



PREFATORY.

IN a country of such wide extent and room for dispersion as our own, where there are no enduring homes, and no laws tending to their perpetuity, it is not surprising, if we observe among our people in general, a premature hardening of character, the lack of a reverential spirit, and of a delicate sentiment for much which should be esteemed sacred. If our advantages are many ; with freedom, range, and opportunities for ambition hitherto unequalled ; if the fetters of caste are stricken off, and every one is the maker of his own fortune, there must be, of necessity, from the drift and hurry of our lives, counterbalancing losses. The ties of families are disrupted nearly as soon as formed, while a continual exodus is going on from the older settlements, although abundant lands remain there in a state of nature, as when the Indian roamed over them. From the restricted valleys of New England, the young hurry to the ampler domains