

therefore, of the blame attachable to this failure, must rest where fidelity of narration has obliged me to place it.

But the primary cause of this defeat may be traced to a source even more distant than any I have mentioned; I mean to the disclosure of our designs to the enemy. How this occurred I shall not take it upon me to declare, though several rumours, bearing at least the guise of probability, have been circulated. The attack upon New Orleans was professedly a secret expedition; so secret, indeed, that it was not communicated to the inferior officers and soldiers in the armament, till immediately previous to our quitting Jamaica. To the Americans, however, it appears to have been known long before, and hence it was that, instead of taking them unawares, we found them fully prepared for our reception. But it is past, and cannot be recalled, and therefore to point out errors on the part of my countrymen can serve no good end. That the failure is to be lamented, no one will deny, since the conquest of New Orleans would have been beyond all comparison the most valuable acquisition that could be made to the British dominions, throughout the whole western hemisphere. In possession of that post, we should have kept the entire southern trade of the United States in check; and furnished means of commerce to our own merchants, of incalculable value.