

LETTER LIV.

DESTRUCTION OF THE FORTS SURROUNDING CADIZ — FRENCH PRISONERS —
ENGLISH GARRISON EXPECTED — PEOPLE OF ST. MARY'S PREPARING TO
FLY — FLAG OF TRUCE.

CADIZ, FEB. 1810.

IF any thing could conquer the gravity of Spaniards, we might naturally expect that an approaching siege would infuse some degree of activity into the conduct of the people, but the characteristics of the nation are patience and perseverance, not vivacity and zealous exertion. The number of the citizens who daily assemble on the ramparts, and, wrapped in their long cloaks, spend hours silently gazing on the explosions of the forts that surround the bay, which the English sailors are busily employed in blowing up, naturally excites this remark. They appear indifferent spectators of the events around them, rather than the persons for whose security these exertions are made.

Our countrymen are labouring with great activity in destroying all those batteries which may annoy the shipping at their anchorage in the bay. The castle of St. Catharine, near St. Mary's, is strongly built, and requires great exertions to demolish it; but by the help of gunpowder under the buttresses which support the arches on which the platforms are constructed, they have nearly reduced it to a heap