

## PREFACE.



THE military reputation of England has never been so debased as it was at the beginning of the Seven Years' War. With the bravest soldiers in the world, excellent regimental officers, and a large staff of veterans who drew the pay of Generals, Great Britain had not one commander capable of leading her armies to victory. Since the time of Marlborough she had produced no military genius but Clive. No other man exhibited that comprehensiveness which is the most indispensable qualification of a successful General. The Duke of Cumberland was indeed brave, but, at best, rarely fortunate; Lord Stair was no master of strategy, and Marshal Wade's talent lay in engineering. The incapacity of Braddock, Loudoun, and Abercrombie, brought disaster after disaster upon our arms in America; while nearer home the failures which arose from the same cause were more alarming and disgraceful, if not so bloody.

"I know," said Pitt, "that if any man can save England, I can," but the Great Minister's very first warlike undertaking was foiled through the inefficiency of the commanders to whom he had entrusted it. He, however,