

**AMERICAN AUTHORSHIP
OF THE PRESENT-DAY
(SINCE 1890)**

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American Authorship of the Present-Day (Since 1890) by T. E. Rankin

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BY
T. E. RANKIN
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1918

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PREFACE

Not all of us can agree with Brunetière that in art and literature the beginning of wisdom is to distrust what we like. But there is no division of opinion about the kind of books to which the majority of readers to-day devote themselves, — it is only the kind that they "like." I do not believe that we ought to deny to ourselves what gives us pleasure just because it gives us pleasure; but it is the aim of this little book to be an aid to better reading than that which gives mental excitement alone. "Our heritage as Americans is independence, originality, self-reliance, and sympathetic energy animated by a strong ethical instinct, and these are the forces which can produce a higher and broader civilization than the world has yet seen if we choose to have it so." We shall not be choosing to have it so, if in feeding the mind, as the mass of people do by reading chiefly, we overlook the books which touch moral truth and human passion with largeness, sanity, and attractiveness of form. The following pages attempt to indicate only those books which, amid the deluge of publication during the last quarter of a century in the United States and Canada, are most worth while finding and keeping for companionship.

I wish to acknowledge indebtedness to the eager spirit in search of "good reading" which is constantly displayed by my students; and to Professor R. W. Cowden for patient and valuable aid in reading the proofs for this volume.

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