



History of France: From the Earliest Times to the Treaty of Versailles (Classic Reprint)

William Stearns Davis

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Excerpt from History of France: From the Earliest Times to the Treaty of Versailles

This book was originally intended for members of the American army who naturally would desire to know something of the past of the great French nation on whose soil they expected to do battle for Liberty. The happy but abrupt close of the war vitiated this purpose, but the volume was continued and was extended on a somewhat more ambitious scale to assist in making intelligent Americans in general acquainted with the history of a country with which we have established an ever-deepening friendship.

During the war period, when this task was begun, it seemed possible at first to take some elementary history of France in the French language, translate the same, and present it to new readers in a suitable American dress. This soon appeared impracticable, but certain French manuals were extremely helpful in preparing this work. This is true of the well-known *Histoire de la civilisation française* by M. Alfred Rambaud, and even more particularly of the three admirable volumes of M. Albert Malet's *Histoire de France*, which, taken consecutively, form a national history for use in secondary schools superior possibly to any similar books wherein English or American students learn the story of their own respective countries. Very specific acknowledgment must be made of M. Malet's work for material used in Chapters ix, xiii, and xviii, which utilization in some cases almost amounts to a free translation. The same is true also of the supplemental matter on the acquisition of the French Colonies (Chapter xxv). Of course every competent scholar of French history will recognize the well-known books in the English language which have been frequently laid under contribution.

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