

THE AMERICAN WAR.

I.—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

WAR is the most deplorable evil that afflicts society. In the mixed condition of human affairs, from the conflicting interests and uncontrollable passions of men, to promulgate a theory professing to be a remedy for the evil would be deemed quixotic ; we must wait the predicted era of universal peace. But when the subject of war is viewed in the abstract, how the mind revolts from the spectacle of multitudes of intelligent beings arrayed one against the other in deadly conflict like the beasts of the forest ! How cutting a reproach to the boasted perfection of modern civilization, that the differences which arise between nations or states cannot be adjusted without a resort to arms ; that the happiness and wealth of the civilized world must be diminished by the withdrawal from the fields of industry of so many millions of the most stalwart of the male population, whose profession it is to invent and use implements with which they may destroy their fellows !

Standing armies have long been acknowledged as a fixed institution amongst the older communities of Europe ; but the untried, though hopeful-born American Republic, included amongst other peculiar and novel characteristics, an exemption from the cost of maintaining numbers of armed citizens to protect their country from invasion or to prosecute schemes of conquest. The latent disease which slumbered in the embryo Republic very soon, however, began to infect it, and to embar-