

Congress, and 'tis thought that our ministers plenipotentiary, as also those from the kings of Great-Britain and Saxonia, will set out in three weeks time for Aix-la-Chapelle. Our letters from Switzerland advise, that the Protestant cantons have not only agreed to the raising of twelve new companies, and as many recruits as are desired, but that some of those cantons have also resolved to raise provisionally two new battalions.

December 28. Some letters from Brabant assure, that the French will shortly assemble at Dendermonde a body of 40,000 men.

Paris, December 29. A declaration of war against the Dutch is at last actually in the press, and will serve for an answer to their placarts, by which they have broken all commerce and friendship with us. Marshal Saxe's departure for Flanders will take place much sooner than was expected.

Liege, December 29. We learn from Namur, that on the arrival of a courier from marshal Saxe, M. Lowendahl had sent orders to many regiments which were in winter quarters to hold themselves in readiness to march at a minute's warning; but the design of these orders we know not. 'Tis said, however, that they will form a corps on the right of the Meuse, between Huy and Molef, to make an excursion into the duchies of Luxembourg and Limbourg. On the other hand, the advices they have received at Verviers of these motions, and of some others, have engaged marshal Balthian to order all the troops he commands, as well as those in the archbishoprick and city of Cologne, to be in readiness to march on the first command.

L O N D O N .

Nov. 5. Last Monday orders were sent from the Lords of the Admiralty, for such ships as were ready for sailing, to put to sea with the utmost expedition.

The same day upwards of 30 transports were taken into the government's service, to carry stores, &c. to the plantations in America.

Nov. 19. We hear that since the return of the Dobbs and California, which were sent last year to discover the north-west passage from Hudson's bay into the Pacific ocean, that tho' they had not time enough, because of the frosts coming on, to compleat their design, they made such observations, as, it is thought, the next adventurers, by sailing directly to the proper inlet, to accomplish this great work, which has been so often attempted in vain.

If we may depend upon the freshest advices both from France and Holland, the opening of the conferences at Aix la Chapelle is fixed for the 5th of January, N. S. which is our Christmas day; 'tis also said, that a certain time will be limited for the settling the preliminaries, the last article of which, is said to be a general cessation of arms; and in case there shall be found insurmountable obstacles to the adjusting the preliminary articles and cessation before mentioned, the conferences will be discontinued, and the ministers return to their respective courts.

Orders are given by the States General for equipping 40 men of war with all expedition; and we hear there are near 300 privateers fitting out in the sea ports of the United Provinces.

His Majesty confirmed the honour of Knight of the Bath on Sir Edward Hawke, on Saturday, in the circle of St. James's, the captains and officers in the late action attending, dressed uniformly in blue trimmed with gold, with buff-coloured waist-coats.

Nov. 28. They write from Paris, that it has been resolved to build 14 men of war by the next spring; and that orders had been sent for lists of ships and frigates in all the ports of that kingdom.

Letters from Paris say, that the French esteem their loss in the late engagement off Cape Finisterre, at eight millions.

Advices by to-day's mail bring word, that 150 French merchantmen have been forced into a little gulph, and are blocked up by some English men of war.

November 30. By a letter from Petersburg to a person of distinction in London, we have an account, that 30,000 Russians have at last begun their march to join the allied army. They set out some months ago; but the distance being computed 350 German leagues, and as they rarely travel above 3 leagues a day, it is thought will not be able to join the army 'til Christmas. They are said to be the choicest troops in the Russian service; and all foot.

December 19. 'Tis said that Serjeant Smith who was executed a few days ago in Hyde-Park, has left fifteen widows to bemoan his untimely death.

Dec. 24. The treaty between the maritime powers and Russia, for a body of 37,000 Russian troops, contains 14 articles, the preambles to which set forth, That the empress of

the Russians has determined to grant those auxiliary succours to the said powers, in order to contribute by such an accession of forces to theirs, to the restoration of peace in Europe. By the articles it is agreed, that the general of this Russian army of troops shall act according to the directions that may be given him by the general in chief of the allies, whether it be thought expedient to make those troops join the said army, or to make them act separately. As soon as this treaty was signed, express were dispatched from Petersburg with orders to the several columns, that are to compose the auxiliary corps, to begin the march, viz. the first column the 25th of December, N. S. the second the 1st of January, and the 3d column on the 8th of the same month, so as that the whole corps may be assembled at the frontiers of Poland before the 18th, in order to traverse the territories of that kingdom.

Extrait of a private Letter from Williamsfad, dated December 30, N. S.

"The 15th of next month is fixed for the departure of the ministers for Aix la Chapelle, if their Apartments can be ready by that time; and the reason they assign for not more sooner is, That they were willing to clear up and settle several material and very difficult points before they left the Hague, they might have nothing to do at Aix la Chapelle, but immediately enter upon business; and 'tis now judged, by some who are in the secret, that a peace is not so far off as most people imagine; the French minister declaring, that if all powers are desirous of peace as his master, they will not break up without one."

At a court-martial held on board his Majesty's ship the *Dix*. Sir Peter Warren president, &c. the court proceeded to try into the charge exhibited by Admiral Hawke against Capt. Fox, commander of his Majesty's ship the *Kent*, for misconduct on the 14th of October last; and having heard the evidence in support of the defence of Capt. Fox, the court were of opinion, That part of the charge had been proved; That he had been guilty of backing his mizen top-sail, and leaving the *Kent* which the court do attribute to misconduct, and not contrary the contrary having fully appeared to them; and that his conduct was owing to the first lieutenant and master of the *Kent*: And the court were of opinion, That the said *Kent* fell under the 10th and 11th articles of war, and adjudged that he be dismissed from the command of his Majesty's ship the *Kent*, and he was thereby dismissed accordingly.

Extrait of a Letter from Portsmouth, December 21.

"On Thursday the examination of Capt. Fox's conduct ended, who all unanimously agreed, that Capt. Fox's part in the day of battle. It is to be observed, that the evidence against him swore that the *Kent* did not engage but at a great distance; but his evidence may appear by undeniable proofs, to the satisfaction of the court, that she engaged the *Fougueux* for three quarters of an hour at the same distance, 'til she had carried away the *Tonant's* main-top-mast, at which time she forged a head; her braces, jennets, and stoppers being all shot away, prevented her retreating the *Tonant* again; and it is worthy of observation, that not the meanest man of the ship's company, was heard to reflect in the least upon his captain's behaviour. Yesterday the court proceeded to give sentence; which was, That they be acquitted him of the charge of cowardice; but because he paid much regard to the advice of his officers, contrary to the better judgment, they have dismissed him from the command of the *Kent*."

Dec. 27. Early this morning an express was dispatched to the court of Petersburg, without the ratification of the treaty, the march of the Russian troops into Flanders.

Extrait of a Letter from Ter Veer in Zealand, Dec. 23.

Six deserters from the regiment Dauphin, who made their escape to the island Walcheren in a small flat-bottom'd vessel, report, that there are no extraordinary motions among the enemy's troops on the opposite shore; but as it was owing to false security, grounded upon a like report, that *Berg-voet* fell a sacrifice to Lowendahl, far from giving any credit to their information, they have been put under arrest, and one of them, who is a Fleming by birth, is said to be a very important discovery, the most material of which is, that several flat-bottom'd vessels have been filled with great quantities of grenades, carcasses, fire-pots, and other destructive combustibles, to be employ'd as fire-boats to destroy our vessels on the Scheld, and the narrow sea that divides this province from the continent. A prodigious quantity of wheat has likewise been embark'd on the largest of their sloops, which is supposed to be set fire to on occasion, and under the