

**THE AGE OF
TRANSITION,
1400-1580, VOL. 1**

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The age of transition, 1400-1580, Vol. 1 by F. J. Snell

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F. J. SNELL

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HANDBOOKS
OF
ENGLISH LITERATURE
EDITED BY PROFESSOR HALES
THE AGE OF TRANSITION
VOL. I

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AGE OF TRANSITION

1400—1580

BY

F. J. SNELL, M.A.

AUTHOR OF 'THE AGE OF CHAUCER,' ETC.

VOL. I

THE POETS



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1920

PREFACE

THE object of the present work is to present a lucid and succinct account of English and Scottish literature during the period that intervenes between Chaucer and Spenser; and in order that the reader may derive distinct and tangible impressions, considerable care has been bestowed on the grouping of the various matters. It is the misfortune of some otherwise excellent books that in them this vital question of arrangement is either utterly neglected or regarded as purely secondary, so that the process of absorbing and digesting their contents is truly formidable.

The author has been at pains to consult previous histories (unfortunately, the second volume of M. Jusserand's work appeared too late for the purpose), but happily there have been available for the study of the writings embraced in this sketch many publications, including the editions of the E. E. T. S. and Professor's Arber's reprints. As a general introduction to the literature of the age Dr. Skeat's specimens will be found invaluable. Mr. A. W. Pollard's *Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse*, though of genuine utility, is hardly representative enough; the collection, indeed, is a little capricious. Omissions, however, are easy, and the author of the present volumes much regrets not having included a notice of that deserving writer, Thomas Wilson, although he has twice mentioned him in the text.

In another edition this oversight will assuredly not be repeated.

Grateful acknowledgments are due to Professor Hales for his kind aid and encouragement. Both editor and author have accomplished the work under circumstances of some difficulty; now that it is complete it is hoped that it may prove a serviceable guide to the poetry and prose of an era of which little is generally known.

F. J. SNELL.

TIVERTON,

March 23rd, 1905.

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