

**A GUIDE TO THE  
STUDY OF  
CHURCH HISTORY**

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*Prof. Ephraim Emerton*

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## PREFACE.

As the title indicates, this volume is intended to be a guide to students. It is not designed to take the place of larger works or render lecturing unnecessary, but to be a guide to the best known manuals and a basis for lecturing. The effort has been made to present the essentials of church history in a form so compact as to appeal to the eye and be easily remembered, and at the same time to direct the student to wider reading on the various subjects. For this purpose, four of the best known manuals, representing different confessional view-points, those of Newman (Baptist), Hurst (Methodist), Kurtz (Lutheran) and Alzog (Catholic), have been selected for constant reference, with occasional references to Schaff, Möeller and other works. No attempt has been made to refer to a wide range of works. The student who is passing through the vast field of Church History for the first time can find enough to do with the references given. As he advances he can easily enlarge his bibliography. In order to secure brevity there have been frequent abbreviations of words and condensations of sentences, but it is believed that no obscurity has resulted. The needs of students in theological seminaries have been steadily in mind, but it is hoped that others may find the work of value.

W. J. M.

#### ABBREVIATIONS.

- A.—Alzog's Universal Church History.  
A. N. F.—Ante-Nicene Fathers.  
C. C.—Schaff's Creeds of Christendom.  
Henderson.—Henderson Historical Documents of the  
Middle Ages.  
H.—Hurst's History of the Christian Church.  
K.—Kurtz's Church History.  
M.—Moeller's Church History.  
N.—Newman's Manual of Church History.  
S.—Schaff's Church History.  
Underhill.—Underhill's Baptist Confessions of Faith.



# A GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF CHURCH HISTORY.

## INTRODUCTION.

Historic Christianity is the resultant of the gospel acting on the world of men. Both the gospel and the world into which it came must be studied as a preliminary to church history.

### I. THE GOSPEL.

The gospel consisted (1) of the teachings and doings—earthly life—of Jesus; (2) Jesus himself, including His death, resurrection and ascension; (3) interpretations of Jesus; (a) by apostles who knew Him; (b) by Paul and others.

### II. THE WORLD INTO WHICH THE GOSPEL FIRST CAME.

*References:* N. i. 20-64; H. i. 61-86; K. Secs. 6-11; A. i. 62-135; S. i. 55-89.

Christianity was born in the Roman Empire, and scarcely passed beyond its boundaries for five hundred years.

1. EMPIRE'S LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES; surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. Rest of the world little known and without influence on the West. Population c. 100,000,000.

2. ITS GOVERNMENT. By Romans. (1) Central—by Emperor and Senate; (2) Provincial—by appointed

governors; (3) Municipal. It was firm and orderly, with much local freedom; brought all races under law, preserved order, prevented petty internicine strifes, suppressed robbery, built good roads, kept open communications by sea and land between all parts of the Empire. All offices below the Senate were appointive, its judges, in the main, just, its law faithfully administered.

3. ITS RACES AND THEIR DISTRIBUTION. Many peoples intermingled and greatly mixed. (1) Latins—in Italy, North Africa, Spain and Gaul, which were largely Latinized. (Compare their languages.) The military and governing classes everywhere were Romans; Latin the official language. (2) Greeks—In Greece and its islands, Asia Minor, Syria, N. and E. Palestine, Egypt, the coasts of Italy, Sicily, Rome, S. E. Gaul, and elsewhere. (3) Jews—(a) Palestine; (b) the Dispersion, mostly commercial people in the cities of Egypt, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Greece, Macedonia, in Rome, Spain, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia and further East. (4) Other Semites—(a) Syrians in Syria and Mesopotamia; (b) Arabs in Arabia; (c) Phœnicians in Phœnicia and North Africa; (5) other native populations—(a) Celts in Gaul, British Islands and Galatia; (b) Copts in Egypt; (c) Berbers in North Africa; (d) various native peoples in Asia Minor and Southeast Europe. Surrounding the Empire were the Germans on the north, still barbarous; on the east the Persians, Parthians, Scythians; on the south various desert tribes in Asia and Africa.

4. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. (1) Many slaves, without legal rights, and often cruelly treated; (2) woman was debased, with few rights, often im-

moral; children were poorly educated and little regarded; (3) there were extremes of wealth and poverty (200,000 mendicants in Rome alone).

5. CULTURE. The masses everywhere ignorant; no system of public schools; education left largely to slaves; books few and costly; education was literary, rhetorical, artificial. Sources of culture were various: (1) That of ancient Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria had largely perished. Only the ruins of their architecture and sculpture remain. (2) The native populations had never possessed much culture. (3) The culture of Persia had affected the Empire little, that of India and of China perhaps not at all. (4) The golden age of Greece was past, but the language had been widely diffused by commerce, colonization and war (Alexander), and was the chief vehicle of culture for the world. The elements of Greek culture were: (a) A beautiful, flexible and expressive language, widely distributed. (b) An extensive literature, which still serves as models in dramatic, lyric and epic poetry, in oratory and in history. (c) Art, which still exerts influence on sculpture and architecture (Doric, Ionic and Corinthian). (d) Philosophy, which has deeply affected theology and philosophy to the present time. Socrates (469-399), Plato (427-347), Aristotle (384-322); Stoic School founded by Zeno (340-260); Epicurean School founded by Epicurus (342-270). (5) Romans, contributed law, stable government, internal order, good roads, open seas. Their literature and philosophy were dependent upon Greek models, but Latin ultimately became the language of theology and learning for the Western world, and held that position till recently. (6) Jews can not be said to have contributed anything