

PREFACE.

A NARRATIVE of the Hungarian war and its heroes is demanded by the American people. They sympathized with that noble band, which strove for freedom and national independence, and expressed their enthusiastic admiration of its leaders in the council and in the field. They traced, with satisfaction, many features of resemblance between the Hungarian revolution and their own, and between Kossuth and Washington, and Klapka and Wayne. When "treason, like a blight, came o'er the council of the brave," and Hungary lay prostrate at the feet of the savage Hainau, a feeling of sorrow and indignation was universal in the United States. Congress ordered a national vessel to be sent to convey Kossuth and his fellow exiles to our happy shores. In all quarters, the dastardly conduct of Austria towards the vanquished was bitterly censured.

The work now offered to the public is as complete as circumstances will admit at the present time. The authorities relied on were "Schlesinger's War in Hungary," various historical papers by Francis Pulszky, Klapka's "Memoirs of the War of Independence,"

and the "Memoirs of an Hungarian Lady," by Teresa Pulszky. The authors whom we consulted had the best means of obtaining accurate information, though, being partisans, they may colour or misrepresent. Max Schlesinger is generally impartial; awarding due praise to the courage and constancy of the Austrian troops, and to the gallantry and skill of their officers. His enthusiasm for the Hungarian cause, which occasionally gives his history the tone of the pleading of an advocate, is pardonable at this time. The cool and correct Pulszky is the best moderator of Schlesinger, and from his store of facts we have liberally drawn.

The biographies in the latter part of the work are necessarily incomplete. Bem excepted, all of their subjects remain, in the maturity of life, prepared, if occasion serves, to fight the battle over again; and, perhaps, the greatest achievements of their lives have yet to be performed. But enough is related of the career of Kossuth, Görgey, Dembinski, and others, to give a clear conception of their characters and capabilities. It will be seen that the Hungarians possessed statesmen and generals equal, at least, to those of any other country in point of talent, and filled with that energy which an enthusiasm for freedom alone can give. The careful study of the lives of such men cannot but increase our veneration for greatness, and our love of free institutions.