

to the benefit of the negroes, so far as their small faces could have any weight.

Our Army, in general have been <sup>well</sup> supplied with good provisions & indeed with more than a sufficiency. Hospitals and some other small necessities could not be procured, but in general there has not been the least want of complaint in this regard.

After mentioning my leaving the Command of the Flying Camp, which I have not, altho we frequently act together and have encamped close by each other for within a month. I thank the Convention for the resolve in my favor. Their intention was good tho' it has not had the desired effect, owing to an impropriety in their mode of appointment tho' was I to insist, General Washington has said I ought and should have the command, tho' it might raise some difficulties here perhaps in other circumstances. Mr Bell without doubt is a brave and an honest man, but I leave you and the Convention to judge, whether with propriety he can expect he will do himself and his Country any honor in the character of a General. He is considered here as the second edition of the Custom General and the distinguishing gentlemen here, who now begin to entertain more favorable sentiments of our State, are not a little surprised at the impropriety of this appointment, but they will be done, even tho' I suffer an indignity, when it has not been intended.

General Lee has just arrived, and is appointed to the Command of one of the Divisions, who are to oppose the enemy above King's Bridge. The Enemy have landed their chief force on Long's Neck, and are making every disposition to march across from the Sound to their Ships in the North River, thereby to cut off our communication by land with Albany and the New England Provinces and to cooperate and threaten us, for I am apprehensive it will be in their power by their Ships at any time to cut off our retreat into Jersey, both which should they effect, it will put us in the basket. The situation of the Country favors our troops, being very uneven and rocky, interspersed with some bushes, and abounding in Stone walls, here our officers good, and our men well trained, it would be impossible to effect their purpose, for we have now on this side the bridge thirteen Brigades, which do not exceed thirteen thousand men (by this you may see how far short the Provinces are of furnishing their respective quotas, none I believe have completed but Maryland) but with this force, could our officers be brought to a proper sense of their duty and dignity and the weight of the Army, the enemy might be checked in their career; for this you may rely on however their parade may indicate the contrary, yet it is a fact, they are as much afraid and cautious of us, as we can be any of us of them, their officers alone give the superiority, and in this instance I have greater hopes of our officers and men fighting than ever, for here is no hope of running away left. Fight or starve and surrender at discretion has almost become the word, which event might have proved favorable to the Common interest, had they reduced us to this dilemma before, at least it would have prevented much disgrace and brought our army to think of fighting. One Northern General has

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