

## PREFACE

THERE are elaborate books on historical method in various languages ; but so far as I know there are none which sum up shortly the different sources of historical information, and the principles that should guide the inquirer in estimating their evidential value, first as enabling him to ascertain the facts, and secondly as guiding him in making the inferences reasonably deducible from those facts. I have endeavoured to do this as briefly as possible, and with no more illustrations than seem necessary to make the principles clear. I have carefully avoided expressing opinions on disputed historical questions, because I think that one great merit of historical study is that it trains men to compare more or less discrepant statements, and to draw their own conclusions, confident or hesitating according to their estimate of the evidence.

H. B. G.