

You will be glad to hear that the children and myself have never been in better health than now. That I can be so with my dear M. absent is a pleasure to me. My dear children are very amusing. I have started to teach Anne to write and to sew. She reads quite well. David reads a little too. I have not forgotten your teaching, for instead of spending money to have my work done, I do all my sewing myself, and I am fairly good at cutting out.

The French landed in Wales some time past, one thousand two hundred of them. As soon as the vessels unloaded they set sail, and left the men to be cut down or themselves to cut down the natives. The report has spread that in consequence of this, all the laborers, servants, gentlemen, everybody, in fact, gathered together, armed with pitchforks, shovels, and clubs, anything that could be used as a weapon. They did so well that the *frogs* surrendered as prisoners. Since that victory, there has been one at sea, the like of which we have never had. Sir John Jervis had seven men-of-war in the battle and the Spaniards had twenty-seven, many of them one-hundred-and-thirty-gun ships. We took four of their finest and the rest were badly damaged.¹ The strange thing is that the vessel in which my dear Meredith was a prisoner at the time of the siege of Gibraltar, is now one of those taken by our gallant admiral. It is called the *Saint Isadore*. I know nothing further, but it is perhaps the best thing that ever happened here, our having fought the Dons, for if they had joined the French as they intended, the Germans also were to have been of the number, and their navy would have been so great that nothing would have prevented their descent on this country, and then they had planned to massacre men, women, and children, without an exception, for we have information of what they intended to do.

Be so good, Mama, as to ask my Father if he knows how far from Cork is the place where he was born, because if my dear Husband is not too far away he will give himself the pleasure of a visit there. I have an idea that my dear M. will be quite content in Ireland. They say Cork is a

¹ The allusion is to the battle of Feb. 14, 1797, off Cape St. Vincent. The English fleet numbered fifteen ships, instead of seven, as here stated.