

CHAP.
X.

the whole of that extensive bay which forms the Bight of Leogane, and the capture of the forts, shipping, and town of Port au Prince (the metropolis of the French colony) seemed more than probable, on the arrival of a large armament now daily expected, with much anxiety, from England.

IN the mean while (the reduced state and condition of the troops not admitting of great enterprize) the commander in chief conceived an idea of obtaining possession of the town of Port Paix, an important station to the eastward of Cape St. Nicholas, *by private negociation*. The town was commanded by Lavaux, an old general in the French service, to whom Colonel Whitelocke addressed himself by letter, which he sent with a flag, and offered five thousand pounds to be paid to him in person, on his delivering up the post. Colonel Whitelocke seems, however, to have mistaken the character of Lavaux, who was not only a man of distinguished bravery, but of great probity. His answer is remarkable: “ You
“ have endeavoured (said he) to dishonour me in the eyes of
“ my troops, by supposing me so vile, flagitious, and base, as to
“ be capable of betraying my trust for a bribe: this is an affront
“ for which you owe me personal satisfaction, and I demand it
“ in the name of honour. Wherefore, previous to any general
“ action, I offer you single combat until one of us falls; leaving
“ to you the choice of arms, either on foot or horseback. Your
“ situation, as my enemy on the part of your country, did not give
“ you a right to offer me a personal insult; and as a private
“ person,