyed in that port, though 2,000 French troops occupied the town. This former attack had made them take new measures of defence; and there were now above 100 sail of victuallers, gun-boats, and ships of war. Nelson represented to the Admiral how important it was to destroy these vessels; and offered, with his squadron of frigates, and the *Culloden* and *Courageux*, to lead himself in the *Agamemnon*, and take or destroy the whole. The attempt was not permitted; but it was Nelson's belief that, if it had been made, it would have prevented the attack upon the Austrian army, which took place almost immediately afterwards.

General de Vins demanded satisfaction of the Genoese government for the seizure of his commissary; and then, without waiting for their reply, took possession of some empty magazines of the French, and pushed his sentinels to the very gates of Genoa. Had he done so at first, he would have found the magazines full; but, timed as the measure was, and useless as it was to the cause of the allies, it was in

character with the whole of the Austrian general's conduct; and it is no small proof of the dexterity with which he served the enemy, that in such circumstances he could so act with Genoa as to contrive to put himself in the wrong. Nelson was at this time, according to his own expression, placed in a cleft stick. Mr. Drake, the Austrian minister, and the Austrian general, all joined in requiring him not to leave Genoa; if he left that port unguarded, they said, not only the imperial troops at St. Pier d'Arena and Voltri would be lost, but the French plan for taking post between Voltri and Savona would certainly succeed; if the Austrians should be worsted in the advanced posts, the retreat of the Bocchetta would be cut off; and if this happened, the loss of the army would be imputed to him, for having left Genoa. On the other hand, he knew that if he were not at Pietra, the enemy's gun-boats would harass the left flank of the Austrians, who, if they were defeated, as was to be expected, from the spirit of all their operations, would, very probably, lay their defeat to the want of assistance from the *Agamemnon*. Had the force for which Nelson applied been given him, he could have attended to both objects; and had he been permitted to attack the convoy in Alassio, he would have disconcerted the plans of the French, in spite of the Austrian general. He had foreseen the danger, and pointed out how it might be prevented; but the means of preventing it were withheld. The attack was made as he foresaw; and the gun-boats brought their fire to bear upon the Austrians. It so happened, however, that the left flank, which was exposed to them, was the only part of the army that behaved well: this division stood its ground till the centre and the right wing fled, and then retreated in a soldier-like manner. General de Vins gave up the command in the middle of the battle, pleading ill health. "From that moment," says Nelson, "not a soldier stayed at his post: it was the devil take the hindmost. Many thousands ran away who had never seen the enemy; some of them thirty miles from the advanced posts. Had I not, though I own, against my inclination, been kept at Genoa, from 8,000 to 10,000 men would have been taken prisoners, and, amongst the number, General de Vins himself; but by this means the pass of the Bocchetta was kept open. The purser of the ship, who was at Vado, ran with the Austrians eighteen miles without stopping; the men without arms, officers without soldiers, women without assistance. The oldest officers say they never heard of so complete a defeat, and certainly without any reason. Thus has ended my campaign. We have established the French republic: which but for us, I verily believe, would never have been settled by such a volatile, changeable people. I hate a Frenchman: they are equally objects of my detestation whether royalists or republicans: in some points, I believe, the latter are the best." Nelson had a lieutenant and two midshipmen taken at Vado: they told him, in their letter, that few of the French soldiers were more than three or four and twenty years old, a great many not more than fourteen, and all were nearly naked; they were sure, they said, his barge's crew could have beat a hundred of them; and that, had he himself seen them, he would not have thought, if the world had been covered with such people, that they could have beaten the Austrian army.

The defeat of General de Vins gave the enemy possession of the Genoese coast from Savona to Voltri, and it deprived the Austrians of their direct communication with the English fleet. The *Agamemnon*, therefore, could no longer be useful on this station, and Nelson sailed for Leghorn to refit. When his ship went into dock, there was not a mast, yard, sail, or any part of the rigging, but what stood in need of repair, having been cut to pieces with shot. The hull was so damaged that it had for some time been secured by cables, which were served or thrapped round it.