

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY:
SKETCH OF LIFE AND
LABORS OF MISS
CATHERINE S. LAWRENCE**

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Autobiography: Sketch of Life and Labors of Miss Catherine S. Lawrence by Catherine S. Lawrence

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CATHERINE S. LAWRENCE

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C. S. LAWRENCE.
1861.

1. The ...



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INTRODUCTION.

The writer of the following pages having been solicited frequently by her friends and by members of the Grand Army corps to give her life and her labors in the army to the public, has, after long consideration, consented, though somewhat reluctantly, to do so.

The writer of this preface has acquainted himself quite thoroughly with this little volume while in its manuscript form, and he is prepared to pronounce it a highly interesting work and well adapted to promote christianity and good morals, such as can be introduced safely into the best and most refined families or libraries in the land.

The authoress claims to be a lineal descendant of Capt. Lawrence of the frigate *Chesapeake*, and she frequently applies to herself throughout this work the words used by that hero of the war of 1812, "Don't give up the ship." The indomitable pluck which seems to have characterized her career from childhood to a period of over three score and ten, is evidence of her having descended from a noble ancestry. Thus in her case tradition is confirmed by inheritance.

The publication cannot fail to be read with especial interest by all who were actively engaged in putting

down the late Rebellion. This book should have a large sale and wide circulation, not only on account of its fearless advocacy of truth and of its rigorous denunciation of injustice of every form, but because of the material aid which the sale will secure to her, as she approaches the end of the voyage of life.

The government has not been as liberal with her, by way of awarding a pension, as it has in many other instances much less deserving. Her pension of twelve dollars per month is not large enough to furnish her with the common comforts of life, as every impartial judge must admit. It is hoped and expected that the proceeds of the sale of this work will so supplement this pittance, which she receives from the government, as that life's sunset shall be undimmed by the mists of anxiety and unobscured by the clouds of want.

CHESTER HARRIS.

ALBANY, *April 20, 1893.*

CHAPTER I.

"Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close ;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose." — *Longfellow.*

After disposing of my first edition many of my friends and readers urged me to give them more of my real life. My reply was that time and means had both been limited, but I would give them more in my next edition. Consequently I add to my book, sketch by sketch, and will commence by relating an incident connected with a recent visit.

I had been invited to spend the day with a family of old friends. Mother, son and myself were pleasantly seated conversing on different topics, when in came another member of the family — a professional gentleman. After shaking hands cordially he accosted me with, "I am mad at you, Kate ; I am going to quarrel with you."

I felt a queer sensation at the top of my head. It must be that the roots of my hair are disturbed. Quickly recovering myself I said :

"Madness, doctor, means hydrophobia, and if we are to quarrel, doctor, sit down and let's have a pleasant time of it."

"Well, I have read your book three times through."

"And that is what gave you the hydrophobia, is it?"

"No," said he, "I approve of it, but there is not enough of it. Why did you not give us more of your real life?"

"Yes," said I, "but the book, even before reading, has brought an epidemic of hydrophobia to some portions of our city, especially among the managers of our charitable institutions; but perhaps another dose of the same medicine might prove an antidote for the ill effects of the first. But if I were to give you the details of my whole life it would fill a volume as large as Webster's Lexicon. Then nobody would read it. Now the book is of a readable size. Then, you know, it is altogether disagreeable to look in a mirror and behold nothing but our own deformities. Satan is said to keep his cloven foot well covered, lest it proclaim him Satan, when he would pass as a saint, and, if my book should prove like a mirror, the more there is of it the more aggravating it might be, unless it might also give us some suggestions of reform."

CHAPTER II.

"For the soul is dead that slumbers
And things are not what they seem." — *Longfellow.*

In the morning of life we are very unsuspecting creatures. All things are just what they appear to be.

The artless child dreams of no disagreement between the apparent and the real; but before the sun has reached its zenith, and while it is yet forenoon, we are cruelly surprised to find that "it is not all gold that glitters," and our diamonds prove too frequently to be but burnished brass.

Who of us, even as children, have not found ourselves sadly mistaken in our estimate of people and things? When character and quality have proved a failure, our supposed jewels only worthless pebbles, our beautiful things but deformities, and disappointments have seemed almost to crush our young hearts, and drive us back within ourselves, until we fairly recoil from the touch of humanity, we become so distrustful and cynical that we feel prone to let faith drop entirely and drift with the tide. Like the little girl, who, upon finally learning that Santa Claus was only a myth, lost faith in her parents, and coming to her mother, said: "So there is no Santa Claus after all, and it is only you and papa who fill my stockings on Christmas?" "I suppose so," her mother replied; when the child with childish disgust said, "And I don't suppose there is any God either; you have probably been fooling me about that too."

This loss of faith in childhood, this finding out that older people are not so good and pure as we have thought them to be, is one primal means of sending many a little boy and girl to the bad, and ultimately filling our prisons and electric chairs.

It is so extremely difficult to distinguish between