

NORTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

It has been the ambition of my literary life to write a book about the United States, and I had made up my mind to visit the country with this object before the intestine troubles of the United States Government had commenced. I have not allowed the division among the States and the breaking out of civil war to interfere with my intention; but I should not purposely have chosen this period either for my book or for my visit. I say so much, in order that it may not be supposed that it is my special purpose to write an account of the struggle as far as it has yet been carried. My wish is to describe as well as I can the present social and political state of the country. This I should have attempted, with more personal satisfaction in the work, had there been no disruption between the North and South; but I have not allowed that disruption to deter me from an object which, if it were delayed, might probably never be carried out. I am therefore forced to take the subject in its present