

CHAP.
X.

EMIGRATIONS from all parts of St. Domingo had indeed prevailed to a very great extent, ever since the revolt of the negroes in the Northern province. Many of the planters had removed with their families to the neighbouring islands: some of them had taken refuge in Jamaica; and it was supposed that not less than ten thousand had transported themselves, at various times, to different parts of the continent of America. Most of these were persons of peaceable tempers, who sought only to procure the mere necessaries of life in safety and quiet. The principal among the planters, having other objects in view, had repaired to Great Britain. It is a circumstance within my own knowledge, that so early as the latter end of 1791 (long before the commencement of hostilities between France and England) many of them had made application to the King's ministers, requesting that an armament might be sent to take possession of the country for the king of Great Britain, and receive the allegiance of the inhabitants. They asserted (I am afraid with much greater confidence than truth) that all classes of the people wished to place themselves under the English dominion, and that, on the first appearance of a British squadron, the colony would surrender without a struggle. To these representations no attention was at that time given; but at length, after the national assembly had thought proper to declare war against Great Britain, the English ministry began to listen, with some degree of complacency, to the overtures which were again made to them, to the same effect, by the planters of St. Domingo. In the summer of 1793, a M. Charmilly (one of those planters) was furnished with dispatches from the secretary of state to General Williamson, the lieutenant-governor and commander in chief