

leave ; and it was not without many tears and wringing of hands, that their early homes were abandoned a prey to the victor. It was, too, in an inclement season of the year. History tells us that the vessels employed to carry the troops and the royalist fugitives, were obliged to wait two days after all was ready, before they could get out of the harbor, the winds were so high and dead ahead ; and that the accommodations for the families were very bad, and so crowded that General Howe had serious apprehensions they should never be able to reach port any where. His own situation was a frightful one, for the preservation of his army depended upon the risk ; he felt they were surrounded, and be the dangers of the sea what they might, as a soldier, there was no alternative. One other danger awaited them—that of being blown off to the West Indies without provisions. Their situation, in such an event, would have been dreadful ; as it was, they did not get fairly out to sea until a week after they left the port of Boston. It will be recollected they were permitted to depart in peace by agreement with General Washington, on condition of leaving their munitions of war and sparing the town, the burning of which would not only have been a great public loss, but have beggared hundreds of patriot families. Howe had prepared combustible materials in every part of the town, ready to fire in a moment, in case of molestation. History describes the departure of the loyalists as presenting a mournful spectacle :

“ The fathers carrying burdens, and the mothers their children, ran weeping towards the ships—the last salutations, the farewell embraces of those who departed and of those who remained. The sick, the aged, the wounded, and infants, would have moved with compassion the witnesses of their distress, had not the care of their own safety absorbed the attention of all. And to add to their