

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY PROSE

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Seventeenth Century Prose by Elizabeth Lee

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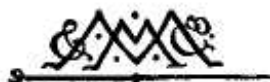
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ELIZABETH LEE

**SEVENTEENTH
CENTURY PROSE**

English Literature for Secondary Schools
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TORONTO

Seventeenth Century Prose

*Selected and Edited, with Introductions, Notes
Glossary, etc., by*

Elizabeth Lee

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INTRODUCTION.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY PROSE.

ALTHOUGH it is usual for the sake of convenience to classify great writers according to the century in which they flourished, the division must always be an arbitrary one, since the beginning and ending of a century does not necessarily coincide with the beginning and ending of other things. It does, however, so happen that the authors selected for this volume, with one exception,¹ all lived and worked and died within the seventeenth century.

Before the seventeenth century English Literature has little to show of what is by common consent regarded as literary prose in the modern sense of the term, that is, prose which follows the approved rules, so far as there can be any, of style. Sir Thomas More, Roger Ascham, Tyndale, the translator of the Bible, Sir Philip Sidney, Richard Hooker, Sir Walter Raleigh, Francis Bacon, to mention only the chief names, wrote literary prose before that era, and their work forms important steps in the evolution of English prose. But the old superstition, if we may so call it, that prose could only be properly written in Latin still lingered. Sir Thomas More's chief book, *The Utopia*, was written in Latin, so

¹ Izaak Walton, born 1593.