

the republicans than their antagonists, still we cannot concur with all the mock heroics that have been vented in reference to this era. The men who gave character to it were judicious persons, and in one or two instances may be said to have possessed genius. The impression given by the groupe that struggled for independence, and that framed the constitution, is, that they were energetic and reasonable men, who were distinguished more by solid than by brilliant qualities. They have received credit for more than this; they have been estimated as if they were opposed to skilful antagonists. We do not know but that the best commanders which Britain could then afford were sent them, but we are persuaded that there was nothing eminent notwithstanding. Generals who cannot by a rapid glance take in the peculiarities of the ground, and other circumstances, may be brave but cannot be formidable. We do not hear that amongst the British leaders there was one that had the sort of capacity that could allow for the peculiarities of situation, and therefore we consider that they were very ordinary men. Had there been one such character, with sense enough to know the difference between bush-fighting and open warfare, and to take his measures accordingly, there would have been room for exultation in vanquishing such a foe; but to the best of our recollection there was no such person. Tame men of routine, capable of acting according to a few rules already laid down, wholly unable to devise methods for themselves, such we believe were the British leaders. Considering the nature of the country and climate, we imagine that it could scarcely be possible to have put down a revolt in which the majority of the inhabitants participated; as it was, the methods that were actually followed seem to have been as foolish and unsuitable as could have been suggested, by the extreme of military pedantry. We allow to the American leaders great good sense, and when asked to admit more, we own the pedantic stupidity of their antagonists. When we cast the eye over that series of events that led to the declaration of independence, we do not feel as if we surveyed the doings of persons capable of the concentrations of the highest genius. Shrewd sense on the one side, Prussian-like starched stupidity by rule on the other; such is the idea that we form. In the American army we discern a Quintus, Fabius, Constator, but on neither side was there a Hannibal, a Caesar, a Bonaparte. The present generation have been taught from the days of their primer to hear and say stilted things about Washington. In regard to him and Wellington, we labour under an inability to rise to the normal height of admiration and marvel. There is a similarity between the two commanders, in this degree at least, that they can be described more easily by negative than by positive truths. War being set on foot, they could watch its events, take advantage of circumstances, and by their prudence gain the victory; war being finished, the one could superintend his tobacco plantations, the other spend forty years in attending levees and reviewing single regiments. Neither was cast in that impassioned mould that Byron portrays