

1776

have been kept dormant until the arrival of the force from Ireland, it seems more than probable that the southern colonies would have considerably felt the impression of such an insurrection. But now their force and spirits were so entirely broken, their leaders being sent to different prisons, and the rest stripped of their arms, and watched with all the eyes of distrust, that no future effort could be reasonably expected from them. Perhaps too great a dependence was laid on their power and prowess, while those of the opposite side were measured by a scale equally deceitful. It is, however, extremely difficult to regulate or restrain the caprice or violence of those leaders who assume authority in such seasons.

Mar. 3d.

Hopkins
strips the
Bahama
Islands of
stores &
artillery.

A squadron of five frigates were sent out by the Congress early in the year, under the command of a Mr. Hopkins, who sailed with them to Bahama Islands; where they stripped that of Providence, which is the principal, of a considerable quantity of

Character

* Mr. Robert Hopkins was born at Portsmouth in New England, in the year 1718. His father being in the sea service, and discovering an early inclination in his son towards that way of life, besides the Latin and Greek tongues, he had him taught the several branches of the mathematics, particularly those of navigation, and at a proper age, when he had sufficiently acquired the theory, to add practice thereto, he put him an apprentice to a Mr. Wainwright, commander of the Joseph and Anne, a vessel of 250 tons burthen. It is to be presumed, old Mr. Hopkins reasons for indenting his son to another person rather than to himself was, lest he should presume too much on his paternal affection, and thereby probably neglect his other duties; but this caution however well intended, we are of opinion, was premature, our hero, in his capacity, omitting no opportunity of making himself master of every branch of sea-service, in testimony of which, at the expiration of his third year, capt. Wainwright made him his chief mate, in which station he behaved with great satisfaction to both captain and crew.

At the close of his apprenticeship he quitted the Joseph and Anne, and engaged as mate, with an old school-fellow of his, who