

A LAST LOOK

AT

THE UNITED STATES.

I.

A SHORT CHAPTER.

INTRODUCTORY.

It must be confessed that some six or eight years ago we were overdone by two and three volume travels, and various impressions and descriptions of the United States, and of our transatlantic "cousins." Of late, however, as time flies, we have had nothing to point out

"The very age and body of the time,
Its form and pressure,"

if I except Mr. Chambers's book, which, though very good and valuable in its detailed facts, seems unavoidably written in praise of everybody and everything.

To know things well and intimately in this world will nowhere admit of this, if we are really bent on the naked truth. The great difficulty for ever is to find out the simple honest truth of anything! no two individuals ever seeing or feeling the same plain facts in the same way—no two descriptions ever exactly coinciding—to say nothing of eternal and most admired contradictions!

As to America, her forests, her rivers, and her climate, she still lies before our eyes in nearly all the wild majesty and beauty of nature, little altered, except on the sea-board, since the days of her Indians. And as to her present possessions, the inhabitants of her great cities, her villages, her fleets—which fill her harbours and cover the ocean—what are they but English, under their new energetic name of *American*, and another flag. In an increased liberty of action, seized on and carried boldly out in everything, we recognise our own selves transplanted to a wider field, and we go on wondering a little too much at the difference between us, as if it had