

NOTE B.

In consequence of the infancy of the arts in America, both the soldiers and seamen have had to contend with their enemies, in the wars that are passed, under the disadvantages of possessing inferior arms, powder, and even shot. How far these deficiencies in the guns and shot may have been felt in the Revolution, it is not easy to say, as a large portion of the military supplies were obtained either from the enemy himself, or from Europe. After the Revolution, however, down to the close of the last war with England, the navy in particular, laboured under great disadvantages on account of defective armaments and stores. In many of the actions, more men were injured by the bursting of guns, than by the fire of the enemy, and the shot, from imperfect casting, frequently broke when they struck. Another consequence of this defective casting was a diminution in weight, and, consequently, in momentum. The latter fact having been alluded to in the course of the war, the writer, with a view to this work, personally weighed a quantity of shot, both English and American, and made a note of the results. It was found that the old shot, or those with which the ships were supplied at the commencement of the war of 1812, were comparatively lighter than those which had been cast at a later day; but in no instance was an American shot even then found of full weight. On the other hand, the English shot were uniformly of accurate weight. Some of the American 32 pound shot, weighed but 30 pounds; and a gentleman present on the occasion, assured the writer that, a few years earlier, he had met with many which did not much exceed 29 pounds. The heaviest weighed, was 31 pounds 3 ounces. An average of four, all of which were of the later castings, gave 30 pounds 11 ounces. The average of the 18 pound shot, was about 17 pounds; but it was understood, as this examination occurred several years after the peace, that the shot, as well as the guns, were then materially better than they had been previous to and during the war.

The reader will bear in mind that twelve French pounds make nearly thirteen English. Thus, while the gun-deck batteries of l'Insurgente were nominally twelves, the shot weighed about 13