UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA.

No single event in modern history has been of so much importance to mankind as the discovery of America. That great continent, which had been hid from the eyes of civi­lized nations for so many ages, comprises nearly one third of the habitable globe. In soil and climate it rivals the best parts of the old continent. It is not, like Asia and Africa, infested by the larger and more dangerous species of wild animals, nor deformed by vast deserts, which pre­sent insuperable obstacles to civilization. But its great and peculiar advantage lies in the unrivalled magnitude and number of its navigable rivers, which enable its most remote inland parts to hold commercial intercourse with each other, and with foreign states, with unparalleled case and rapidity. The position of these great rivers, whose estuaries all open to the east, points out the western side of the old continent as the region with which it is destined by nature to be most closely connected. Two great classes of colonists, widely dissimilar in character and in circumstances, came from Europe to occupy this new world. The Spaniards, who were first in the order of time, took possession of the most populous and fertile regions ; but their natural advantages were rendered abortive by political and moral evils, a rapa­cious spirit, a corrupt religion, and a vicious system of go­vernment. The English, the other great class of colonists, owed their better fortunes in some measure to their appa­rent disadvantages. Having neither gold mines to work, nor wealthy Indians to rob, they cultivated with greater diligence the natural riches of the soil, and laid the founda­tion of future prosperity in habits of order and industry. Neglected by the government as a band of destitute re­fugees, they enjoyed what was then an unusual degree of civil and religious liberty. Their industry flourished, be­cause it was unfettered and unburdened. They were well governed, because they were left to govern themselves. And if they wanted the aid of the mother country when that aid might sometimes have been useful, they were, on the other hand, exempted from those incessant exactions and vexations to which the Spanish colonists were exposed, from the ignorant, meddling, grasping, bigoted spirit of their European rulers. The troubles which they experienced from the hostility of the Indians diminished as their own numbers increased, and, except at first, were never extreme­ly detrimental. Their common dangers served in some measure as a bond of union among themselves, and per­haps favoured their social improvement, by acting as a slightly compressing force to prevent the indefinite diffu­sion of the population over a large surface. To their free spirit, virtuous habits, intelligence, and industry, the Eng­lish colonists certainly owed much of their early success ; but we must not forget that a series of fortunate changes, not directly the consequence of their own exertions, has greatly contributed to place them in the enviable situation which they now occupy. Had the Dutch, French, Danish, and Swedish colonies planted in North America spread as fast and as far as those of England, and continued separate and independent, we should have seen, in the space between the Mississippi and the Atlantic, the same medley of na­tions and languages, with the same diversity of manners, religion, institutions, and clashing interests, which foster everlasting feuds and jealousies in Europe, engender deso­lating wars, load the people with oppressive taxes and mili­tary tyrannies, and present a formidable barrier to the cir­culation of knowledge and the progress of society. The conquests of England, which blended all these colonies into one nation, have secured to the United States an ex­emption from half the evils which afflict civil society in Eu­rope, and have prepared for them a career of peaceful gran­deur and growing prosperity, which divided Europe cannot hope to enjoy, and which has had no parallel in the history of mankind. The people of the United States find them­selves in a condition to devote their whole energies to the cultivation of their vast natural resources, undistracted by wars, unburdened by oppressive taxes, unfettered by old prejudices and corruptions. Enjoying the united advan­tages of an infant and a mature society, they are able to apply the highly refined science and art of Europe to the improvement of the virgin soil and unoccupied natural riches of America. They start unencumbered by a thou­sand evils, political and moral, which weigh down the ener­gies of the Old World. The volume of our history lies be­fore them : they may adopt our improvements, avoid our errors, take warning from our sufferings, and, with the com­bined lights of our experience and their own, build up a more perfect form of society. Even already they have given some momentous and some salutary truths to the world. It is their rapid growth which has first developed the astonishing results of the productive powers of population. We can now calculate, with considerable certainty, that America, which yet presents to the eye, generally, the aspect of an untrodden forest, will, in the short space of one century, surpass Europe in the number of its inha­bitants. We even hazard little in predicting, that, before the tide of civilization has rolled back to its original seats, Assyria, Persia, and Palestine, an intelligent population of two or three hundred millions will have overspread the New World, and extended the empire of knowledge and the arts from Cape Horn to Alayska. Among this vast mass of civilized men there will be but two languages spoken. The effect of this single circumstance in accelerating the progress of society can scarcely be calculated. What a field will then be opened to the man of science, the artist, the popular writer, who addresses a hundred millions of educated persons ? what a stimulus given to mental energy and social improvement, when every new idea, and every useful discovery, will be communicated instantaneously to so great a mass of intelligent beings, by the electric agency of the post and the press ? With the united intellect and resources of a society framed on such a gigantic scale, what mighty designs will then be practicable? Imagination is lost in attempting to estimate the effects of such accu­mulated means and powers. One result may however be anticipated. America must then become the centre of knowledge, civilization, and power ; and the present lead­ing states of Europe (Russia perhaps excepted), placed on the arena amidst such colossal associates as the American republics, will sink to a subordinate rank, and cease to exert any greater influence on the fate of the world than the Swiss cantons do at the present day.

The territory of the United States is situated between the 25th and 49th degrees of north latitude, and between the 67th and 124th degrees of west longitude from Lon­don. Its extreme length east and west is 2780 miles, its greatest breadth north and south 1230 miles, and its area, according to Mr Mellish, 2,076,410 square English miles. It is bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the north by the British possessions, on the west by the Pacific Ocean, and on the south by Mexico and the Mexican Gulf. The Mississippi divides it into two parts nearly equal in extent. In the north-east angle of this territory, there is a space of more than 100 miles square, of very barren ground, interposed between New Brunswick and Lower Canada, the possession of which has long been the subject