

**FOUNDATIONS OF  
MODERN EUROPE;  
TWELVE LECTURES**

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Foundations of modern Europe; twelve lectures by Emil Reich

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**EMIL REICH**

**FOUNDATIONS OF  
MODERN EUROPE;  
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FOUNDATIONS OF  
MODERN EUROPE

TWELVE LECTURES

DELIVERED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BY

EMIL REICH

(DOCTOR JURIS)

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CIVILIZATION," ETC.



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## PREFACE

THE present work attempts to give a short sketch of the main facts and tendencies of European history that, from the year 1756 onwards, have contributed to the making of the present state of politics and civilization. It has grown out of a series of public lectures which the author delivered at the request of the University of London in the central hall of the said University, in South Kensington, London, during the Lent term of 1903. The author is fully aware of the massiveness and apparent unwieldiness of the innumerable details known about the period, which, it would appear, it is almost an insolence to attempt describing in a small book of a couple of hundred pages. Yet it may be urged that in history, as well as in nature, the greater the extent of movements and phenomena in general, the more readily must they yield to certain general formulation. There has been no Kepler's law for the movements of tiny leaves falling in autumn; but we have long known the laws regulating the movements of the planets. The events of history from 1756 to 1815 are so vast and so plastic, that on that very account they can more easily be treated and summarized than could, for instance, the incoherent and meaningless facts of the history of some negro state in Africa.



Throughout the lectures (and the present work) the main object was to indicate not only the body of the general facts, but more particularly their soul, their meaning. In that, very probably, the author has frequently been mistaken; just as he cannot help stating, that other writers on the same period have not always been successful in reading aright the drift or the causes of modern history. The author craves permission to assure the reader that he has not only carefully read a considerable number of the original "sources" bearing on the period from 1756 to 1871, but also that he has tried to acquire an intimate and personal acquaintance with the nations whose modern history he has endeavoured to trace. An acquaintance ever so intimate with the life and language of each of the leading modern nations is, by itself, no guarantee for a correct insight into their history and civilization. Yet, on the other hand, we cannot but state in rather uncompromising terms, that no amount of patient research in archives or books can ever be held to replace that living knowledge of nations which a lengthy sojourn in the different countries, rendered more instructive by the fight for life in those countries, can alone convey. To write the history of a country not only neatly or eruditely, but well, one must love that country, one must have much suffered and much enjoyed in that country. History ought indeed to be written *quellengericht* (from and in keeping with the sources), as the Germans call it; however, it is usually overlooked that the most abundant as well as safest historical "source" is to be found in that very personal acquaintance with five to six essentially different types of modern national civilization, which it is somewhat

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difficult to acquire in the silent vaults of archives alone.

The author takes this opportunity to thank the numerous ladies and gentlemen who have honoured him with their attendance, for their patience and kindness. A Hungarian is, as a rule, sure of sympathy in Great Britain; yet the spirit of absolute fairness with which the audience received many an opinion running counter to some of the best cherished national views of history, was very much more than could be expected in many another country. May the readers of this book extend the same fairness to views prompted neither by malice, nor, it is hoped, by inexcusable ignorance.

The author begs to thank the University Extension Board of the University of London for the honour they have conferred upon him by intrusting him with this and other systematic courses on history, and the historic study of Evidence in Science and the Humanities.

EMIL REICH,

LONDON,  
33, ST. LUKE'S ROAD, W.  
*January 14th, 1904.*

