

Place.	Authority.	Latitude			Longitude W.		
		N.			of Greenwich.		
		°	'	"	°	'	"
Pico (peak)	Horsburgh	38	27	0	28	28	0
	R. T.	38	26	52	28	27	40
St. George (p. del Topa)	Horsburgh.....	38	30	0	27	51	0
	R. T.....	38	53	30	28	10	0
Graciosa (N. point)	Horsburgh.....	39	8	0	28	6	0
	R. T.....	39	11	0	27	54	30
Terceira (Mt. Brazil)	Horsburgh.....	38	38	30	27	13	0
	R. T.....	38	39	7	27	12	42
St. Michael (p. Ferraria)	Horsburgh.....	37	54	0	55	59	3
	R. T.	37	47	0	25	42	0
Sub-marine volcano, or Sabrina shoal.	} Horsburgh.....	37	52	30
St. Mary (p. Maldemarenda)		Horsburgh.....	36	57	0	25	16
—— (town)	R. T.....	36	56	40	25	9	10
Formiga (greater)	Horsburgh.....	36	17	0	24	56	0

S.

GREAT BRITAIN.

ON 25 October, one of the brick Towers, upwards of 100 feet high, erected about 60 years ago, upon the sea coast, near Formby,* as a beacon, for navigating through Formby channel, was pulled down in a very expeditious and safe manner.—Another, in a true direction for sailing through the Channel, had been previously put up, in lieu of the one taken down, which, owing to the shifting of the sand banks, was found considerably out of its true bearing.

SHIPWRECKS.

THE LAUREL.

(Communicated by our Correspondent GULIELMUS ÆSTAVICUS.)

HIS Majesty's ship Laurel arrived in Quiberon Bay on the evening of the 30th of January, 1812, and was immediately placed under the orders of Captain Somerville, of H. M. S. Rota, to sail, in company with her, and the Rhin, Captain Malcolm, in pursuit of three French frigates, which had chased the Surveillante.

During the whole of the night, the boats of the fleet were employed in completing the Laurel with water; and before day, on the morning of the 31st, she was ready to proceed.

* N. C. XXVI. 477.

The light at length appeared, with its attending fog; the wind blowing fresh from the S. by E. and the rain falling heavily at intervals. At 7 the commodore made the signal to weigh, but, from the violence of the weather, the anchor was hove up with great difficulty.

There are three passages out of Quiberon: the most southern, lying between Isle Hedic and the Main, is called the Cardinaux; the middle, between Isle Houat and Hedic, named the Veneguet; and the last, most northern and hazardous, situated between Houat and a rock called the Teigneuse, receives its name from that rock. The marks for the fairway of the latter is the Isle of Mirbau, open with the Teigneuse; the former mark a considerable distance from the entrance. The cross bearings for the Govivas are, a mill in one with Quiberon steeple.

The southern passage would have been the most eligible, as a short board would have enabled us to clear it, and weather Belleisle; but, by the advice of his pilot, the commodore determined to proceed through the Teigneuse.

On weighing, we set close-reefed top-sails, and shortly after bore up. On clearing Hedic road, the Rota set her fore-sail; the Rhin and Laurel following her example. Our superiority of sailing soon enabled us to pass the Rhin. At 9. 15. the Teigneuse rock bore N.N.W.; at 9. 25. it bore N.E. by E. the ships steering W. by S. at the rate of 8 knots; tide setting W.N.W. nearly 4. The only rock we had then to pass was the Govivas; a small sunken rock, which has, at low water, only $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The tide, which was at the spring, was fifteen feet, and it had still two hours to ebb. A French 74 was lost on this rock in 1795.

On entering the passage, we had a heavy squall; and, from the thickness of the weather, the marks near the Morbihan, which indicated the fairway, became completely obscured, and the cross bearings were only at times visible.

At this moment we observed the Rota ahead, yawing continually, and apparently undecided in her course. Captain Rowley, remarking this, observed to the pilot, that, if we were right, the Rota must go on shore. The pilot answered, that the Rota was too far to leeward, and he requested that the ship might be hauled up W.S.W. The Rhin was then within half a cable's length, close on our weather quarter, and the commodore a little on our lee, distant about half a mile.

The officers and gentlemen were all on the quarter-deck, congratulating each other on our decided superiority of sailing over the other ships; and, among other subjects of conversation, the loss of the St. George, which we had only heard that morning, was introduced, and one of the master's mates, who had formerly belonged to her, was receiving those felicitations so natural on such an escape. At this moment the ship struck on the Govivas, and, from her way through the water, and the rapidity of the tide, it may easily be imagined with what force. Captain Rowley immediately ordered the Rhin to be hailed, which, letting go her head sheets, and luffing in stays, struck, but fortunately got off without any damage. The Rota, in most imminent danger, passed between the Govivas and Les Trois

Peres, a passage used only by fishermen and small craft : her escape was, indeed, miraculous.

