

L E T T E R XXIX.

November 27, 1779.

WITH all possible respect to the sentiments of more experienced Men, the Author of the foregoing Letters presumes to offer it as his opinion, that we have *probably* been in an error in dropping such Ships of the Line as were those of last war carrying 68 guns with 520 men, such as the *Lancaster*, *Orford*, and *Northumberland*, and substituting so many of 74 guns; as comparatively, and in a *national scale*, the former were perhaps better. They required 80 men less; drew less water; carried their ports *as well*; stowed a *greater* quantity of provisions in proportion to their complement; were in *less danger* from taking the ground, being flatter floored, and for the same reason could approach the shore nearer to cover the landing of men or to attack batteries; were what the Seamen call better Sea-boats; required *less* expensive rigging and masts, and are not apt to be injured *so much in either*, both from their construction, and their comparative lightness. They are more manageable (as the human powers, by numbers being added, cannot be brought to act with *proportionable* effect upon such masts, yards, cables, &c. as are *extremely* large). They are more easily docked and hove down, and are in less danger in shoal water, which may be made appear by the loss of the *Invincible* and *Mars* last war. They being what the Seamen call long-legged, sharp ships, and drawing more water, were lost, where ships of the old construction