

## PREFACE.

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IN this busy age that which saves time and labor in the acquisition of knowledge is not less appreciated than are labor-saving appliances in the arts and industries. As civilization has advanced, Encyclopedias have multiplied, until they now lighten the labors of the student in almost every field of investigation. Hitherto, however, no attempt has been made to apply this plan to the compilation and arrangement of local history, and a search for information concerning any event of local interest has usually been far more laborious than the effort to obtain knowledge of the happenings of remote ages in far-away countries. It has been well said that "history, like charity, begins at home. The best American citizens are those who mind home affairs and local interests." And again, that "the first step in history is to know thoroughly the district where we live. . . . American local history should be studied as a contribution to general history." Ignorance of the history of the country, the city, or community in which we live, is, in this age, "a reproach to any people," and those who think it safe to rely solely upon traditions for their knowledge of family or local history cherish a sentiment which should have passed away with the aborigines.

Believing that the cyclopedic plan, which has so greatly facilitated the acquisition of knowledge in broader fields, could not fail to be productive of the most satisfactory results when applied to the preservation of local history, I planned the Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri, and the first encyclopedia of a State is herewith presented to the public. The compilation of that portion of the encyclopedia relating to the city of St. Louis was begun early in the year 1897, with the lamented William Hyde as editor-in-chief. Upon this last labor of his life he entered in the spirit of the true historian, determined that it should be a "witness of the times," past and present, and that he would "nothing extenuate nor set down aught in malice." For nearly two years thereafter, Mr. Hyde and myself were co-laborers, and then the dark-winged angel beckoned my beloved associate away from the crowning work of his life. When this talented writer and chivalrous gentleman—who had himself been so much a part of the history of the State—passed away, the completion of our joint task devolved upon me. In the same spirit in which it was begun, the work has been carried forward, and on behalf of my