A short biographical dictionary of English literature

Cousin John William
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REFERENCE

A DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH
AND AMERICAN AUTHORS
BY JOHN W. COUSIN
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- Reference
- Romance

IN TWO STYLES OF BINDING, CLOTH, FLAT BACK, COLOURED TOP, AND LEATHER, ROUND CORNERS, GILT TOP.

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NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.
I WILL MAKE A PRIEF OF IT IN MY NOTE BOOK MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR
INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this book is to give as much information about English authors, including under this designation American and Colonial writers, as the prescribed limits will admit of. At the same time an attempt has been made, where materials exist for it, to enhance the interest by introducing such details as tend to illustrate the characters and circumstances of the respective writers and the manner in which they passed through the world; and in the case of the more important, to give some indication of the relative place which they hold and the leading features of their work.

Including the Appendix of Living Writers, the work contains upwards of 1600 names; but large as this number is, the number of those who have contributed something of interest and value to the vast store of English Literature is larger still, and any attempt to make a book of this kind absolutely exhaustive would be futile.

The word "literature" is here used in a very wide sense, and this gives rise to considerable difficulty in drawing the line of exclusion. There are very many writers whose claim to admission may reasonably be considered as good as that of some who have been included; but even had it been possible to discover all these, their inclusion would have swelled the work beyond its limits. A line had to be drawn somewhere, and the writer has used his best judgment in making that line as consistent as possible. It may probably, however, be safely claimed that every department of the subject of any importance is well represented.

Wherever practicable (and this includes all but a very few articles), various authorities have been collated, and pains have been taken to secure accuracy; but where so large a collection of facts and dates is involved, it would be too sanguine to expect that success has invariably been attained.

J. W. C.

January, 1910.
Dictionary of English Literature

The following list gives some of the best known works of Biography:


LIST OF CONTRACTIONS USED THROUGHOUT THE WORK

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ABBOTT, JACOB (1803-1879).—Educationalist and miscellaneous author, b. at Hallowell, Maine, ed. at Bowdoin Coll. and Andover, entered the ministry of the Congregational Church, but was best known as an educationist and writer of religious and other books, mainly for the young. Among them are Beech Nut Tales and The Rollo Books, both of which still have a very wide circulation.

ABBOTT, JOHN STEVENS CABOT (1805-1877).—Historian, etc., b. Brunswick, Maine, and ed. at Bowdoin Coll. He studied theology and became a minister of the Congregational Church at various places in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Owing to the success of a little work, The Mother at Home, he devoted himself, from 1844 onwards, to literature, and especially to historical writing. Among his principal works, which were very popular, are: History of Napoleon Bonaparte (1852-55), History of the Civil War in America (1863-66), and History of Frederick the Great (1871).

A BECKETT, GILBERT ABBOTT (1811-1856).—Comic writer, b. in London, the s. of a lawyer, and belonged to a family claiming descent from Thomas à Becket. Destined for the legal profession, he was called to the Bar. In addition to contributions to various periodicals and newspapers, including Punch, The Illustrated London News, The Times, and Morning Herald, he produced over fifty plays, many of which attained great popularity, and he also helped to dramatise some of Dickens' works. He is perhaps best known as the author of Comic History of England, Comic History of Rome, Comic Blackstone, etc. He was also distinguished in his profession, acted as a commissioner on various important matters, and was appointed a metropolitan police magistrate.

ABERCROMBIE, JOHN (1780-1844).—Physician and writer on mental science, s. of a minister, was b. at Aberdeen, and ed. at the Grammar School and Marischal College there. He studied medicine at Edinburgh, in which city he practised as a physician. He made valuable contributions to the literature of his profession, and pub. two works, Enquiry Concerning the Intellectual Powers (1830) and The Philosophy of the Moral Feelings (1833), which, though popular at the time of their publication, have long been superseded. For his services as a physician and philanthropist he received many marks of distinction, including the Rectorship of Marischal College.
ABERCROMBIE, PATRICK (1656-1716).—Antiquary and historian, was physician to James II. in 1685; he was a Jacobite and opposed the Union in various pamphlets. His chief work was *Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation* (1711-16).

ACTON, JOHN EMERIC EDWARD DALBERG-ACTON, 1ST LORD (1834-1902).—Historian, s. of Sir Richard A., and grandson of Sir John A., who was Prime Minister of Naples, was b. at Naples. He belonged to an ancient Roman Catholic family, and was ed. first at Oscott near Birmingham under Dr. (afterwards Card.) Wiseman. Thence he went to Edinburgh, where he studied privately, and afterwards to Munich, where he resided in the house of Dr. Dollinger, the great scholar and subsequent leader of the Old Catholic party, by whom he was profoundly influenced. While at Edinburgh he endeavoured to procure admission to Cambridge, but without success, his religion being at that time a bar. He early devoted himself to the study of history, and is said to have been on terms of intimacy with every contemporary historian of distinction, with the exception of Guizot. He sat in the House of Commons 1859-65, but made no great mark, and in 1869 was raised to the peerage as Lord Acton of Aldenham. For a time he edited *The Rambler*, a Roman Catholic periodical, which afterwards became the *Home and Foreign Review*, and which, under his care, became one of the most learned publications of the day. The liberal character of A.'s views, however, led to its stoppage in deference to the authorities of the Church. He, however, maintained a lifelong opposition to the Ultramontane party in the Church, and in 1874 controverted their position in four letters to *The Times* which were described as the most crushing argument against them which ever appeared in so condensed a form. A.'s contributions to literature were few, and, in comparison with his extraordinary learning, comparatively unimportant. He wrote upon *Cardinal Wolsey* (1877) and *German Schools of History* (1886). He was extremely modest, and the loftiness of his ideals of accuracy and completeness of treatment led him to shrink from tasks which men of far slighter equipment might have carried out with success. His learning and his position as a universally acknowledged master in his subject were recognised by his appointment in 1895 as Professor of Modern History at Cambridge. Perhaps his most valuable services to historical literature were his laying down the lines of the great *Cambridge Modern History*, and his collection of a library of 60,000 vols., which after his death was purchased by an American millionaire and presented to Lord Morley of Blackburn, who placed it in the University of Cambridge.

ADAMNAN, ST. (625?-704).—Historian, b. in Donegal, became Abbot of Iona in 679. Like other Irish churchmen he was a statesman as well as an ecclesiastic, and appears to have been sent on various political missions. In the great controversy on the subject of the holding of Easter, he sided with Rome against the Irish Church. He left the earliest account we have of the state of Palestine in the early ages of the Church; but of even more value is his *Vita Sancti Columbae*, giving a minute account of the condition and discipline of the church of Iona. He d. 704.