

## NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

An Essay on the Life, Character, and writings of John B. Gibson, LL. D., lately Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. By William A. Porter. Philadelphia : T. & J. W. Johnson.

We have read with much interest this appreciative sketch of the intellectual and moral character of one, whose talents and virtues so long illustrated and adorned the jurisprudence of Pennsylvania. The rich legacy which Judge Gibson bequeathed to the profession in the fruits of so many years of judicial labor, imperatively demanded a more than passing acknowledgment. It is true, that on the very spot which had been the theatre of his triumphs when living, in the Supreme Court itself, there was pronounced a tribute to him, when dead, which, if paid to any less great than he, might have obscured its subject by its own intrinsic splendor. But that eulogy was necessarily brief and general. Much remained to be said, and to have been the first to attempt to supply the deficiency, is of itself no slight praise to the author of this memoir. But he is fairly entitled to the greater praise of having succeeded in the attempt. He has delineated the great mind and heart of Chief Justice Gibson, in colors which a calm sobriety of judgment has prevented from being too glaring. The contemplation of the merits of his subject has not blinded him to its defects, and he has produced a picture whose chastened tone bears the impress of fidelity.

It is not, however, only as an offering to departed worth that we commend Mr. Porter's essay to the attention of our readers. To the professional reader certainly, the history of the life of such a man as John B. Gibson must be at once instructive and interesting. He must feel a natural curiosity to know something of the education, associations, tastes, habits and peculiarities, something of the private life of one whose public life the jurisprudence of our State commemorates more eloquently than the most glowing eulogy, which the warmest admiration for his great qualities could inspire. Such curiosity Mr. Porter has done much to gratify, since he has succinctly traced the manner of life of the Chief Justice, from his athletic and vigorous youth, through his lofty and self reliant manhood and his venerable age, to the time when the solemn messenger came to summon him from the judgment seat to be himself judged.

The style is easy and perspicuous, the reflections interspersed just and apposite, and if the time devoted to the preparation of this memoir left the author a gainer, as he himself assures us, we have great confidence that the time devoted to its perusal will produce a similar result for the reader.

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