A SKETCH OF ANNE ROBERT JACQUES TURGOT

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JAMES MUNSON BARNARD

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Trieste


A. R. J. TURGOT

A SKETCH

OF

ANNE ROBERT JACQUES TURGOT

WITH A TRANSLATION OF HIS LETTER TO DOCTOR PRICE

BOSTON
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1899

IN MEMORY

OF

WILLIAM GARDINER HAMMOND

OF ST. LOUIS, MO.

The Most Learned Civilian in the United States.

TO HIM I OWE MY APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE OF THE ROMAN LAW, AND MY RESPECT FOR THE HIGHER BRANCHES OF JURISPRUDENCE AND LEGISLATION.

J. M. B.

JAN. 10, 1899.

8.
Mrs Dennis Johnson
11-4-42

SKETCH.

WASHINGTON and his associates warned their countrymen against entangling alliances with the European powers.

M. Turgot, Minister of State under Louis XVI., our great friend in France, in his letter of the 22d of March, 1778, to Dr. Price, our best friend in London, in relation to the new republic writes, "In order that all these good results, which he foresaw were possible in America, may be brought about, it will be necessary for America to keep itself from imitating or becoming an image of Europe."

Again, he goes on to say: "We see her [America] irrevocably independent. Will she be happy in her freedom? This new nation is situated so advantageously to give the world the example of a constitution where the individual enjoys all his rights, freely uses all his faculties, and is only to be governed by nature, right, and justice. But will the people know how to

form such a constitution? Will they know how to ground it on eternal foundations? America is the hope of the human race. It may become its model. It could prove to the world by deeds that men can be free and peaceful, and are able to dispense with fetters of all kinds, which the tyrants and impostors have pretended to impose upon them under the pretext of the public good."

In regard to the moral sciences, particularly with the noblest of them all, the highest statesmanship, it is otherwise. Here we might profit by the experience of Europe.

It requires but a very superficial acquaintance with juridical history to know that a broad and all-comprehensive knowledge of the Roman law, of the historical school of which perhaps Montesquieu was the founder, of the Physiocrates in France, of Immanuel Kant, of Thomas Hobbes, of Jeremy Bentham and his great followers, is necessary for that end. Now, as far as I can find out, these are known only partially in our law schools. This is the more surprising, inasmuch as the Americans have an especial talent for law, producing the best of legists. In historical sense they seem to