

PREFACE.

These short biographical sketches are intended to answer a double purpose; first, to serve as supplementary lessons in History; secondly, to supply materials, and perhaps suggest method, for Composition. Every intelligent instructor knows the value of teaching History by examples. The interest of historical study to the young centres in persons rather than in events, in individual achievement rather than in the development of a country or the progress of a people. The mastery of the main events in the lives of prominent men—in other words, the study of History through Biography—is to the child not only a deeply interesting task, but the memory is able permanently to retain what is presented to it in the form of a mental picture. Biography is History appealing to the eye of the mind.

As to the second point, teachers of Composition know that pupils take more readily to the writing of biographies and character sketches than to any other form of Narration. These brief biographies may be useful in supplying materials for pupils to work upon, and thus lighten the labor of preparation, which is no small burden in the teacher's daily life.