

PREFACE.

different states of the union ; in order that many prejudices, the offspring of ignorance, might be removed ; and that the injurious effects, which must flow from an acquaintance with the history of a single state only, might be avoided. It was the correct remark of an able writer, that the history of colonies generally affords but two interesting eras, that of their settlement, and that of their independence. To both of these the author has more particularly directed his attention.

Let those who imagine that no book can do good that is not a great book, consider that every American should be acquainted with the history of his country, and that a voluminous history would not be read by one twentieth part of the population ; that, on most minds, the same or even stronger impressions would be made by a work well written on the plan of this, than by a minute, and of course often tedious, detail of every event ; that the perusal of such a work, in early life, must excite rather than gratify curiosity ; that much, very much good would be done, should a knowledge of the important events be communicated, and correct impressions be given, to those who would otherwise remain entirely ignorant : and that, in fact, this book contains more than many an octavo or high price.

But while it is important that no American citizen should be ignorant of the principal events in the history of his country, it is the indispensable duty of all, who can enjoy the opportunity, to read and to study the larger and more particular histories which have been published.

There is little danger that this small and favored class will neglect this duty. The danger is greater, that much the most numerous portion of the population—that portion in whose hands are the destinies of the republic—would read nothing on the subject should expensive works only be published