

SOUTHERN
LITERATURE



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SOUTHERN LITERATURE

From 1579-1895.

A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW, WITH COPIOUS EXTRACTS
AND CRITICISMS

FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS AND THE GENERAL READER

*Containing an Appendix with a Full List of Southern
Authors*

BY
LOUISE MANLY

—
ILLUSTRATED
—

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PREFACE.

THE primary object of this book is to furnish our children with material for becoming acquainted with the development of American life and history as found in Southern writers and their works. It may serve as a reader supplementary to American history and literature, or it may be made the ground-work for serious study of Southern life and letters; and between these extremes there are varying degrees of usefulness.

To state its origin will best explain its existence. This may furthermore be of some help to teachers in using the book, though each teacher will use it as best suits his classes and methods.

The study of History is rising every day in importance. Sir Walter Raleigh in his "Historie of the World" well said, "It hath triumphed over time, which besides it nothing but eternity hath triumphed over." It is the still living word of the vanished ages.

The best way of teaching history has of late years received much attention. One excellent method is to read, in connection with the text-book, good works of fiction, dramas, poetry, and historical novels, bearing upon the different epochs, and also to read the works of the authors them-

selves of these different periods. We thus make history and literature illustrate and beautify each other. The dry dates become covered with living facts, the past is peopled with real beings instead of hard names, fiction receives a solid basis for its airy architecture, and the mind of the pupil is interested and broadened. Even the difficult subjects of politics and institutions gradually assume a more pleasing aspect by being associated with individual human interests, and condescend to simplify themselves through personal relations.

To illustrate this method, which I have used with great success in teaching English History :

In connection with the times of the early Britons, read Tennyson's "Idyls of the King."

At the Norman Conquest, Bulwer's "Harold."

At the reign of Richard I. (Coeur de Lion). Scott's "Ivanhoe" and "Talisman," Shakspeare's "King John."

At the reign of Elizabeth, Scott's "Kenilworth," the non-historical plays of Shakspeare, as he lived at that epoch, Bacon's Essays, and others.

I mention merely a few. The amount of reading can be increased almost indefinitely and will depend on the time of the pupil, the plan of the teacher, and the accessibility of the books. Most of the books necessary for English History are now published in cheap form and are within reach of every pupil.

A great deal of reading is very desirable; it is the only way to give our pupils any broad view of literature and

history, and to cultivate a taste for reading in those destitute of it. It is often the only opportunity for reading which some pupils will ever have, and it lasts them a lifetime as a pleasure and a benefit.*

The reading may be done in the class or out of school hours. It is well to read as much as practicable in class, and to have some sketch of the outside reading given in class.

Geography must also go hand in hand with history, a point now well understood. But its importance can hardly be exaggerated and its practice is of the utmost value. One *must* use maps to study and read intelligently.

In American History pursue a similar course, as for example :

At the period of discovery and early settlement, read Irving's "Columbus," Simms' "Vasconcelos" (De Soto's Expedition), and "Yemassee," John Smith's Life and Writings, Longfellow's "Hiawatha" and "Miles Standish," Kennedy's "Rob of the Bowl," Strachey's Works, Mrs. Preston's "Colonial Ballads," &c.

In Revolutionary times, the Revolutionary novels of Simms and Cooper, Kennedy's "Horse-Shoe Robinson;" the great statesmen of the day, as Jefferson, Adams, Patrick Henry, Hamilton, Washington; Cooke's "Fairfax" in which Washington appears as a youthful surveyor, and "Virginia Comedians" in which Patrick Henry appears, Thackeray's "Virginians;" and others.

* See Professor Woodrow Wilson's excellent article on the University study of Literature and Institutions, in the FORUM, September, 1894.

Each teacher will make his own list as his time and command of books allow. And each State or section of our great country will devote more time to its own special history and literature; this is right, for knowledge like charity begins at home, and gradually widens until it embraces the circle of the universe.

In collecting material for classes in American History to read in accordance with this plan, it was found easy to get cheap editions of Irving, Longfellow, Cooper, and other writers of the northern States, but almost impossible to get those of the southern, in cheap or even expensive editions. And the present volume has been prepared to supply in part this deficiency. To fit it to the plan suggested, the dates of the writers and the period and character of their works have been indicated, and some selections from them given for reading,—too little, it is feared, to be of much service, and yet enough to stimulate to further interest and study.

The materials have been found so abundant, even so much more abundant than I suspected when undertaking the work, that it has been a hard task to make a selection from the rich masses of interesting writing. I fear that the work is too fragmentary and contains too many writers to make a lasting impression in a historical point of view.

If, however, it leads to a sympathetic study of Southern life and literature, and especially if it makes young people acquainted with our writers of the past and with something of the old-time life and the spirit that controlled our ancestors, it will serve an excellent purpose.

Our writers should be compared with those of other sections and other countries; and due honor should be given them, equally removed from over-praise and from depreciation. If we, their countrymen, do not know and honor them, who can be expected to do so? No people is great whose memory is lost, whose interest centres in the present alone, who looks not reverently back to true beginnings and hopefully forward to a grand future.

So I would urge my fellow-teachers to a fresh diligence in studying and worthily understanding the life and literature of our past, and in impressing them upon the minds of the rising generation, so as to infuse into the new forms now arising the best and purest and highest of the old forms fast passing away.

My sincere thanks are hereby tendered to the scholars who have aided me by their advice and encouragement, to living authors and the relatives of those not living who have generously given me permission to copy extracts from their writings, to the publishers who have kindly allowed me to use copyrighted matter, to Miss Anna M. Trice, Mr. Josiah Ryland, Jr., and the officials of the Virginia State Library where I found most of the books needed in my work, and to Mr. David Hutcheson, of the Library of Congress. My greatest indebtedness is to Professor William Taylor Thom and Professor John P. McGuire, for scholarly criticism and practical suggestions in the course of preparation.

1895.

LOUISE MANLY.

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