

READINGS · IN
EUROPEAN · HISTORY

ABRIDGED · EDITION

JAMES · HARVEY · ROBINSON

READINGS IN EUROPEAN HISTORY

*A collection of extracts from the sources chosen with
the purpose of illustrating the progress of
culture in Western Europe since
the German Invasions*

BY

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IN ONE VOLUME

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PREFACE

It is now generally conceded by teachers that the study of history should consist of something more than plying the text-book, — a method simple, no doubt, and enjoying the sanction of immemorial usage, but painful and on the whole rather fruitless. The text-book is doubtless as essential as ever as a means of supplying the learner with a coherent outline of the subject, but this outline must be given reality and life by recourse to fuller and more vivid accounts of events and persons than can be looked for in even the most carefully constructed manual.

In order to meet this need, so called "source books" have been appearing of late, not only in the United States but in England, France, and Germany. These furnish in a more or less convenient form the very best of all existing material for collateral reading and for discussion, namely, examples of the sources themselves. This is not the place to defend the judicious use of extracts from the sources; indeed, such defense would be superfluous, since few teachers now question the expediency of the newer method, if only the illustrative extracts can be brought into organic relation with the general historical narrative, so that there may be no danger of confusing the student.

It is precisely with a view of obviating this danger that I have arranged my *Readings* so as to follow, chapter by chapter, my *Introduction to the History of Western Europe*. I have, moreover, chosen the extracts with the purpose of reënforcing the main points made in the manual, so that the outline and the source book work together throughout.

I cannot but think that this close interrelation will prove a great convenience.

The present volume is an abridgment of my fuller course of *Readings in European History* occupying two volumes, the first of which relates to the period before the Protestant Revolt, the second to the four centuries which have since elapsed. I regret that there should be any need for this shorter collection of extracts, since the complete edition contains none too much. Yet there are several obvious reasons why teachers, especially in the schools, should find one volume all that they can expect their students to have in hand. I have accordingly reduced the original collection by more than half by omitting many extracts altogether, by cutting down in a few cases those that I retained, and by excising those portions of the bibliographies which had to do with strictly advanced study.

J. H. R.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK,
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