

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

I wish to express my gratitude for great help received in the writing of this book to Miss MacDermot, Miss Stearne and others, as well as to three friends who submitted to hearing it read aloud in manuscript, and who assisted me by their criticisms and suggestions.

Further, I think it worth saying that in all historical episodes in this book I have taken pains to be as accurate as possible. The various plots, the political movements, and the closing scenes of Charles II.'s life are here described with as much fidelity to truth as is compatible with historical romance. In particular, I do not think that the King himself is represented as doing or saying anything—except of course to my fictitious personages—to which sound history does not testify. I have also taken considerable pains in the topographical descriptions of Whitehall.