

PREFACE.

IN the following pages I have endeavored to portray a phase of life upon which many romances have been founded, and it has been my object to give the reader, who may be unacquainted with the *Vie Bohemienne* of the army, a true idea of the feelings and circumstances as felt and seen by a soldier in the "ranks," who gradually wins his way from the first step of the ladder to that position from whence most other story-tellers start when they adopt a military hero.

Many chapters in this book relate to what is now matter of history, and the whole are the experience of a life of active soldiering, with the uninteresting and dry details of General Orders left out. The guard-tent and barrack, instead of the mess-table and ante-room, has supplied me with material for many of my scenes. In this I have deviated from the beaten track, and hope the reader may find that in so doing I have not injured the interest of the narrative.

THE AUTHOR.