

INTRODUCTION.

thought impracticable for European armies to move. They did not tamely wait for the moment of exertion in the precise line of their duty, but boldly fought out danger and death; and no sooner was one officer lost on any hazardous service than many competitors appeared to succeed in the post of honor. It was this spirit which, among uncommon difficulties, so frequently triumphed over numbers of brave, skilful, and enterprising opponents. The British soldier who thought himself superior, actually became so; and the ascendancy which he claimed was in many instances importantly admitted by his antagonists. Nor was this spirit, the result of principle, confined to the operations of the field: it was shewn in the hour of civil persecution and rigorous imprisonment; in situations where coolness supplies the place of activity, and thought precedes execution. General Gage in a celebrated letter to Washington at the commencement of the war, had said, "that such trials would be met with the fortitude of martyrs;" and the behaviour of the Loyalists amply confirmed his prophecy.

The British Generals were commonly obliged to hazard their armies without any possibility of retreat in case of misadventure: they trusted to the spirit and discipline of their troops; and the decision, with which they risked themselves, forms the most striking and singular feature of the American war. Nor was this only done when the armies were in their full force; by Sir William Howe in his campaigns, particularly in the glorious battle of the Brandywine; by Sir Henry Clinton in his celebrated march through the Jerseys; by Earl Cornwallis in a latter period at Guildford, when the war was transferred to the Carolina's; and eminently by Lord Rawdon, who was

"Left to bide the disadvantage of a field

"Where nothing but the sound of Britain's name

"Did seem defensible;"—but the same spirit was infused into the smallest operations; and the light troops in their enterprizes, confident in the superiority of their composition, scarcely admitted the idea of retreat, or calculated against the contingency of a repulse. An account of the Queen's Rangers.