

1776,

commencement, to a raw and despised militia, seemed exclusive of all other ill consequences, a disgrace not to be borne. But these brave men had, by a variety of events, and perhaps it will be thought, through original error and misconduct in the arrangement of the war, been reduced to such circumstances, and hedged in, in such a manner, that no means were left for an exertion of their force and courage, that were not subject to the greatest danger without affording a prospect of success.

Fortune prevented this perilous trial in the first instance. On the day that succeeded the tempest, the design was reassumed, but upon a nearer inspection it was discovered, that a new work had been thrown up, which was stronger than any of the former, and that the whole were now so completely fortified, that all hope of forcing them was at an end. It became clear also that Boston was not a situation very happily chosen for the improvement of any advantage which might be obtained towards the reduction of the Colonies.

Nothing now remained but to abandon the town, and to convey the troops, artillery, and stores, on board the ships. Nor was this last resort free from difficulty and danger. The enemy, however, continued quiet in their works, and made not the smallest attempt to obstruct the embarkation, or even to molest the rear, it is said, and, though it was positively denied by the ministers in both houses, seems to be generally believed, that some kind of convention or agreement, whether verbal, or only understood by secondary means, was established between the Commanders in Chief on each side, and that the abstaining from hostility on the one, was the condition of saving the town on the other. In proof of this it is affirmed, that combustibles were ready laid for firing the town, and that the select men

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