

CURSORY FAMILY SKETCHES

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Cursory Family Sketches by S. Ann Garnett

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S. ANN GARNETT

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FAMILY SKETCHES**

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BY

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PRIVATELY PRINTED.

1870.

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JOEL MUNSSELL
PRINTER
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1970

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1870

TO THE
GRAND-CHILDREN
OF
THE HON. C. TOMPKINS,
THIS HISTORICAL
FAMILY SKETCH
IS
AFFECTIONATELY
Dedicated.

NEW YORK CITY,
April 2, 1870.



INTRODUCTION.



IRGINIA amply atoned for her error in upholding the Stuarts and their ideas of "Divine rights," (over which Cromwell triumphed) by afterwards yielding to her country, in her greatest peril, that loyalty and support which she had withdrawn from the unworthy cause of tyranny and oppression. Who can ever forget, that she gave birth to that Genius, who secured for his country a name among the nations of the earth, and laid the foundations, broad and deep, for "the most splendid spectacle of human happiness the world ever beheld?"¹ Many

¹ Sidney Smith.

wandering exiles found, through her timely sympathy, a place of refuge, and a home. Among these, were the subjects of this cursory FAMILY SKETCH, written with the view of rescuing virtues from the oblivion of the tomb, for the benefit of the living, who, by emulating may give them immortality. It is a simple record of truth, and this is its only merit. As tradition has perpetuated no pomp of titled rank, or family escutcheons, bearing boasted emblems, it is to be supposed none graced this name. Such honors are apt to be remembered, while few have the moral courage to own, however true, that

“ My ancient but ignoble blood,
Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood.”

As to the intrinsic value of rank and titles, a man's grandfather had as well be a peasant as a prince; a cobbler as a king; since the source of honor, or of degradation lies within his own bosom, and the power of distinction within himself. The question is not, *who his grand-sire was*, but, *who he is*. Merit is the same, whether it mounts a throne, or sits upon a cobbler's bench; whether it has a gold ring with goodly apparel, or is clad in vile

raiment. Human distinctions and empty names are held by too frail a tenure to furnish a safe reliance for pride. Even with the greatest extent of temporal power the destiny of man cannot be controlled. Nor can one of nature's laws be suspended by its utmost exercise. Canute and king Henry Vth gave a rebuke to the fawning pride of arrogance, which should point all future generations to the eternal laws of truth,—all proclaiming in harmony, "None is great but God." Whoever connected, in thought even, the creation of a plant, a mineral, a dell, mountain or planet with any other power than His, who made them? Who interprets the mute language of the inanimate universe which ascends in accepted praise to the great original? Who can reach into the obscurity of the future, and draw thence its hidden secrets? All alike must abide the development of His will, who decrees the fortunes of all, from the greatest to the least, and guides the existences and flow of life and happiness in every channel of animate and inanimate nature. All must submit to the general laws of mutation. Analogous laws control all existencies of the universe. Mount Blanc cannot