

PREFACE.

THE close of the first century of American Independence naturally called for some extraordinary and imposing commemoration of the great event; and when it was proposed to celebrate it by an International Exhibition, in which the American Republic should display to the world the triumphs it has achieved in the noble arts of peace during its first century of national existence, and in which these triumphs should be compared in friendly rivalry with those of other and older nations, there was a general and cordial response of approval from the entire country. Out of this sentiment the International Centennial Exhibition was born. Foreign nations entered cordially into the competition to which they were invited, and the enterprise was carried forward to completion with the most gratifying energy and promptness.

The International Centennial Exhibition was a grand success. It surmounted its early difficulties and delighted its friends and silenced its enemies by the beauty and grandeur of its proportions, and by its