

**SELECT MINOR POEMS OF JOHN  
MILTON: HYMN ON THE  
NATIVITY; L'ALLEGRO; IL  
PENSEROSO; COMUS; LYCIDAS;  
SONNETS**

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Select Minor Poems of John Milton: Hymn on the Nativity; L'allegro; IL Penseroso; Comus;  
Lycidas; Sonnets by John Milton & Albert Perry Walker

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**JOHN MILTON & ALBERT PERRY WALKER**

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NATIVITY; L'ALLEGRO; IL  
PENSEROSO; COMUS;  
LYCIDAS; SONNETS**





"O welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope, . . .  
And thou unblemished form of Chastity!  
I see ye visibly."

*Comus*, 213†.

SELECT  
MINOR POEMS  
OF JOHN MILTON

HYMN ON THE NATIVITY  
L'ALLEGRO  
IL PENSEROSO  
COMUS  
LYCIDAS  
SONNETS

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, ETC., BY

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## PREFACE.

THE form of this book has been determined by the same considerations which influenced me in the preparation of my volume of *Selections from Paradise Lost*. I had learned from my observation of nearly two thousand pupils in literature that Milton's erudition makes it impossible for pupils of secondary school age to read his works intelligently without a definite preparation, through the study of certain conceptions with which he, in common with all the educated classes of his time, was perfectly familiar. Among these were the conceptions in regard to physical science which prevailed during the Middle Ages, the myths which are found in the Greek and Roman classics, and the religious dogmas held by the Christian world in the seventeenth century. I believe that that method of editing Milton's works which compels pupils to acquire a knowledge of these conceptions piecemeal, through the process of referring to isolated notes, is pedagogically indefensible if the pupils are supposed to be studying the works for their educational value as examples of good literature, both because this method creates faulty conceptions of the true method



and purpose of literary study, and because it runs counter to the principle that knowledge, to be useful, must consist of a body of logically related facts. In a word, I believe that pupils should be enabled and induced to equip themselves as thoroughly as possible for reading any poem *before* they enter upon the study of the text, and that they should not be led to degrade a noble poem to the level of a catalogue of bits of recondite information to be laboriously acquired through notes or works of reference.

I have, therefore, condensed, for this volume, the Historical Introduction to my volume of *Selections from Paradise Lost* by omitting all the portions not necessary to the interpretation of the poems here included, and have added a general Introduction to the Minor Poems and also a special Introduction to each poem, together with critical notes, which aim to direct attention to the poems as literary productions. The various Introductions should be studied with some care, as a preparation for the study of certain classes of literature. Then the poems should be made the object of study, the references to the Historical Introduction and the Glossary being used only when the failure of the pupil's memory renders it necessary.

ALBERT PERRY WALKER.

BOSTON, August, 1900.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	iii
WORKS FOR REFERENCE . . . . .	vii
BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE . . . . .	ix
<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF MILTON'S WORKS :</b>	
Suggestions for the Study of Poetry . . . . .	1
Seventeenth Century Ideas . . . . .	6
INTRODUCTION TO THE MINOR POEMS . . . . .	47
<b>HYMN ON THE NATIVITY:</b>	
Editor's Introduction . . . . .	53
Text . . . . .	57
<b>L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO:</b>	
Editor's Introduction . . . . .	68
L'Allegro . . . . .	73
Il Penseroso . . . . .	79
<b>COMUS:</b>	
Editor's Introduction . . . . .	86
Text . . . . .	93
<b>LYCIDAS:</b>	
Editor's Introduction . . . . .	132
Text . . . . .	137
<b>SONNETS:</b>	
Editor's Introduction . . . . .	144
Text . . . . .	146
NOTES ON THE MINOR POEMS . . . . .	157
GLOSSARY . . . . .	168
INDEX . . . . .	187

## ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE LADY IN COMUS . . . .	<i>J. D. Crittenden</i>	<i>Frontispiece</i>
THE WORLD (Diagram of the Ptolemaic System) . . . .		11
THE "STAR-LED WIZARDS" . . . .	<i>J. Portaels</i> . . . .	58
"DIVINEST MELANCHOLY" . . . .	<i>W. C. Thomas</i> . . . .	80
THE EDUCATION OF COMUS . . . .	<i>From a Greek Vase</i> . . . .	93
CIRCE . . . . .	<i>J. H. Waterhouse</i> . . . .	95
LUDLOW CASTLE . . . . .	<i>J. M. W. Turner</i> . . . .	128
FAUN, SATYR, AND PAN PIPES . . . . .	<i>Harriet Hosmer</i> . . . .	138