

PREFACE

This book is intended to describe in a simple and comprehensive way the progress of civilization among the peoples of the ancient world. It seeks to illustrate the real historical significance of these peoples, and to point out the contributions which each has made to the progress of mankind. The significance of each country is estimated by the permanent elements of its civilization, or those elements which have survived after the nation has passed away. The purpose of the book is, therefore, not simply to describe the growth of separate countries, but to indicate in a general way the continuity of ancient history.

The usual division of ancient history into Oriental, Greek, and Roman, has been followed not only as the most convenient arrangement, but as affording the means to illustrate in a satisfactory way the progressive stages in the growth of ancient civilization. A brief sketch of the Oriental countries is given to show the beginnings of man's industrial life and the initial stages in the development of government, art, science, and religion. The Greek world is viewed as the historical field especially distinguished for the growth of political liberty and the development of a high intellectual and æsthetic culture. In describing the Roman world, the attempt has been made to keep clearly in view that which has given to Rome its distinctive place in the world's history—the genius for organization, the growth of an imperial dominion, and the development of a universal system of government and law.

The history has been reduced to the simplest terms consistent with the importance of the subject-matter. But it has also been written so as to develop in the pupil's mind a scientific spirit, not only by emphasizing the continuity of history, but by indicating the relation of special facts to general movements, and the relation of these general