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operations at the same time. The succours that were sent, suffered incredible hardships in their march; which they endured with that fortitude which had hitherto distinguished the Provincials in this war. On the other hand, General Carleton guarded, with his usual vigilance against every effort of fraud, force, and surprize; but as all supplies were cut off from the country, the inhabitants and garrison experienced many distresses.

1776.

As the season approached, in which supplies from England were inevitable, the Americans grew more active in their operations. They again renewed the siege, and erected batteries, and made several attempts by fire ships, and otherwise, to burn the vessels in the harbour. They failed in these attempts, though some of them were very boldly conducted; and their troops were at one time drawn up, and scaling ladders, with every other preparation, in readiness for storming the town, during the confusion which they expected the fire would have produced. Though they had not all the success they wished, they however burnt a great part of the suburbs, and the remaining houses being pulled down to prevent the spreading of the conflagration, afforded a most seasonable relief of fuel to the town, which had for some time been exceedingly distressed through the want of that necessary. During this state of things, a party of Canadians which had been embodied by Mr. Beaujeu, with a design of raising the siege, were encountered on their march, and easily dispersed by a detachment of the rebels.

Fruitless
attempts
to set the
city on
fire.

Mar. 2

This small success was not long sufficient to support the spirits of the Provincials. Having failed in all their attempts with shells, fireships, and red hot balls, to cause a conflagration in the city, their hope of taking it by storm ceased, whilst that of succeeding by a regular siege was daily lessened; indeed their