

INTRODUCTION.

THE several Letters which have at different times been published by the Petworth Emigration Committee, have been almost exclusively from persons who had emigrated from that neighbourhood, or at least from the North side of the Hills ; but as many Families have gone out also from the South side, a publication of some of their letters may be an object of greater interest to the Inhabitants of those Places, most of whom know the writers by name and some of whom are personally acquainted with them.

Numerous as such Letters are, which have been received during the last few years in all parts of Western Sussex, there is perhaps scarcely an exception to the fact, that contentment and satisfaction are the sum and substance of them. So that if the Emigration, thus set on foot, be considered as an experiment, to provide for some of those who were destitute, and to better the condition of the remainder by diminishing the number of competitors who must necessarily divide the Work with them : it would be difficult to adduce an instance of any similar experiment, which had turned out more undeniably successful.

Nevertheless in the commencement, and while the success was a calculation rather than a certainty; doubt and distrust arose in the minds of many to whom it was offered. In spite of want of work, and consequent privation which they were experiencing at home ; they had not confidence and courage to venture Abroad : and every absurd story, invented by the ignorant or designing was sufficient to deter them.

Time and experience have now operated a total change in this particular, the concurring accounts of so many Friends and Acquaintances have converted the opinions of the most obstinate, and there is scarcely a Labourer in Western Sussex, but is fully aware that with health and willingness to work, he can instantly obtain comfort and abundance in America, and after 5 or 6 years, become the Purchaser and Proprietor of a small independent Farm. But the objections to Emigration which were heretofore on the side of those to whom it was proposed to undertake the Voyage have now only shifted their ground to the side of those who are to pay for it. The doctrine is of late promulgated, that the excess of Labourers is less real, than imaginary. There is certainly some truth in the assertion—and as