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## PREFACE.

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THE author of this memoir — being so little of a politician that he scarcely feels entitled to call himself a member of any party — would not voluntarily have undertaken the work here offered to the public. Neither can he flatter himself that he has been remarkably successful in the performance of his task, viewing it in the light of a political biography, and as a representation of the principles and acts of a public man, intended to operate upon the minds of multitudes, during a presidential canvass. This species of writing is too remote from his customary occupations — and, he may add, from his tastes — to be very satisfactorily done, without more time and practice than he would be willing to expend for such a purpose. If this little biography have any value, it is probably of another kind — as the narrative of one who knew the individual of whom he treats, at a period of life when character could be read with undoubting accuracy, and who, consequently, in judging of the motives of his subsequent conduct, has an advantage over much more competent observers, whose knowledge of the man may have commenced at a later date. Nor can it be considered improper, (at least the author will never feel it so, although some foolish delicacy be sacrificed in the undertaking,) that when a friend, dear to him almost from boyish days, stands up before his country, misrepresented by indiscriminate abuse, on the one



hand, and by aimless praise, on the other, he should be sketched by one who has had opportunities of knowing him well, and who is certainly inclined to tell the truth.

It is perhaps right to say, that while this biography is so far sanctioned by General Pierce, as it comprises a generally correct narrative of the principal events of his life, the author does not understand him as thereby necessarily indorsing all the sentiments put forth by himself, in the progress of the work. These are the author's own speculations upon the facts before him, and may, or may not, be in accordance with the ideas of the individual whose life he writes. That individual's opinions, however, — so far as it is necessary to know them, — may be read, in his straightforward and consistent deeds, with more certainty than those of almost any other man now before the public.

The author, while collecting his materials, has received liberal aid from all manner of people — whigs and democrats, congressmen, astute lawyers, grim old generals of militia, and gallant young officers of the Mexican war — most of whom, however, he must needs say, have rather abounded in eulogy of General Pierce, than in such anecdotal matter as is calculated for a biography. Among the gentlemen to whom he is substantially indebted, he would mention Hon. C. G. Atherton, Hon. S. H. Ayer, Hon. Joseph Hall, Chief Justice Gilchrist, Isaac O. Barnes, Esq., Col. T. J. Whipple, and Mr. C. J. Smith. He has likewise derived much assistance from an able and accurate sketch, that originally appeared in the Boston Post, and was drawn up, as he believes, by the junior editor of that journal.

CONCORD, (Mass.) August 27, 1852.

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