

**K. K. K. SKETCHES, HUMOROUS AND
DIDACTIC, TREATING THE MORE IMPORTANT
EVENTS OF THE KU-KLUX-KLAN MOVEMENT
IN THE
SOUTH. WITH A DISCUSSION OF THE CAUSES
WHICH GAVE RISE TO IT, AND THE SOCIAL
AND POLITICAL ISSUES EMANATING FROM IT**

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K. K. K. Sketches, Humorous and Didactic, Treating the More Important Events of the Ku-Klux-Klan Movement in the South. With a Discussion of the Causes Which Gave Rise to It, and the Social and Political Issues Emanating from It by James Mellville Beard

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JAMES MELLVILLE BEARD

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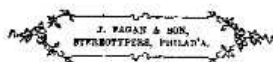
BY

JAMES MELVILLE BEARD.

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TO

Messrs. Geo. C. Heeler and H. H. and J. M. Park,

BOTH AS A MARK OF THE AUTHOR'S ESTEEM AND A TESTI-
MONIAL OF GENEROUS AID RENDERED DURING
THE PROGRESS OF THE "SKETCHES."

P R E F A C E.

THESE sketches are placed before the public without other apology for their appearance than may be found in that demand for information on the subject treated which renders a work of the character a positive necessity of the times. The secret political movement here introduced to the reader has contributed more to the sensational character of American politics, and, at the same time, proven a more influential factor in those political questions with which we have dealt as a people, than any or all contemporaneous issues. And yet nothing has been written on the theme bearing a just proportion thereto, — absolutely nothing, — if we subtract the unknown quantity in the news problem of the day from this estimate, and for reasons as varied as obvious. We shall not weary the reader with a statement of the latter, nor a recitative of the conditions upon which they are or may have been based. It is enough that we know that no consecutive nor reliable history of the Order could have been written at an earlier period; and even at this date, so broken and fragmentary are those passages referring to its active career, compiled during months of arduous labor, that the author has been necessitated to group them in a series of historical sketches, or pen-

pictures, and in treating the subject to adopt the style of the romancist, rather than that of the historian. He flatters himself, however, that while the reliability of his historical information is not impaired by this method, that the work will thereby be rendered more attractive to a large class of readers; and, on the other hand, as to facts connected with the *morale* of the weird subject, he is not hampered by these considerations, but is enabled to present them in such a concise form, and as sentimentously as regards style, as their share of the task's importance renders peremptory.

From the moment that the resolution to compose these sketches in the interest of the reading public became fixed in the author's mind, he has been in constant communication with individuals who were not only influential leaders of the secret movement, but held high official rank under it; so that the authenticity of his statements affecting its *regimé* is placed so far beyond question that the reader is at liberty to take the latter as *ex cathedra* utterances of this singularly reticent body. Should those passages which are occupied with the more exciting events of K. K. K. history be calculated to awaken *sensation* in the public breast, it is a *contretemps* from which the author begs to excuse himself in the light of the same admission, adding, moreover, that he has availed himself of those examples which have gone before him in this department of literature, and reserved his art-flourishes for less susceptible divisions of the theme.

The intelligent reader will see no politics, nor evidence of political bias in the pages of this volume, if he will do the author the simple fairness of its thorough examination. If in addressing his audience from the *status in quo*, to which the Ku-Klux troubles were referred in their origin and bloody career, forcible truths are given their due emphasis, he begs to assure the public that his utterances are no less strongly infected from a standpoint of contrasted locality and habits of political thought. A man professing no politics but those of his grandfather, and, despite settled opinions favoring such partisanship, is strongly tempted at times to question *their* integrity, would hardly be supposed guilty of making an obnoxious necessity of some other man's property, in this most precarious of titled possessions; and lest any should fail to perceive the allegory which this sentence contains, the author begs to call attention to it, and to appropriate the *situation* which it presents. The public mind is so excited regarding such topics at this moment, that it would fail to meet expectation, if it should decline to suspect every shadow of possessing substance, when projected from so suspicious a direction as the subject chosen; and feeling this, and perceiving the inutility of any other form of argument, the reader is invited, in conclusion, to adopt the usual method in such inquiries, and determine for himself the *vexata questio*.

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