

## PREFACE.

WHEN proposals were issued for the publication of this work, some time after the ratification of the treaty of peace with Great Britain, its contemplated plan embraced nothing more than the compilation of hasty sketches of the leading events of the war, arranged in chronological order, and with a proper regard to the preservation of the principal features, and the general characters of the land, and naval engagements. The author was not long in discovering that infinite pains and excessive labour were necessary, to the collection of materials, from which these sketches, however concise, might be made with that fidelity which such subjects require.

His resources at that period, though stamped with the character of authenticity, were extremely limited, and he found it necessary to intimate his intentions to officers of the army and navy, who had been engaged in many of the events which it was his design to perpetuate, and upon the truth of whose statements he could implicitly rely. These intimations were followed, by many assurances of assistance from gentlemen of all ranks in the service, and by promises of full, and accurate, accounts of the operations of the fleets and armies. From such fruitful and authentic sources the author could not fail to elicit the best possible information, and though he did not immediately contemplate an extension of the limits of the work, he determined to put it more in the form of a familiar and connected narrative, than might have been expected from its title, without assuming, however, the style of a history.