

A

GENERAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY.

GEOGRAPHY.

Position.—The Commonwealth of Kentucky—situated between latitude $36^{\circ} 30'$ and $39^{\circ} 06'$ north, and longitude $5^{\circ} 00'$ and $12^{\circ} 38'$ west, from Washington—includes about forty thousand square miles of area, extending for six hundred and forty-two and a half miles along the south bank of the Ohio River, from its junction with the Mississippi to the mouth of the Chatterawah or Big Sandy. This river forms the northern, north-western, and north-eastern borders of the State. A part of its north-eastern border, one hundred and twenty miles, is formed by the Chatterawah River; a south-eastern face of about one hundred and thirty miles has a natural boundary in the several ranges which receive the common name of Cumberland Mountains. The southern face alone is an arbitrary line of two hundred miles in length. The western boundary of about fifty miles is formed by the Mississippi River.

A glance at the accompanying map will make it plain that the region occupied by this Commonwealth has a position of peculiar importance with reference to the great feature-lines of the continent. The Mississippi-River system is the key to the continent. Those parts which lie beyond its borders are, by their limited area or their severe conditions of climate, relatively of minor importance. In this system the State of Kentucky, all things being considered, occupies a most important place. Its western border is only one thousand and