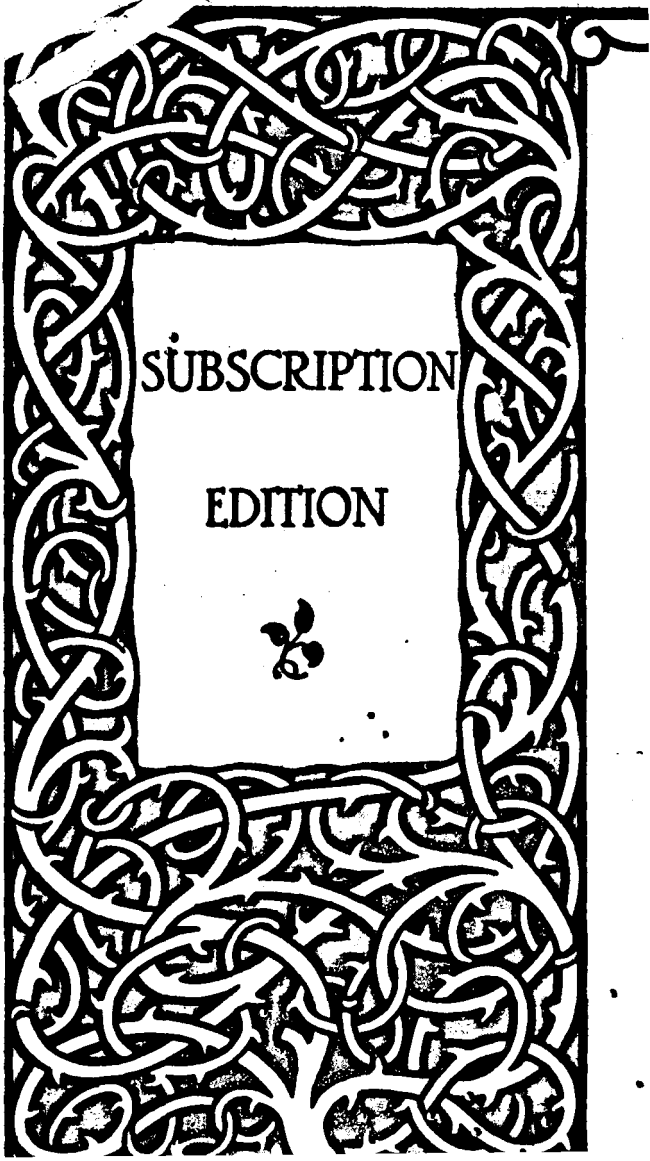


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THE NATION



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The Story of the Nations.

BOHEMIA.



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SMALL RING OF PRAGUE.

BOHEMIA

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE
FALL OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE
IN 1620; WITH A SHORT SUMMARY
OF LATER EVENTS

BY

C. EDMUND MAURICE

AUTHOR OF THE "REVOLUTIONS OF 1848-9 IN ITALY, AUSTRIA-HUNGARY, AND
GERMANY," "RICHARD DE LACY: A TALE OF THE LATER LOLLARDS," &C

*Corresponding Member of the Royal Bohemian
Society of Sciences*

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PREFACE.

FEW countries have been more strangely misunderstood by the average Englishman than Bohemia has been. The mischievous blunder of some fifteenth century Frenchman, who confused the gipsies who had just arrived in France with the nation which was just then startling Europe by its resistance to the forces of the Empire, has left a deeper mark on the imagination of most of our countrymen than the martyrdom of Hus or even the sufferings of our own Princess Elizabeth. The word "Bohemian" has passed into newspaper slang; and it has been so often quoted in its slang sense by people who ought to be more careful in their language, that it has really hindered the study of the real country which it misrepresents. The few who care to hear anything more of a people so strangely slandered, have often been yet further blinded by their readiness to accept as absolute truth the prejudices of the German and Magyar opponents of the Bohemian national feeling. From these sources they have derived an impression

of a set of narrow Ultramontanes, who, oddly enough, combine their religious bigotries in favour of Roman Catholicism with a reliance on Russia in political affairs. These prejudices ought certainly to yield to an acquaintance with the people in their own country. A Roman Catholicism, tempered by an enthusiasm for Hus and Žižka and King George, can scarcely be a very obscurantist form of creed; and an intense feeling of national distinctness can hardly be compatible with an anxiety to be absorbed by the great North-eastern Empire, though undoubtedly it produces a stronger repulsion against the equally denationalising force of Pan-Germanism. Perhaps a careful study of the history of a country so much misunderstood will be the best preparation for a fairer appreciation of its present difficulties.

I have now to thank the many kind friends who have helped me in my work. Of these the chief helper has been Professor Mourek. During the whole of my stay at Prague I received every assistance from him which a foreigner studying in that town could possibly require; and since I have returned to England he has helped me most energetically in procuring various illustrations necessary for my book. I have also to thank Count Leo Thun (the cousin of the late Governor of Bohemia) for many useful hints and introductions. I should also thank Mr. Custos Borovsky, of the Rudolfinum, for the kindness with which he supplied me with introductions during my visits to other towns in Bohemia and Moravia. I should also thank Professor Režek for many useful hints, especially about the difficult reign of Ferdinand

I. Professor Kalausek I have to thank for hints about the earlier period. Professor Tomek I must thank for allowing me to use the map of Prague which appears in my book. I must also thank Dr. Toman for the use of the curious pictures of Žižka. For help in my work in other towns I must thank Father Wurm, of Olmütz (Olomouci); Mr. Palliardi, of Znaym (Znojem); Professor Brettholz, of Brünn (Brno); the Sub-librarian of Časlau; Professor Lemminger, of Kuttenberg (Kutna Hora); Mr. Gross, of Krumov; Father Fučík, of Prachatice; Professor Strnad, of Pilsen (Plzeň); Monsignore Rodler, of Budweis (Budejovice); the Keeper of the Archives at Wittingau (Třeboň), and Professor Sedláček, of Tabor. I also wish to thank Mr. Čelakovsky, of the Town Archives of Prague, for the suggestion about the relation of the early Utraquist rising to the differences between Bohemian workmen and German employers (see Chap. ix. pp. 231, 232).

The question of when and how far to use the Bohemian names of places is one of some difficulty. My own instinct would be to use them wherever possible. But it cannot be denied that there are cases in which the German forms are so well known to English readers, and some in which the Bohemian names seem so unpronounceable, that it would be affectation to follow the strict rules of national expression. Praha, of course, has been hopelessly Anglicized into Prague; and Olomouci, Cheb, Brno, and Plzeň have been as certainly Germanized into Olmütz, Eger, Brünn, and Pilsen. Even in these cases I have on some occasions added the Bohemian

names in brackets. But it was so difficult to know what names of Bohemian towns are generally known in England, that I may sometimes seem to have been inconsistent in my practice. Only let me assure my readers that my wish has been to impress on them the distinctive character of the Bohemian language, and at the same time to secure the recognition of any places with whose names they are already familiar.





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