

## INTRODUCTION.

On board some of our men of war, which are sent on these distant cruises, a person, who with the character of an engineer, and the skill and talents necessary to that profession, should be employed in drawing such Coasts, and planning such harbours, as the ship should touch at, and in making such other Observations of all kinds, as might either prove of advantage to future navigators, or might any ways tend to promote the publick service. Besides, persons habituated to this employment (which could not fail at the same time of improving them in their proper business) would be extremely useful in many other lights, and might serve to secure our Fleets from those disgraces, with which their attempts against places on shore have been often attended: And, in a nation like ours, where all sciences are more eagerly and universally pursued, and better understood than in any other part of the world, proper subjects for such employments could not long be wanting, if due encouragement were given to them. This method here recommended is known to have been frequently practised by the *French*, particularly in the instance of Monsieur *Frezier*, an Engineer, who has published a celebrated Voyage to the *South-Seas*. For this person, in the Year 1711, was purposely sent by the *French* King into that country, on board a merchantman, that he might examine and describe the coasts, and take plans of all the fortified places, the better to enable the *French* to prosecute their illicit trade, or, in case of a rupture with the court of *Spain*, to form their enterprizes in those seas with more readiness and certainty. Should we pursue this method, we might hope, that the emulation amongst those who were thus employed, and the experience, which even in time of peace, they would hereby acquire, might at length procure us a proper number of able Engineers, and might efface the national scandal, which our deficiency in that species of men, has sometimes exposed us to: And surely every step to encourage and improve this profession is of great moment to the public; as no persons, when they are properly instructed, make better returns in war, for the encouragement and emoluments bestowed on them in time of peace. Of which the advantages the *French* have reaped from their dexterity