

C H A P. LIII.

*Charlestown taken by Sir Henry Clinton.—Successes of
Lord Cornwallis.*

1780.

THE preceding campaign had terminated very disadvantageously to the Americans. The maritime force of the New England provinces had been almost wholly destroyed at Penobscot; and they had suffered a great and mortifying defeat at Savannah. The mighty projects formed by D'Estaing had been frustrated in the completest manner. He had been vanquished and compelled to retire with a shattered fleet and a broken army. Unable to prosecute any further operations, he was now returned to France, and the Colonies were again left to their sole exertions, with little prospect of receiving any assistance from their French allies, in sufficient time to obviate effectually the attempts that might be made, in consequence of the superiority now obtained by the British forces.

While the fate of D'Estaing was in suspense, the apprehension that he could not fail of success with such a superior strength, obliged the British commanders at New York to make all necessary preparations for a vigorous defence. General Washington had collected all the strength he could muster from the contiguous provinces, and was advancing towards that city, in order to be at hand to co-operate in the attack concerted between him and the French Admiral.

The necessity of adding materially to the numbers that would be requisite to make head against so formidable an enemy, occasioned the garrison of
Rhode