

LITERATURE PRIMERS

Edited by J. R. GREEN M.A.

ENGLISH
LITERATURE

STOFFORD A. BROOKE M.A.



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Literature Primer.

Edited by JOHN RICHARD GREEN, M.A.

ENGLISH
LITERATURE.

BY THE

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PRIMER

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

WRITERS BEFORE THE NORMAN CONQUEST, 670—1066.

1. English Literature begins in England about 670.
2. War Poems.—*Beowulf*, and *Fight at Finnesburg* before 600.
Song of Brunanburh, 937. *Fight at Maldon*, 991. Odes
in A. S. Chronicle.
3. Religious Poems.—Cædmon's *Paraphrase of the Bible*, 670.
Poems in the Exeter and the Vercelli book.
4. *The Traveller's Song—the Lament of Deor*—inserted into
Exeter book from pagan MSS.
5. PROSE.—Bæda's *translation of St. John*, 735. King Ælfred's
literary and historical work during his two times of peace,
880—893 and 897—901. Ælfric's *Translations*, 990—
995. *The English Chronicle*, ends 1154.

I. What Literature is.—Before we can enter on the story of our English Literature we must try to understand what literature itself is. By literature we mean the written thoughts and feelings of intelligent men and women arranged in a way which will give pleasure to the reader. Literature has to do therefore, so far as its subject goes, with all the things about which we learn, and think, and feel. As to its form, it has two large divisions—one of which is called Prose Literature and the other Poetical Literature.