but because it first revealed the full capacity of Nelson, which was well known in the navy, to all his countrymen. In the course of 1796 the Spanish government had made the disastrous alliance with the French republic, which reduced its country to the level of a pawn in the game against England. The Spanish fleet, which was in a complete state of neglect, was forced to sea. It consisted of 27 sail of the line under the command of Don José de Córdoba—fine ships, but manned in haste by drafts of soldiers, and of landsmen forced on board by the press. Even the flagships had only about eighty sailors each in their crews. Don José de Córdoba, who had gone out with no definite aim, was in reality drifting about with his unmanageable ships in two confused divisions separated from one another, in light winds from the W. and W.S.W., at a distance of from 25 to 30 m. S.W. of the Cape. While in this position he was sighted by Sir John Jervis, of whose nearness to himself he was ignorant, and who had sailed from Lisbon to attack him with only 15 sail of the line. Jervis knew the inefficient condition of the Spaniards, and was aware that the general condition of the war called for vigorous exertions. He did not hesitate to give battle in spite of the numerical superiority of his opponent. Six of the Spanish ships were to the south of him, separated by a long interval from the others which were to the south west. The British squadron was formed into a single line ahead, and was steered to pass between the two divisions of the Spaniards. The six vessels were thus cut off. A feeble attempt was made by them to molest the British, but being now to leeward as Jervis passed to the west of them, and being unable to face the rapid and well directed fire to which they were exposed, they sheered off. One only ran down the British line, and passing to the stern of the last ship succeeded in joining the bulk of her fleet to windward. As the British line passed through the gap between the Spanish divisions the ships were tacked in succession to meet the wind- ward portion of the enemy. If this movement had been carried out fully, all the British ships would have gone through the gap and the Spaniards to windward would have been able to steer unimpeded to the north, and perhaps to avoid being brought to a close general action. Their chance of escape was baffled by the independence and promptitude of Nelson. His ship, the “ Captain ” (74), was the third from the end of the British line. Without waiting for orders he made a sweep to the west, threw himself across the bows of the Spaniards. His movement was seen and approved by Jervis, who then ordered the other ships in his rear to follow Nelson’s example. The British force was thrown bodily on the enemy. As the Spanish crews were too utterly unpractised to handle their ships, and could not carry out the orders of their officers which they did not understand, their ships were soon driven into a herd, and fell on board of one another. Their incompetence as gunners enabled the “ Captain ” to assail their flagship, the huge “ Santisima Trinidad ” (130), with comparative impunity. The “ San Josef ”(112), and the “ San Nicolas ” (80), which fell aboard of one another, were both carried by boarding by the “ Captain.” Four Spanish ships, the “ Salvador del Mundo ” and “ San Josef ” (112), the “ San Nicolas ” (80), and the “ San Isidro ” (74), were taken. The “ Santisima Trinidad ” is said to have struck, but she was not taken possession of. By about half-past three the Spaniards were fairly beaten. More prizes might have been taken, but Sir John Jervis put a stop to the action to secure the four which had surrendered. The Spaniards were allowed to retreat to Cadiz. Sir John Jervis was made Earl St Vincent (*q.v.*)for his victory. The battle, which revealed the worthlessness of the Spanish navy, relieved the British government from a load of anxiety, and may be said to have marked the complete predominance of its fleet on the sea.

Authorities.—A very interesting account of the battle of Cape St Vincent, *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the British Fleet, &c.* (London, 1797), illustrated by plans, was published immediately afterwards by Colonel Drinkwater Bethune, author of the *History of the Siege of Gibraltar,* who was an eyewitness from the “ Lively ” frigate. See also James’s *Naval History* (London, 1837); and Captain Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power on the French Revolution and Empire* (London, 1892). (D. H.)

ST VITUS’S DANCE,@@1 or Chorea, a disorder of the nervous system occurring for the most part in children, and characterized mainly by involuntary jerking movements of the muscles throughout almost the entire body (see Neuropathology). Among the predisposing causes age is important, chorea being essentially an ailment of childhood and particularly during the period of the second dentition between the ages of nine and twelve. It is not often seen in very young children nor after puberty; but there are many exceptions. It is twice as frequent with girls as with boys. Hereditary predisposition to nervous troubles is apt to find expression in this malady, especially if the general health becomes lowered. Of exciting causes strong emotions, such as fright, ill-usage or hardship of any kind, insufficient feeding, overwork or anxiety, are among the most common; while, again, some distant source of irritation, such as teething or intestinal worms, appears capable of giving rise to an attack. It is an occasional but rare complication of pregnancy. The connexion of chorea with rheumatism is now universally recog­nized, and is shown not merely by its frequent occurrence before, after or during the course of attacks of rheumatic fever in young persons, but even independently of this by the liability of the heart to suffer in a similar way in the two diseases. Poynton and Paine have demonstrated a diplococcus, which they regard as the specific micro-organism of rheumatism, and which has been found in the lymph spaces in the cortex in chorea. An attempt has recently been made to demonstrate the infectious nature of the chorea.

The symptoms of St Vitus’s dance sometimes develop suddenly as the result of fright, but much more frequently they come on insidiously. They are usually preceded by changes in disposition, the child becoming sad, irritable and emotional, while at the same time the general health is somewhat impaired. The first thing indicative of the disease is a certain awkwardness or fidgetiness of manner together with restlessness. In walking, too, slight dragging of one limb may be noticed. The convulsive muscular movements usually first show themselves in one part, such as an arm or a leg, and in some instances they may remain localized to that limited extent, while in all cases there is a tend­ency for the disorderly symptoms to be more marked on one side than on the other. When fully developed the phenomena of the disease are very characteristic. The child when standing or sitting is never still, but is constantly changing the position of the body or limbs or the facial expression in consequence of the sudden and incoordinate action of muscles or groups of them. These symptoms are aggravated when purposive move­ments are attempted or when the child is watched. Speech is affected both from the incoordinate movements of the tongue and from phonation sometimes taking place during an act of inspiration. The taking of food becomes a matter of difficulty, since much of it is lost in the attempts to convey it to the mouth, while swallowing is also interfered with owing to the irregular action of the pharyngeal muscles. When the tongue is protruded it comes out in a jerky manner and is immediately withdrawn, the jaws at the same time closing suddenly and sometimes with considerable force. In locomotion the muscles of the limbs act incoordinately and there is a marked alteration of the gait, which is now halting and now leaping, and the child may he tripped by one limb being suddenly jerked in front of the other. In short, the whole muscular system is deranged in its operations, and the term “ insanity of the muscles ’’ not inaptly expresses the condition, for they no longer act in harmony or with purpose, but seem, as Trousseau expresses it, each to have a will of its own. The muscles of organic life (involuntary muscles) appear scarcely,

@@@1 This name was originally employed in connexion with those remarkable epidemic outbursts of combined mental and physical excitement which for a time prevailed among the inhabitants of some parts of Germany in the middle ages. It is stated that sufferers from this dancing mania were wont to resort to the chapels of St Vitus (more than one in Swabia), the saint being believed to possess the power of curing them. The transference of the name to the disease now under consideration was a manifest error, but so closely has the association now become that the original application of the term has been comparatively obscured.