

INTRODUCTION.

NO sooner was the late war with France concluded, and peace established by the treaty of Versailles in the year 1763, than I began to consider (having rendered my country some service during the war) how I might sometime still be serviceable, and contribute as much as lay in my power, to make that vast acquisition of territory, gained by Great Britain in North America, advantageous to it. It appeared to me indispensably useful, that government should be acquainted, in the first place, with the true state of the dominions they were now become possessed of. To this purpose, I determined, as the next proof of my zeal, to explore the most unknown parts of them, and to spare no trouble or expense in acquiring a knowledge that promised to be so useful to my countrymen. I knew that many objections would arise to my scheme from the want of good Maps and Charts; for the French, while they retained their power in North America, had taken every artful method to keep all other nations, particularly the English, in ignorance of the concerns of the interior parts of it: and to accomplish this design with the greater certainty, they had published inaccurate Maps and false accounts; calling the different nations of the Indians by nicknames they had given them, and not by those really appertaining to them. Whether the intention of the French in doing this, was to prevent these nations from being discovered and traded with, or to conceal their discourse, when they talked to each other of the Indian concerns, in their presence, I will not determine; but whatsoever was the cause from which it arose, it tended to mislead.

As a proof that the English had been greatly deceived by these accounts, and that their knowledge relative to Canada had usually been very confined;—before the conquest of Crown Point in 1759, it had been assumed an impregnable fortress; but no sooner was it taken, than we were convinced that it had acquired its greatest