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Book Review: True Relation of the Hardships suffered by Governor Fernado de Soto and certain PortugueseGentlemen during the Discovery of the Province of Florida, now newly set forth by a Gentleman of Elvas

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BOOK REVIEW

True Relation of the Hardships suffered by Governor Fernado de Soto and certain Portuguese Gentlemen during the Discovery of the Province of Florida, now newly set forth by a Gentleman of Elvas. Translated and Edited by James Alexander Robertson. Volume I., Facsimile of the Original Portuguese of 1556. Volume II., Translation and Annotations. Publications of the Florida State Historical Society, Number 11, Volumes I and II. (DeLand: the Society, 1932, 1933, Pp., 22, clxxx and xxv, 487. \$50.00.)

No one else in this country is so capable of performing the task which Dr. Robertson has just consummated in this translation from the original Portuguese. All previous English translations have been in one way or another unsatisfactory. And if any one is skeptic enough to doubt the accuracy of this new product of Dr. Robertson's pen he has only to compare it with the original, a facsimile of which is to be found in volume I. For making the manuscript available in this form scholars in this country owe a great debt to the Florida State Historical Society.

This de luxe edition of the Gentleman of Elvas is one of the most beautiful examples of the art of bookmaking and typography in recent years. Volume I, besides containing a clear readable facsimile of the original manuscript found in the Lenox collection of the New York Public Library, includes a Foreword by the Committee on Publications of the Society, a Preface by the editor in which are mentioned earlier translations of this basic document for Florida history, a Table of Contents, and a list of members of the Society. Volume II contains the

English translation, together with a Preface in which the editor discusses the companions of de Soto and their hardships, a Table of Contents and list of illustrations, detailed notes, a very valuable bibliographical essay, and an exhaustive index which is characteristic of all of Dr. Robertson's books.

The romance of de Soto's expedition into Florida and the Mississippi valley is known to every school child. It is ever interesting and ever new. Only by persistence and patience were the Spaniards able to penetrate these regions, and de Soto and his companions deserve the greatest of praise. Particularly does the "Gentleman of Elvas" deserve a better fate than that which has hidden his identity behind a cloud of anonymity. Who this great chronicler was no one has yet been able to determine. Dr. Robertson however thinks that something may be found about him if the Portuguese archives of Torre do Tombo could be examined. How fortunate it would be if Dr. Robertson could be granted the assistance necessary to discover this historian's name.

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