

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Contest between foreign powers for possession. General views. Steam boat navigation. Natural resources of the west. Abundant means of national prosperity. Source of support for a dense population. General boundaries. Face of the country. Hills and mountains. Principal rivers. Projected canals. Fertility of soil. Native productions. Agricultural remarks. Growth of timber. Stones, on and near the surface. Minerals. Antiquities. Natural curiosities. Wild animals and fowls. Fish. Indian tribes. Boundary between the FREE and SLAVE states. Cession of the Floridas. First settlement of the western country. Separation of the eastern from the Atlantic states.

THE discovery of the new world, by Christopher Columbus, while the human mind had scarcely awoken from the ignorant and superstitious slumbers of the dark ages, opened to the nations of Europe a new and important theatre of action.

The abundance of the precious metals in the south, tempted the avarice of the Spaniards, who barbarously exterminated the innocent natives, and seized upon their possessions, under pretext of right by conquest.

North America was not explored by the Spaniards, English, or French, until a much later period. A contest between these nations, for the jurisdiction of this then wilderness territory, subsisted with but little inter-