



PREFACE.

WHEN the THIRD BOOK has been reached, the pupil may be presumed capable of enjoying the delightful lyric poetry in which English Literature abounds, and to which so many of the finest minds have contributed. The literary form is often easier than that of a prose narrative; it is, moreover, peculiarly adapted for expressive reading and recitation. The literary ascent can be made so gradual that, before he is conscious of intellectual effort, the young student has come into the immediate presence of the loftiest peaks of that grand and majestic literature which is the pride and the glory of the whole English-speaking race.

In our selections, we have ranged over the poets and the prose writers of three centuries,—from the era of Shakspeare and Herrick to the era of Tennyson and Rossetti, of Emerson and Longfellow. The selections, by their freshness, will, it is hoped, yield a grateful relief to teachers wearied by long years of monotonous repetition.

The cultivation of children's fancy, though not actually formulated as part of school-training, has of late years been most strenuously promoted by delightful gift-books and illus-