

these principles. But in the rapid sketch which we shall draw of the rise and progress of the momentuous contest in which we have been engaged for twenty one years, we shall often leave their application to your own judgements, contenting ourselves with pointing out the great success, which after the most disastrous events, has been vouchsafed us through the blessing of Almighty God ; and concluding with the notice of some of those glorious advantages which the termination of the war in Europe presents to the enraptured imagination.

The nations of Europe, from the peace of 1783, to the commencement of the French Revolution, formed a picture, which was on the whole pleasing, and interesting to the contemplative mind. There was seen throughout a spirit of improvement, strong among the people, and animating some of the Governments themselves. Changes were actually adopted in some states, highly beneficial to the public ; and such attention began to be paid to the general information of the people, as to present the fairest prospects of future amelioration. It cannot, however, be concealed that, in most countries in Europe, and especially in France, the Governments were far behind the knowledge of the people. The oppression of the laws ; the injustice of their administration ; and the general corruption of the Court of Versailles, which appeared in every department, spread discontent among all ranks of people, except those immediately