

P R E F A C E.

THE following Letters were hurriedly written during an excursion through part of the United States and British North America, in the Summer of 1843. Several of them ~~have already appeared from time to time~~ in the *Glasgow Argus*, but the whole are now printed in their present form at the suggestion of several kind friends in the Canadas, who had not seen them as they formerly appeared. 57

In complying with this request, I have been influenced by the desire of making a slight acknowledgment to these transatlantic friends for the great kindness and attention which I invariably received during my brief sojourn amongst them. While doing this, at same time, to demonstrate to my countrymen how much a person having the desire to obtain a knowledge of foreign countries may accomplish in a few weeks, and to induce, if possible, my fellow-citizens to take advantage of the facilities now afforded by steam navigation, and visit a continent which must in a greater or less degree be interesting to every mercantile mind. No country on the face of the globe possesses greater attractions than America, not only from its rapidly increasing commercial and political importance, and from its vast natural resources—the development of which is every day becoming more apparent—but a country, much of whose diversified scenery, besides being picturesque and beautiful in no small degree, possesses a grandeur and sublimity not to be equalled; and whose people are generally as intelligent and enterprising as they are hospitable and attentive to strangers.

In making my remarks, I have endeavoured to condense, in the form of a diary, as much information as possible, and have never attempted to spin out the ideas as they entered my mind, in that uninteresting and diffuse style often resorted to by those who visit distant countries for the mere purpose of manufacturing a volume.

J. L.