



Mrs. Astor.  
(From a miniature.)

Nantes, and where he had been thankful to find a refuge! Traveling through the Black Forest and Switzerland, Mr. Astor purchased a villa named Genthod, on the Lake of Geneva, and after journeying extensively in Germany and Italy, resided for some time in Paris, where his daughter-in-law's father, General Armstrong, had been American Minister. During leisure hours in New York he had learned French from an *émigré* instructor, and now applied himself to acquiring Italian. He passed two winters at Rome and Naples, visiting the wonders of Italian art, delighted with Pompeii, rejoicing in the charm of the Southern scenery, and

finding everywhere objects for study and reflection. He was presented at the Court of Charles the Tenth; and three years later, a revolution having intervened, at that of Louis Philippe. He met Guizot in Paris and Metternich in Vienna, and at Naples witnessed the accession of young Ferdinand II., subsequently better known to fame as King Bomba. The summers were spent at Genthod with his daughter Eliza, who had married the diplomatic representative of the Hanse towns in Paris, whom I remember in my boyhood as a handsome and courtly old man.

After his final return to New York he lived much in the company of a small group of men of letters, of whom the most distinguished was Washington Irving, who spent several years as a guest in Mr. Astor's house. He appreciated fine dramatic performances, and was a regular theatre-goer in the days of Edmund Kean, Charles Mathews, Garcia and Madame Malibran, when a piece of merit was on the stage. To the end he delighted in making excursions, and found in the magnificent scenery of the Hudson, the Alleghanies and the Catskills an exhilarating and inexhaustible pleasure. During the long evenings of the American winter his recreation was in his library, and this fondness for books increased as his reading extended. He gathered about him a few thousand choice volumes, taking by preference historical and biographical subjects. With what interest must his self-taught mind have traced through those brilliant pages the vicissitudes of earthly affairs, and mused upon the subtle destiny that in all ages so often wrecks the illustrious and raises men from humble spheres to renown!

In America my great-grandfather's life and character have been distorted and