

## FOREWORD

*I HAVE* written this little book, having in my mind's eye neither schoolboys nor historians, though I should indeed be proud if one and the other gave it their approval; but I had in view the class of cultivated and ignorant men and women to which I myself belong, and meant to offer them such a book as I wish some one would write for me about Russia or Rumania or Serbia or even the United States. For thirty years and more the history of France has been my hobby, and I have read a good deal more of it than I have quoted; I have a fair library, and access to the hospitable bookshelves of my friends;—it seemed to me, therefore, that I was cut out for this particular form of war-work.

Of course, my little book is far from complete—partly on purpose; I have some qualms about a chapter on Philippe-le-Bel which I deliberately sacrificed because he seemed to me too prominent a personage to stand so far back. I have tried above all for unity, and to give a complete impression—the distance left in mass while the figures nearer our own times stand out in fuller relief.

So far as it goes, I hope it is accurate. The picture might be better, yet the painter has taken great pains, out of love and infinite respect for her two countries, the two great countries of Europe.

PARIS,

November 1917.