

THE SOUL OF FRANCE

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The Soul of France by Reuben Sallens

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REUBEN SAILLENS

**THE SOUL
OF FRANCE**

THE SOUL OF FRANCE



Vive l'Entente cordiale, par
l'Évangile de Jésus-Christ!

R. Sailleus

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THE SOUL OF FRANCE

BY
REUBEN SAILLENS, D.D.

"GESTA DEI PER FRANCOS"

GUIBERT DE NOGENT
History of the Crusaders (XIth Century)

MORGAN & SCOTT LTD.
12, PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS
LONDON, E.C. MCMXVI

P R E F A C E

THE aim of this book is to afford the English reader a cursory view of the spiritual history of France. Few historians concern themselves mainly with the Soul of nations; wars and dynasties are foremost in their works. The names of two or three great military men, and of one or two genial writers or artists: that is all that the man in the street knows of any people beside his own. That is particularly the case, we believe, with regard to the mutual acquaintance of those two near neighbours, the English and the French. And this explains how it is that, since the beginning of this War, France has been the wonder of the world, by the quality of her moral fibre, and her unexpected power of endurance in trials more severe than she has known for centuries.

These pages will show that France has ever been a chivalrous defender of ideals, ever athirst for something higher and better. Her very

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restlessness, with which she is often reproached, is her glory. And the reason of this nobility of mind, as will appear in these pages, is that, being the earliest evangelized race in existence, France carries in her very Soul, from her birth as a nation, those immortal principles which are expressed in her motto: *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*, words drawn from the Gospel itself. How different from the blasphemous maxim of German theorists: MIGHT IS RIGHT!

The author has tried to show that this early deposit of Christian truth has never ceased to be present and active in the mental and moral constitution of France, giving rise to many so-called "Heresies," none more beneficial than that of the Huguenots, which prepared the great Revolution, and, to a large extent, made France what it is to-day—the bulwark of the world's liberties.

The book concludes with a few instances of the greatness of soul manifested during the War, and with a fervent hope and prayer that, by a return to the pure evangelic springs, to CHRIST Himself, apart from man-made Churches, France may still more become a benefactress of the world, in time of Peace, as she is now in War.

R. SAILLENS.

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