

**A TREASURY OF
ENGLISH
LITERATURE**

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A treasury of English literature by Kate M. Warren

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KATE M. WARREN

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A TREASURY
OF
ENGLISH LITERATURE

Selected and arranged

BY

KATE M.^{ARY} WARREN

Lecturer in English Language and Literature at Westfield College (University of London)

With general Introduction

BY

STOPFORD A. BROOKE

JOHNSON TO BURNS

LONDON

ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE & CO. LTD

10 ORANGE STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE, W.C.

1908

418443
27.12.43

THE HISTORY OF THE
COUNTY OF
SURREY

BY
JAMES W. CLAPHAM

BUTLER & TANNER,
THE SELWOOD PRINTING WORKS,
FROME, AND LONDON.

1897

Price 10s.

Preface to Revised Issue in Parts

THIS book is the last of a series of six volumes which form, all together, an anthology of English verse and prose from the earliest time up to Burns. The whole has been already published in one volume under the title of *A Treasury of English Literature*, but for the convenience of students and classes who may wish to study separately a particular epoch, this edition in six books has been prepared. The selections in each volume of the series represent a period of literature, and, so far, form a whole. For an account of the aims of the complete anthology readers are referred to the Editor's Preface which, together with Mr. Stopford Brooke's Introduction, is printed at the beginning of this book.

The present volume includes specimens of prose and verse from Johnson to Burns. It scarcely needs an introduction, for we are now among the "moderns." Johnson, Goldsmith, Fielding, Burke, Gray, Blake and Burns, to mention only a few of the leaders, are in our company to-day.

The verse selections have been chosen partly with the view of giving some slight idea of the earlier part of the romantic movement in poetry, of the struggle of the old "classical" school of Pope against the young, fresh, varied genius of the poets who began to care for nature and romance, and whose work, at the end of the eighteenth century, triumphed so completely.

Among the prose writers the most room has been given to Johnson and Burke. The great novelists have less because they cannot really be represented at all in selection. Their work is more like the drama and needs to be read as a whole to be comprehended. This is especially the case with Fielding. The

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complete letter, however, taken from Richardson's greatest novel, does represent the sentimental and detailed analysis of feeling and the slow-moving style which belong throughout to that author's work.

The letters of Cowper and Gray which close this volume are useful in showing not only a special and beautiful form of English literature, but also the romantic elements of the eighteenth century expressing themselves through the medium of prose.

K. M. W.

July, 1907.

Preface to First Edition

It may be objected to this book that there are already good anthologies of English Literature. There seems to be, however, a place unfilled for which this *Treasury* may be fitted. It has been prepared, in the first instance, as a companion to Mr. Stopford Brooke's *Primer of English Literature*, with the intention of illustrating, by prose and verse selections, the literary history and criticism to be found in that well-known book. The *Primer* has long been recognized as a classic among manuals of the kind. More than twenty-five years ago, Matthew Arnold thought it worthy of an essay to itself;¹ but without that honour it would have easily held its own, for it combines the qualities of usefulness and beauty in an unusual way. To those who need a guide on their first venture into the centuries of English Literature it is invaluable; while to those who already know and admire that wonderful country, it has the power to give keen pleasure from the penetration and delicacy of its criticism as well as from the fine rightness of its proportions.

The *Primer*, however, was never intended to be sufficient in itself; it implies that the reader will turn to the books described and criticized. But the range of literature involved makes this, in many cases, no easy matter, and it is hoped that the *Treasury of English Literature* will supply the need of those who may not be able to seek out from the books themselves these literary illustrations. Furthermore, the Editor will be glad if her work here may help to prevent, or at least render less possible, that second-hand use of a history of literature

¹ See *Mixed Essays*, 1879. Macmillan.

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by which the student takes the given view, both of fact and opinion, without an intelligent effort to arrive at his own conclusions.

But, beyond these aims, it is hoped that the present book may fill a place as an English anthology representing more fully than has yet been attempted in a brief selection, the course of our literature (with the exception of the Drama) from the earliest time to the eighteenth century; and a special feature has been made of Old and Middle English writings before the time of Chaucer. The *Treasury* forms a complete work in itself and can be used apart from its connexion with the *Primer of English Literature*.

No extracts from the Drama proper have been included, except in one case as an example of Marlowe's "mighty line." It seems almost impossible, from the very nature of that form of art, to represent it at all justly in brief passages. Moreover, the work of selection from our dramatic literature is being done by others at the present time, to say nothing of the classic volume of Elizabethan specimens given to us by Charles Lamb.

The selections in this *Treasury* end with the poetry of Burns, though originally it was intended to bring them up to 1832, where the *Primer* itself ends. It was found, however, that this would make the book too large for its purpose, without adding much to its usefulness, since there are already many good selections from the later authors. The writers included and the order and proportionate importance assigned to them follow, as a rule, the arrangement of the *Primer*, though now and then an author has been represented who is not named there, or, if named, is only glanced at without distinctive criticism.

For the character of the specimens the Editor is, with a few exceptions, alone responsible. She has tried to select passages interesting in their subject-matter, or in their literary relationships, as well as representative of the authors in their best or most characteristic manner. It has been impossible to avoid giving certain extracts which have already a place in other

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anthologies, but new matter has been quoted wherever it could be done without material loss. With one or two exceptions, the extracts up to the end of the 15th century have been printed in the original spelling; after that date, except in the case of Spenser, the spelling has been modernized.

It is too much to hope that every one will agree with the selection made. But those who know the difficulties of compiling such a book as this will be lenient in their judgment of its failings; and they will further understand how the Editor, viewing the work as a whole, now that it is finished, would like to do it all over again, making many changes. It often goes to the heart of the lover of literature when the stern exigencies of space compel him, in his character of compiler, to omit or curtail some interesting or beautiful or time-honoured or personally-endearred lines. His only comfort lies in the hope that the brief compilation may lead readers to the full text.

This *Treasury* was begun in the spring of 1900, and has never since been wholly laid aside. One advantage of the delay, however, has been the opportunity it has given for the testing of certain parts of the work. Many of the selections have been used to illustrate the Editor's lectures to college students in English Literature, while valuable suggestions have been made by those authorities who have seen the book in MS. or proof form, especially by Professor W. P. Ker, who has been kindly interested in it from the beginning.

The Editor has made the translations and glossaries attached to the Old and Middle English specimens, but for some details of arrangement and type she wishes to confess her debt to Mr. Quiller-Couch, whose delightful *Oxford Book of English Verse* has given her suggestions.

The original texts printed here have, as far as possible, been taken from the best editions available, some of which are now unfortunately out of print. The Editor is especially grateful to Professor Wülker of Leipzig, who has kindly allowed her