

P R E F A C E.

of travellers and others; and, in some points, to private information from intelligent traders. The materials for the foreign settlements are far from being as perfect, or as much to be depended upon, as we could wish; it was very seldom that I could venture to transcribe any thing directly from them without some addition or some corrective.

In the historical part of this work, I fixed my eye principally on some capital matters, which might the most fully engage and best reward the attention of the reader; and in treating of those I dwelt only upon such events as seemed to me to afford some political instruction, or to open the characters of the principal actors in those great scenes. The affairs which seemed most worthy of an account of any length, are those splendid and remarkable events of the discovery of America, and the conquest of the only two civilized kingdoms it contained.

In treating of other parts, I have given so much of the history of each country as may serve