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HISTORY

OF THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

BY

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"WIFT ARRIVES TOO TARDY AS TOO SLOW"

— *Shakespeare*

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1894

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A

HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY

IN

FRANCE

AND

FRENCH BELGIUM AND SWITZERLAND

"AS THE EARTH BRINGETH FORTH HER BUD, AND AS THE GARDEN
CAUSETH THE THINGS THAT ARE SOWN IN IT TO SPRING FORTH; SO THE
LORD GOD WILL CAUSE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PRAISE TO SPRING FORTH
BEFORE ALL THE NATIONS." — *Isaiah*.

"DIE GESCHICHTE IST DAS WISSEN DER MENSCHHEIT VON SICH, IHRE
SELBSTGEWISSHEIT. — SIE IST NICHT 'DAS LICHT UND DIE WAHRHEIT,'
ABER EIN SUCHEN DANACH, EINE PREDIGT DARAUF, EINE WEIHE DAZU;
DEM JOHANNES GLEICH: οὐκ ἦν τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ' ὅτι μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ
φωτός." — *Droysen*.

BY

ROBERT FLINT

РОССИЙСКАЯ
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PREFACE

ALMOST twenty years ago the Author published a volume in which he endeavoured to describe and criticise the principal attempts which had been made in France and Germany philosophically to comprehend and explain the history of mankind.

Had he not been called soon afterwards to a position which required for a considerable number of years almost exclusive devotion to a different order of studies, that volume would have been followed by one dealing in a similar way with the course and succession of historical philosophies in Italy and England. But before he could resume the work, he had become so convinced of the necessity of altering and enlarging his plan, as well as of endeavouring to improve the execution, that he has allowed the volume which he had published to remain out of print for nearly a dozen years, during which it has only been known through the excellent French translation of the late M. Carrau.

He now believes himself to be able to make his work, instead of simply a connected series of studies, a real and comprehensive history; and, if life and strength be granted, to carry it on steadily, although not perhaps rapidly, to completion.

For the reasons stated in the Introduction the Author deems it impossible to describe the course of historical philosophy in a detailed, orderly, and useful manner, otherwise than by tracing it in the first place in its national channels. He desires so to do this that his work may be not merely a history of a department of philosophy, but the history of an interesting and instructive phase of the intellectual development of four great nations — France, Germany, Italy, and England.

Believing that in few, if any, spheres of activity are national tendencies and characteristics more clearly discernible than in that of historical thought, he hopes that the present volume will be found to be to some extent a contribution to the history of France, as well as of the philosophy of history; and will equally endeavour to give to subsequent volumes not merely a general and philosophical but likewise a special and national interest and value.

The volumes being so far relatively distinct will be published separately, although they have a common subject.

The one now issued has been a considerable time passing through the press. Hence some writers treated of in it when alive are now dead. Hence also a considerable number of books which would probably have been referred to if they had appeared earlier are unnoticed.

The best thanks of the Author are due to his learned friend, the Rev. W. Hastie, B.D., for his assistance in revising the proofs of the entire volume, and for many helpful suggestions.

JOHNSTONE LODGE, CRAIGMILLAR PARK,
EDINBURGH, 20th November 1893.

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