

Preface.



THIS elementary history of the Middle Ages is intended as a child's first exposure to the history of the times between the Fall of the Roman Empire of the West and the advent of our Modern Era beginning with the Renaissance. As such, it is chiefly concerned with the stories of the people that figure prominently during that thousand year sweep, when the principles of Christianity so informed Western Civilization that Europe was known as "Christendom."

The Story of the Middle Ages is chiefly a compilation of two books written by H. A. Guerber in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: *The Story of Old France* and *The Story of the English*. These two books cover the whole scope of history from man's beginning through the modern era, and, since events in France and England often overlapped in medieval times, many chapters in each book were nearly identical.

Therefore I have woven the histories of these countries together, taking my source material from Guerber, combining elements from both books, where necessary, into a single, harmonious narrative. In addition, as other nations also figure in medieval history, I have included chapters from Charlotte M. Yonge's *A Young Folks' History of Germany* and *The Story of the Christians and Moors of Spain*. The material from Yonge's histories has been integrated with that from Guerber's histories, where appropriate, and in some cases whole chapters from Yonge's histories have been re-written in Guerber's own style.

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 Middle Ages 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, as one phrase might be from one Guerber history, and one from another, and a third from Yonge, with the connecting tissue of the sentence my own work—I listed my resources in the bibliography in the back of the book.

In general, however, this scheme was followed: The chapters dealing chiefly with English history were taken nearly verbatim from *The Story of the English*, the chapters dealing chiefly with French history from *The Story of Old France*, and the chapters dealing chiefly with German, Italian, and Spanish history were taken, although not verbatim, from Yonge. Chapters in which English, French, Spanish, German, or Italian history intersect were nearly always a compilation from Guerber's and Yonge's histories.

In addition, I took the liberty of rephrasing several of Guerber's comments in the beginning of her histories where she discusses the origin of the Celts, Germans, and other European tribes. Her histories take the view that man developed slowly, through long ages of civilization, from a savage to a rational human being. Although the historical record supporting this view is non-existent, it was the common one of her day.

However, I have chosen to restore to the narrative the origin of these tribes as ancient records relate it. Each of the European tribes kept their own genealogies and king-lists, which all record the descent of their royal families from the sons of Noah, other independent and outside sources confirming their records. These changes only affect the first several chapters dealing with the origin of the settlers of Europe and the advent of the various tribes. The academic works upon which I have drawn are 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, and *A History of England* by Larned, as listed in the bibliography. As with the Guerber histories previously republished by Nothing New Press, *The Story of the Greeks* and *The Story of the Romans*, the first time a personal or place name is mentioned in the text the pronunciation is marked, and a comprehensive index concludes the book.

It is my hope that this history will fill a vital need in educating today's school children, by giving them an understanding of what has happened in the world before them. As "what has been is what will be," this knowledge is indispensable, yet nearly every history of the Middle Ages available today for children deals primarily with how knights fought or how castles were built, but tells them nothing of the actual events and people, the heroes and villains, of our past. This is my attempt to fill that void and provide that necessary familiarity.