

## JOHN S. GITTINGS.

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NORTH of the city of Baltimore, and about fifteen miles distant, in that beautiful valley known as Long Green, some of the earlier immigrants to Maryland, in search of a rich soil and peaceful skies, settled with their families. Many of their homesteads remain to this day, in possession of their descendants, hallowed by association and endeared by domestic ties; while, in the eye of the stranger passing that way, long; low roofs and quaint old gables rise up, here and there, in the midst of more modern improvements—historic relics, marking the line between the proud present and the simpler past. Among the first drawn to this spot was Thomas Gittings, the great-grandfather of John S. Gittings. He came to Maryland about the year 1684; and in 1720 obtained patents for a large tract of land in the valley, under the then name of Gittings' Choice—now known as the Long Green Farm. Here he lived and died; devising his estate to his son James. The mother of James was of the Webster family, of Harford county. James Gittings married the daughter of Dr. George Buchanan, "one of the founders of Baltimore." The wife of Dr. George Buchanan was Eleanor Rogers. Dr. Buchanan was the proprietor of Druid Hill, now Druid Hill Park. He was the father of General Andrew Buchanan, the Lieutenant of the county during the Revolution, and afterwards Chief Judge of the Court; also of William Buchanan, one of the first Registers of Wills of Baltimore county and city; grandfather of James M. Buchanan, late United States Minister to Denmark; and great-grandfather of Admiral Franklin Buchanan. James Gittings, junior, the father of John S., married Harriet Sterrett, daughter of John Sterrett, whose wife was Deborah Ridgely, daughter of John Ridgely, which latter gentleman was the eldest son of the original proprietor of "Hampton," in Baltimore county. John Ridgely married a daughter of Colonel Edward Dorsey, of Elkridge. James Gittings, senior, and John Sterrett, were zealous and active during the Revolution; they were

members of the General Assembly of Maryland, at a time when the principal citizens were selected for the public service.

JOHN STERRETT GITTINGS, the prominent living representative of the family of his name in Maryland, was born at Long Green in the house where his grandfather and father were born; and he is now the owner of the estate. Standing upon the old threshold, worn by the feet of three generations of his family, with the graves of many of them in view, the crowding memories that there overwhelm him, come with no murmuring voices out of the past, charging degeneracy as a descendant and son. True to the dictates of a high nature, ever responsive in breasts from which pride is not flown, to the just wishes of those who see not, nor hear—yet, speak down the years with an unmistakable emphasis, he has withheld the home of his forefathers from the hand of the stranger. Thus, in the winter of life of one other of the race, fast hastening to join the band gone before, no ghosts of the departed bemoan, in that beautiful valley, the homestead and hearthstone deserted.

The childhood of John S. Gittings was passed at Long Green; and the rudiments of his education he there acquired at a mother's knee. He further pursued his studies at Dickinson College, Pennsylvania. At the age of sixteen he left college, to enter the counting house of James A. Buchanan. At seventeen he was made discount clerk in the City Bank. In the spring of 1820 his father died, and he was recalled to the country, to take charge of his father's estate. In 1821, he married Eleanor Addison Smith, daughter of William Rogers Smith, and granddaughter of Cumberland Dugan by his first wife, who was a Miss May, of Roxbury, Massachusetts. In the same year (1821) Mr. Gittings commenced business in Baltimore as a stock broker. In 1835 he was elected President of the Chesapeake Bank. In 1836 he was appointed Commissioner of the Loans for the State of Maryland, which office he filled until removed through a change in the State's administration. He was reinstated under Democratic rule, but again removed under a Republican administration. For many years Mr. Gittings was a member of the City Council of Baltimore, during which time he was chairman of the Finance Committee. He was elected by the City, and also appointed by the State, a Director in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, during the presidency of Mr. William G. Harrison, and was chairman of the Finance Committee. Mr. Gittings for two years was President of the Northern Central Railroad. When the State of Maryland was divided into four Judicial Districts, he was elected Commissioner of Public

Works. In the Democratic State Convention which nominated E. Louis Lowe for Governor, Mr. Gittings's name was presented as the choice of Baltimore county.

In 1848 Mr. Gittings lost his wife, who left two children, Eleanor Addison, who married George H. Williams, a prominent member of of the bar of Maryland; and William S. Gittings who died several years since, leaving two children, a son and a daughter.

In November, 1853, Mr. Gittings married Charlotte Carter Ritchie, daughter of the venerable and distinguished Thomas Ritchie, and granddaughter of Dr. Fouche of Richmond.

In the business world Mr. Gittings is eminent as a banker. He is now President of the Chesapeake Bank, a position which he has filled successfully and uninterruptedly, with the confidence of the public, for thirty-five years. In point of individual wealth he ranks with millionaires. As a business man, he is a model. Discipline, fixed, severe, is the basis of his business course. Prompt and methodical himself, he requires an unremitting exercise of the like qualities in those about him, so that the machinery of which he is master and main-spring, moves with the precision of the stroke of time. In all strictly business transactions, his rule is—payment for value received—equivalent for equivalent—dollar for dollar; and to the uttermost farthing he stands by the spirit and letter of contract; where differences arise, and other means fail, he invites to the courts of law and abides their decisions. In the world he is of the world, and facing its face, he looks out with the eyes, and wears the armor of a Girard and a Peabody. Just, he observes the prime law; true to himself, he is an example to others.

In that more sacred world—the domestic circle—where is cast the needless outer armor off, he stands revealed in all the strength and devotedness of connubial and parental affection—in the pride of fatherly care—in undiminished solicitude, yet satisfaction—the faithful sentinel off guard, within the citadel of heart and home.