that would have been more welcome and probably more useful, had they come sooner. If the accounts be true, which amount to no less than the destruction of all the French settlements, magazines and habitations in those parts, with the taking, burning, or destroying all the ships in all their ports, you will be sooner informed of it than by this letter. Therefore it is useless for me to mention the reports which are, however, entirely credited in these parts, but we are in hopes of receiving farther particulars, with a confirmation of the whole from England.

The Empress has acceded to the preliminaries, though, it is said, with some conditions,[8] and a cessation of hostilities has been published in her army and at Genoa.[9] The Spaniards, they say, still refuse,[10] and in order to prevent them and the Germans fighting, the French have taken all the advanced posts which the Spaniards held. Our sea gentlemen are glad to continue their hostilities by sea for six weeks longer,[11] by interpreting the proclamation in their favour,[12] and indeed they

Domingo fleet, which had escaped Adm. Hawke . . . the rest all got into their several ports') is reported in GM loc. cit. News of Knowles's departure on 'an expedition . . . generally thought . . . against St Jago de Cuba' had been brought by the *Fortune* 12 April OS (*Daily Adv.* 15 April OS), and Knowles's letter of 13 March OS, announcing his capture of Port Louis near San Domingo on 8 March OS, reached London 1 May OS (*London Gazette* No. 8741, 30 April–3 May OS), twelve days after the signing of the preliminaries.

8. Kaunitz still insisted that Austria was not bound to give anything to Don Philip unless Sardinia surrendered its gains under the Treaty of Worms, and that Austria should not guarantee Silesia and Glatz to Prussia unless Prussia in return guaranteed Maria Theresa's dominions. Even after he reluctantly gave an unconditional acceptance, Kaunitz still clung to these reservations (Sir Richard Lodge, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Diplomacy*, 1930, pp. 357–8).

9. 'On the 26th . . . in *Bisagno* . . . between the Spanish and Austrian troops . . . [and] on the 27th . . . at *St Pier d'Arena* between the King of Sardinia's and the Spanish troops' (newsletter, Florence, 2 July NS, BM Add. MSS 32812, f. 379).

10. Spain signed, 28 June (Lodge, op. cit. 359).

11. The proclamation from St James's, 5 May OS, for 'cessation of arms' stated: 'it hath been . . . mutually agreed . . . that all ships, merchandises, and effects which should be taken after six weeks from the said nineteenth day of April beyond the Channel, the British seas and the North seas, as far as Cape St Vincent, and for the space of six weeks more beyond the said Cape to the equinoctial line, whether in the ocean or Mediterranean . . . should be restored on both sides' (*London Gazette* No. 8742, 3–7 May OS). This proclamation was announced in Bedford's circular letter of 10 May OS to the ministers in his province (BM Add. MSS 32812, f. 174) and was acknowledged in Mann's reply of 17 June NS (S.P. 98/56 f. 157). Not until 30 July NS, nevertheless, did Mann report: 'All hostilities at sea even against the Genoese, are ceased ever since the 24 instant' (S.P. 98/56 f. 184).

12. Meaning that they interpreted the proclamation as continuing hostilities for 12 weeks (instead of 6) from 19 April OS, so that they could capture more prizes. Vice-Adm. Byng 'has lately given orders to the captains . . . to continue the hostilities for twelve weeks from the date of the signing of the preliminary articles at Aix,