

JOSEPH WHITAKER.

1755—1838.

JOSEPH WHITAKER, born in Leeds, England, on the twenty-fifth day of August, 1755, was the son of James Whitaker, a manufacturer of cloth, and the grandson of Joseph Musgrave, of the Scottish clan mentioned in the ballad of Lochinvar, for whom he was named. He was of an ancient Saxon family, who came into England in the sixth century with Cerdic, and who seem to have won their greatest distinction in literature and the church. His father's purpose was that he, too, should enter the ministry. He was, however, young, warm-blooded and venturesome, and, resisting the will of his father, there came about a quarrel, the result of which was that he ran away from home and enlisted in the dragoons, on their way to America to suppress the rebellion against King George. He participated in many of the battles of the revolutionary war, and was one of the squad which captured and carried away Major-General Charles Lee in New Jersey, in 1776. Two things, however, after he had gathered experience, impressed him. One was that he was poorly adapted to the life of a soldier, and the other was that the rebels, against whom he was fighting, had in his opinion the right of the contest. When the army under Sir William Howe, in the fall of 1777, landed at the head of the Elk River, on their way to Brandywine and the capture of Philadelphia, he one day, with characteristic recklessness, mounted his horse and rode off, followed by dragoons and the shots of carbines, and he never returned. He found his way to a rough patch of country, on the border between Berks and