

**A TRIBUTE TO W. W.
CORCORAN, OF
WASHINGTON CITY**

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A Tribute to W. W. Corcoran, Of Washington City by M. E. P. Bouigny

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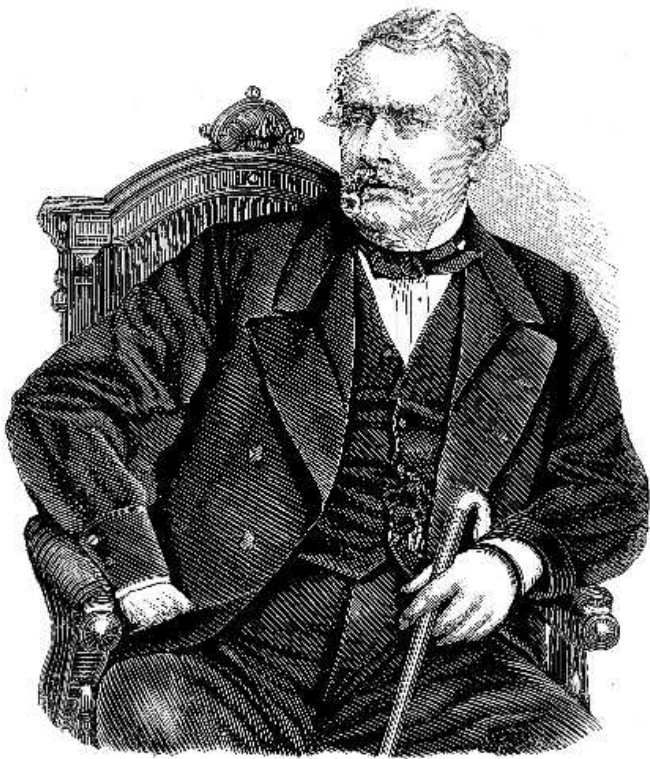
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M. E. P. BOULIGNY

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W. W. CORCORAN.

A TRIBUTE

TO

W. W. CORCORAN,

OF

WASHINGTON CITY.

PHILADELPHIA :
PORTER & COATES,
No. 622 CHESTNUT STREET.

1874.

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In dedicating this little book to Mr. Cooper, I add but a simple flower to the already rich and fragrant garland, that gratitude has woven in remembrance of his numerous deeds of charity, his noble citizenship, and his good name.

M. E. P. SOULIGNY.

Washington, D. C.,

January 12th, 1875.



CHAPTER I.

IF the history of American statesmen is a pleasing study, and will interest the minds of thousands of people throughout the breadth of our land, we may not be wrong in believing that a biography of the noblest philanthropist of our National Capital, will also find its way to the sincere appreciation of very many hearts. If the deeds of great men who have electrified Senates and ruled the nation, are emblazoned in characters of gold, so should continued acts of philanthropy forever dwell in letters of living fire. Heroes acting in behalf of the common good of our country, gain the proudest plaudits of earth, but the humanitarian, sowing the seed of charity, gathers in even a richer harvest, because his generosity is in imitation of the blessed example of God, Who showereth unstintedly His gifts upon mankind. In this age, when, oftentimes, principle, reputation, and honor are sacrificed on the altar of Mammon, it is commonly agreed that the goods of this world become a primary consideration, and that to guard them jealously is an imperative duty. When this selfish rule is departed from, and a man looks in upon his treasury of wealth, saying, "This I

resign for the good of my fellow creatures," he has but walked out of the broad beaten path of avarice and penuriousness, to seek the narrow way that leadeth to righteousness; and such a man, whilst sadly contemplating the weeds and wretched tares that perplex his neighbor, can yet gladly feel that instead of thorns and thistles there have sprung up for himself, violets of love and gratitude.

The subject of our sketch, William Wilson Corcoran, was born on the 27th of December, 1798, in Georgetown, D. C. His father, Thomas Corcoran, a native of Ireland, moving to this country in early youth, first resided in Baltimore, and afterwards settled in Georgetown. By his worthiness and integrity he won the respect and admiration of the community, and held important offices of trust up to the time of his death. For thirty-nine years Wm. Wilson Corcoran continued to reside in his native town, giving his attention, the larger portion of that time, to mercantile affairs. From 1828 to 1836 he had the management of the real estate of the Bank of the United States, in Washington City, and the Bank of Columbia, in Georgetown, and afterwards was engaged in the Exchange business in Penn avenue, up to 1839, when he removed to the building of the old Bank of the Metropolis, F street. Mr. George W. Riggs having become his partner, they purchased, in 1844, the old Bank of the United States, and on the 4th of July of that year (propitious day for a bright destiny), they established themselves, soon making it a bulwark of strength and goodly reputation, and crowning their names with emolument and honor.

In the midst of the grave and momentous trials brought about by the Mexican war, this firm took up the heavy loans made by the government, and with