EDITORIAL INTRODUCTORY

ON this semi-centennial of the American Civil War—the war of the modern Roses in the Western World—these volumes are dedicated to the American people in tribute to the courage and the valor with which they met one of the greatest crises that a nation has ever known—a crisis that changed the course of civilization. We look back at Napoleon through the glamor of time, without fully realizing that here on our own continent are battle-grounds more noble in their purport than all the wars of the ancient regimes. The decades have shrouded the first American Revolution in romance, but the time has now come when this second American revolution, at the turning point of its first half century, is to become an American epic in which nearly three and a half million men gathered on the battle-line to offer their lives for principles that were dear to them.

It is as an American "Battle Abbey" that these pages are opened on this anniversary, so that the eyes of the generations may look upon the actual scenes—not upon the tarnished muskets, the silenced cannon, nor the battle-stained flag, but upon the warriors themselves standing on the firing-line in the heroic struggle when the hosts of the North and the legions of the South met on the battle-grounds of a nation's ideals, with the destiny of a continent hanging in the balance. And what a tribute it is to American character to be able to gather about these pages in peace and brotherhood, without malice and without dissension, within a generation from the greatest fratricidal tragedy in the annals of mankind. The vision is no longer blinded by heart wounds, but as Americans we can see only the heroic self-sacrifice of these men who battled for the decision of one of the world's greatest problems.

In this first volume, standing literally before the open door to the "Battle Abbey," in which the vision of war is to be revealed in all its reality, I take this privilege to refer briefly to a few of the intimate desires that have led to this revelation of THE PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR. As one stands in the library of the War Department at Washington, or before the archives of the American libraries, he feels that the last word of evidence must have been recorded. Nearly seven thousand treatises, containing varying viewpoints relating to this epoch in our national development, have been written—so Dr. Herbert Putnam, Librarian at the Congressional Library at Washington, tells me; while in my home city of Hartford, which is a typical American community, I find nearly two thousand works similar to those that are within the reach of all the American people in every part of the country.

With this great inheritance before us, military writers have informed me that they cannot understand why the American people have been so little interested in this remarkable war. Great generals have told how they led their magnificent armies in battle; military tacticians have mapped and recorded the movements of regiments and corps with tech-