On striking, we hove all aback, and the ship dropped aft into deep water. The best bower was let go, but soon parted ; the small one was then let go, and, after carrying away all the stopper, we brought up by the clinch. At this instant we saw the whole of the false keel, and part of the main, floating alongside. The sails were furled ; the well sounded, and six feet water reported in the hold ; and the chain pumps were manned and worked.

In defiance, however, of every exertion, the leak continued to gain upon us with such rapidity, that it was utterly impossible to keep the ship afloat. In less than ten minutes the water rose to a level with the lower-deck, the ship settling bodily down. The only and miserable resource to save the lives of the crew was, to run her on shore ; for the frigates, from the violence of the wind and sea, and the urgency of their own imminent danger, were utterly unable to afford the smallest assistance, and they made sail for their own safety. The haziness of the weather continued to increase ; and Captain Rowley, with the advice, and in pursuance of the representations of his officers, was reduced to the heart-rending, but inevitable necessity of ordering the cable to be cut, the fore-sail to be set, and the ship to be run on *Les Trois Peres*, a ridge of rocks within a mile of the shore, and the only one we could reach. Though the chain pumps were working to the last, the water had nearly reached the main-deck. On striking, the fore-sail was hauled up, the boats hoisted out, and some of the guns thrown overboard. Several guns were fired, and every signal was made, which could possibly convey an idea of our distress to the advanced ships of the squadron. To ease the ship, and prevent her drifting into deep water, the mizen-mast was cut away, and, shortly after, the fore-mast, which, in falling, carried away the main-top-mast. Before the masts were cut away, the boats, having been ordered to keep clear, unfortunately got adrift, and it was with much difficulty, and the loss of the jolly boat, (which with two men got among the rocks and was lost) that they regained the wreck. The enemy opened their fire from two batteries, and shortly after from four field pieces and a howitzer, which completely enfiladed us, every shot striking, and some of the shells bursting close to us. The ship continued falling over very rapidly, striking with great force ; and, from the rising tide, there was no probability of any part of her remaining above water.* The wind still continued to increase ; and, from the haziness of the weather, and the rising sea, all assistance from our own fleet appeared utterly impossible. Words are not sufficient to describe the extreme horrors of our situation.

The quarter-deck guns were now under the water ; and the unremitting and well-directed fire of the enemy reduced us to the miserable alternative of sacrificing the whole of the officers and crew, or of throwing ourselves into a French prison. A consultation was, therefore, held by Captain Rowley and his officers ; the result of which proved the inevitable necessity of surrendering—a flag of truce was displayed, and a signal of distress

made; but the enemy's fire continued to increase. The ship appeared to be altering her situation, and a few minutes seemed likely to terminate an existence, long tottering on the verge of eternity. Captain Rowley ordered Lieutenants Green and Brine to proceed on shore, with a detachment of the ship's company, and to solicit the commandant of the troops for assistance, and to cease their fire. The boats were hauled under the quarter, when, from the eagerness of some of the landmen, marines, and boys, there was some slight confusion, but it was dissipated in a moment. Captain Rowley expressing his intention to remain on the wreck to the last, the first lieutenant, Edward O'Shaughnessy, declared, with a gallantry that did him honour, that he would also remain; and he was seconded by Mr. Hodge, master; Somerville, master's mate; Thompson, assistant surgeon; Messrs. Clayton and Gardiner, midshipmen; and two of the men, viz. Richard Rowland, boatswain's mate, and William Hughes, an American seaman. These men, inspired by gratitude for Captain Rowley having once forgiven them an attempt to get on shore for a cruise, expressed their determination of staying by the captain, with the view, if the ship should go to pieces, of supporting him in the water. In this, from their uncommon dexterity as swimmers, they would most probably have succeeded.

On the boats reaching the shore, the fire of the enemy ceased; but they would not suffer them to return, nor would they give us any assistance. Fortunately for the remainder of the crew, the ship drove higher upon the rock, and was prevented from capsizing by a small projection, which supported her. The surf broke fore and aft, and every succeeding wave washed us to the rock.

In this state, and tantalized by expectation, we remained upwards of two hours. God of his infinite mercy, who calms the waves, wrought a miracle in our behalf, and saved us from destruction.—The atmosphere clearing up, we observed several boats pulling to our assistance, through a tremendous sea; the frigates at anchor, and two brigs, the *Lyra* and *Constant*, with the *Alban*, and *Hind* cutter under weigh. The latter had been despatched by Captain Alexander, of the *Colossus*, who, having heard our guns, with that zeal and alacrity which mark his professional character, immediately sent them and his boats to our assistance, although at a distance of many miles.

Captain Somerville, in defiance of the opposition and representations of the pilot, worked his ship among the breakers; and his example was heroically followed by Captain Malcolm, of the *Rhin*, who, grateful for the warning we had given him, which caused his preservation, made every exertion to assist us.

In executing the plans of their respective captains, the gig of the *Rhin*, and cutter of the *Colossus*, with the whole of the boats of the *Rota*, were peculiarly fortunate, and too much praise cannot be given to the gentlemen commanding them, for their exertions.

