

**FAMOUS REFORMERS OF THE
REFORMED AND PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCHES: A MISSION STUDY
MANUAL ON THE REFORMATION**

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Famous Reformers of the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches: A Mission Study Manual on the Reformation by James I. Good

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A MISSION STUDY MANUAL ON THE
REFORMATION

BY

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Reformed Church of Germany," "History of the Re-
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Reformed Church of Switzerland since the Reformation,"
"Historical Handbook of the Reformed Church," etc.*

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FOREWORD

One of the promising tendencies in the sphere of present-day religious life, especially among the young people, is the growing interest in the study of the history of the Christian Church. "Bible and Mission Study Classes"—the combination of terms is itself highly significant—are being successfully organized and maintained by so many agencies directly and indirectly connected with the Church, that we may fairly cherish the hope that, not only among youthful converts, but also among older members in our households of faith, the zeal that is so marked and so admirable a feature of our religious activities may be increasingly tempered with that knowledge which is ever the prime requisite for the cultivation of the noblest types of character and the promotion of the best forms of service.

And if truth is never more potent than when it is seen incarnated in human life, surely the study of the great Reformers of the sixteenth century—the leaders in that wondrous anabasis that brought the Church out of her medieval tutelage into the spacious liberties of the modern era—will ever be an effective means for the deepening and enriching of our conception of what Christianity is and what it may become.

I therefore heartily welcome this "Mission Study Manual on the Reformation." The author's many publications in this particular field and his long experience as a professor of history in a theological seminary are a sufficient guarantee for the general excellence of his work. He has succeeded in sketching the careers and achievements of the Reformers with admirable simplicity, clearness and con-

ciseness, and in maintaining a due proportion among the varied elements of the outline as a whole. The style is frequently brightened with picturesque and dramatic touches and with references to historic landmarks and memorials that reveal the sympathetic interest of the narrator as an eyewitness. After the approved fashion in works of this sort, each chapter is followed by a series of questions designed to bring out the salient features of the text for the purpose of a class review. As explained in the Preface, the book is adjusted to the specific purpose of stimulating popular interest in the study of the Reformation considered primarily, though not exclusively, as an evangelistic and missionary enterprise.

We congratulate the author on the completion of this Manual on the eve of the four hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, and express the hope that the book may be widely useful in spreading the knowledge of the Church of that period, and by this means furthering the kingdom of our Lord and Savior in our own day.

FREDERICK W. LONTSCHER.

Princeton Theological Seminary,
May 15, 1916.

PREFACE

The Reformation is a fitting study for its 400th anniversary (1917). We have endeavored in this Mission Study Manual to gather together, in as brief and popular a way as possible, the leading facts about the Reformers, especially of the Reformed Churches. As this is to be a Missionary Manual, we have, of course, emphasized the missionary spirit of the Reformers, an aspect which has been generally forgotten.

The Reformation and missions, what have they to do with each other? This,—that the Reformation was a great missionary movement, one of the greatest the Christian Church has ever seen; and it was both home and foreign missions. The Reformation has been studied from many standpoints, as a political movement, or as a polemical or a theological one, or as economic or moral or ecclesiastical. But to its missionary aspect little attention has been paid. Why should this be. It has been looked upon as mainly the arena of great doctrinal controversies or ecclesiastical strife, and its soul-saving feature has been forgotten? We fear that its polemics have caused some in this peace-loving age to turn away from it. They will recover their interest when its practical evangelistic spirit is fully brought out as in this book. The Reformation was a great missionary movement as much as any that we call missionary or evangelistic to-day.

We in this distant age, so long after the Reformation, are apt to consider it a sort of ready-made thing and to forget that it required a tremendous amount of hand-to-hand, personal work to make it a success. Andrew first

found Peter, and John, James; these apostolic examples were followed in the Reformation. For, although the Reformation was largely a social movement that brought certain individuals to the front, as Luther and Zwingli; yet, after all, the personal element must not be forgotten, for it bulked largely in the success of the movement. And this personal effort was missionary effort. We are apt to forget that the Reformation was real missionary work—a calling of souls out of the darkness produced by the superstitions of Rome into the light of the Gospel of grace through Christ. And we forget that it began first with one man or a few men, who gathered others around them and thus the Reformation spread in ever-widening circles. The cause of its spread was missionary,—a zeal for souls,—a desire to tell them the new joy found in Protestantism. The Reformation was just as much missionary as our sending missionaries to Catholic lands, as Spain and Mexico and South America, to-day. We name the latter "missionaries." And there has just been held a great missionary convention at Panama to consider their work, for Latin-America is very much in the condition of Europe at the Reformation. And if these who go to Latin-America to-day are called "missionaries," then the Reformers and their co-workers should be called so, too, for they did the same kind of work among the same kind of people.

The Reformers talked to those around them about their new Gospel. They wrote many, many letters—a tremendous correspondence to persons and places, trying to lead them to the Evangelical faith. Church historians have made much of the doctrinal treatises of the Reformers and forgotten their correspondence, which is full of evangelism. Never since the days of the Apostle Paul and his Epistles was there so much consecrated letter-writing as in the Reformation; and much of it was missionary, for its aim was the spread of the Reformation by the conversion of individuals, cities or countries. The Reformers labored in their home towns and districts, and so were home mis-