

P R E F A C E.



THIS elementary history of the Renaissance and Reformation is intended as a child's first exposure to the history of the times which ended the Middle Ages in Europe, and began our Modern Era, characterized by individual liberty and scientific advancement. As such, it is chiefly concerned with the stories of the people that figure prominently during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, touching briefly on the dawn the seventeenth.

The Story of the Renaissance and Reformation is chiefly a compilation of three books: two written by H. A. Guerber in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *The Story of Old France* and *The Story of the English*; and one written by C. M. Yonge in the late nineteenth century, *Young Folks' History of Germany*. These books cover the whole scope of history from man's beginning through the Modern Era, and because the scope of *The Story of the Renaissance and Reformation* is so much narrower, I only used those chapters in the three books which pertained to this era.

These chapters have been woven together, taking my source material from Guerber and Yonge, combining elements from all three books, where necessary, into a single, harmonious narrative. In addition, the chapters dealing chiefly with Spanish history were taken from Yonge's *The Story of the Christians and Moors of Spain*. Many other persons and events figure in a comprehensive history of the Renaissance and Reformation, and the histories I used for additional research to build the chapters where information from Guerber and Yonge were slight or nonexistent, are listed in the bibliography in the back of the book.

Some material, additionally, is entirely of my own composition, which has also been woven into the narrative and worded as nearly alike to Guerber's style as I could manage. My purpose in doing this has been to provide as complete a history of the Renaissance and Reformation as possible, in an enjoyable and unbroken style. Maintaining the continuity of the whole narrative was my prime consideration throughout.

Rather than clutter the narrative with footnotes, indicating which sections were from which books—as that would sometimes mean that several references would be present in a single sentence—I listed my resources in the bibliography in the back of the book.

Additionally, I sometimes found that different histories listed conflicting dates for the same event, or presented conflicting accounts. I used *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in its online version on the Internet, as the final arbiter of fact, wherever it touched on the inconsistency in question. This reference is also listed in the bibliography.

The illustrations are from Guerber and Yonge, with many others additionally included from *History of Europe, Ancient and Medieval* by Robinson and Breasted, as listed in the bibliography. As with the other Guerber histories previously republished by Nothing New Press, the first time a personal or place name is mentioned in the text the pronunciation is marked, and a comprehensive index concludes the book.

My philosophy in handling such a volatile history as the Reformation deserves some explanation. I have found that modern histories written by secularists are usually balanced, unless the writer holds a particular animosity toward a certain Christian sect, but that balance is offset by a tendency to diminish the very issues of faith which so shaped the people and events of this era. Modern histories written by Protestants tend to gloss over Protestant abuses and play up Catholic ones; and by the same token, modern histories written by Catholics tend to gloss over Catholic abuses and play up Protestant ones.

I am a Protestant, so this book may be skewed slightly to the Protestant cause. But I honestly tried to present both sides, and portray the ardent heroism and deplorable cruelties perpetrated and suffered by both sides of the conflict. For both sides displayed admirable piety, true devotion, selfless courage, and inhuman cruelties, in the name of God's truth. I wanted to present what happened, and not use the history to editorialize the truth of one position or another, as other Reformation histories for elementary children I have seen have done. Which side had truth, that is for parents to discuss with their children.

If I have made an error, then I invite those learned in this matter to write to me at the address in the front of the book, with documented corrections, and if they prove worthy, I will include the corrections in a future edition of this book. I only ask that such communication be carried on in the spirit of Christian charity.

Before this book was ever written or seen by anyone, one Catholic reviewer of *The Story of the Middle Ages* published the comment that *The Story of the Renaissance and Reformation* was sure to be problematic for Catholics, as I was a Protestant. Why would

this person make this comment, manuscript unseen? This person had to have been absolutely certain, in order for those words to be published and become a matter of public discourse, that any history of the Reformation written by a Protestant would be unfair to Catholics by distorting the truth. I have kept those words in mind while preparing this manuscript, and hope to have succeeded in proving them wrong.

The cruelties perpetrated, on both sides, in the course of these centuries were real, however, and were not glossed over for the sake of not wishing to offend someone, or having this book declared “problematic.” In order to learn from history, it has to be faced, in all honesty. The Scriptures teach us the same thing. Out of the hundreds of people in the Bible, whose history is told, only Daniel and Jesus come through it without faults portrayed; Daniel, because his godliness was so great, I presume, that his faults, which he undoubtedly had, were unnoticeable, and Jesus, because He had none.

I am convinced, through researching and writing this history, that true Christian faith was found among both Catholics and Protestants; even among those in positions of power who unfortunately used their power in misguided ways. Likewise, true ungodliness, and even a zeal for evil, was to be found in some of those who claimed Catholic and Protestant faith. Let us gain wisdom from their example, and not repeat the mistakes made in the past, which cost this world so dear. For Paul said, “For by grace are ye saved through faith,” but I have not found the place in the New Testament where it was stated that salvation rested on accurate doctrine, although accuracy, is of course, desirable.

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“But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth ...” 2 Timothy 2:23-25 NKJV