On the advance of the boats, the enemy recommenced their fire, and, to the credit of their artillery, it was well directed; every shot hulled us. The boys and sick men were first got into the boats, which, from the vio-

lence of the sea, advanced singly and slowly. Captain Rowley and the 1st lieutenant were pressed to take advantage of the opportunity, but in vain. A contest honourable to themselves took place, who should be the last on the wreck. The captain ordered Mr. Hodge, the master, to represent the imminent danger, and he was forced to leave her, but afterwards returned in the boat to our assistance.

The water having risen considerably above the hammock boards, some of the crew were compelled to take the rigging, while others were employed in lashing of spars for a raft; the slow advance of the boats rendering our situation every instant more critical. The fire of the enemy also became more incessant, and better pointed; and they had received a reinforcement of guns, every shot telling.

At 5. 15. Captain Rowley, having seen every individual out of the ship, which was then completely covered, got with his 1st lieutenant and the officers before mentioned into the boats, and giving her three cheers, pulled for the Rota, which he got on board of at 8 o'clock, having remained on the wreck upwards of ten hours.

The Laurel was rated a 38, with a complement of 300 men, and was on the stocks at Flushing, where she was finished, and brought to England, by the indefatigable exertions of Sir Richard Strahan, and Captain Kittoe; and, from her model, accommodations, and swift sailing, was unequalled in the service. By this misfortune, Captain R. and his officers lost every thing but the clothes on their backs, to the amount of several thousands of pounds.

List of Officers taken Prisoners.

John Brine, Esq. 2d lieutenant, son of Admiral Brine; Charles Greene, Esq. 3d lieutenant, son of the Rev. Dr. Greene; Richard Talien, Esq. surgeon; B. Chaproniere, Esq. 2d lieutenant R.M.; Messrs. Hanbury, Clements, Montgomery, Digges, Daniel Galway, Richard Tighe, and Thomas Pettigrew, midshipmen; and young gentlemen of the 1st class. Daniel M'Carthy, captain's clerk, and 86 men.

Not Prisoners.

Captain S. C. Rowley; Edward O'Shaughnessy, Esq. 1st lieutenant; John Hodge, master; J. F. Crofton, 1st lieutenant R.M.; John Mercer, purser; Messrs. William Somerville, and John Jeffard, master's mates; Monk. Thompson, assistant surgeon; Messrs. Clayton, Crawley, Corneck, Louis, Gardner, Eaton, and Lambert, midshipmen, and young gentlemen volunteers; William Whicheloe, assistant clerk.

Drowned.—Not known.

To the above, we subjoin the following French account of the loss of the Laurel:—

REPORT TO THE MINISTER OF MARINE AND COLONIES.

“ MONSIEUR,

“ *L'Orient, Feb. 2.*

“ I have the honour to inform you, that an enemy's frigate was lost on the 31st of January, on the rock named Govivas, to the S.W. of the

Teigneuse. She was entering the Bay of Quiberon, with the wind at S.S.E. She struck at ten in the morning, and appears to have filled soon after. The weather was very foggy, and the sea extremely rough; but, the assistance which humanity claims was afforded as far as possible, and the commandant of the place, and the commissary-general of the police, as soon as they knew of the event, took the measures which prudence prescribes to the civil authorities, as well as to the military department. The Syndic of Quiberon, and the officer of administration charged with the service at Auray, likewise acted as their duty directed.

"I am informed, that the major of the 47th regiment yesterday received a report from the coast, announcing that there had been saved, and made prisoners, from the shipwrecked frigate, ninety-six men, viz. three officers, one surgeon, five midshipmen, one sub-officer, fifteen soldiers, and seventy-one sailors. The report adds, that the boats from the enemy's division have brought assistance to the frigate, to save the other part of the crew. The prisoners will, to-day or to-morrow, go to Auray. I have the honour to present to your Excellency the expression of my respect.

"MOLINI, Prefect ad interim."

ASTRONOMY.

(Continued from page 57.)

THAT comets are habitable worlds, appears to be a favourite article of belief, amongst the astronomical speculators of the present day.* "The comet of 1744," observes one of these gentlemen, had phases like the moon, therefore the heads or *nuclei* of comets are solid globes as well

* Less than two centuries back, to hold such an opinion would have been regarded as downright heresy. Only 178 years have elapsed since the celebrated *Galileo* was obliged, by an assembly of seven Cardinals, to disavow, against reason and conscience, those important and demonstrative truths which he had published to the world. Under the terror of the Inquisition, this venerable philosopher was forced to sign the following formula of abjuration:—

"I, Galileo, in the 70th year of my age, brought personally to justice, being on my knees, and having before my eyes the Holy Evangelists, which I touch with my own hands, with a sincere heart and faith, I abjure, curse, and detest the absurdity, error, and heresy of the motion of the earth," &c.

What a profanation of religion to impose so cruel a task upon the weakness of human nature!—Yet even this humiliating recantation was insufficient to satisfy ignorant and bigoted priests; he was condemned by the Inquisition to perpetual imprisonment, but was released at the end of a year, on the solicitation of the Grand Duke of Tuscany; and to prevent his withdrawing himself from the power of this merciless tribunal, he was forbidden to leave the territory of Florence.