

LIFE OF JOHN MILTON

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Life of John Milton by Richard Garnett

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RICHARD GARNETT

**LIFE OF
JOHN MILTON**

“Great Writers.”

EDITED BY

PROFESSOR ERIC S. ROBERTSON, M.A.

LIFE OF MILTON.

LIFE
OF
JOHN MILTON.

BY
RICHARD GARNETT, LL.D.

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NOTE.



THE number of miniature "Lives" of Milton is great; great also is the merit of some of them. With one exception, nevertheless, they are all dismissed to the shelf by the publication of Professor Masson's monumental and authoritative biography, without perpetual reference to which no satisfactory memoir can henceforth be composed. One recent biography has enjoyed this advantage. Its author, the late Mark Pattison, wanted neither this nor any other qualification except a keener sense of the importance of the religious and political controversies of Milton's time. His indifference to matters so momentous in Milton's own estimation has, in our opinion, vitiated his conception of his hero, who is represented as persistently yielding to party what was meant for mankind. We think, on the contrary, that such a mere man of letters as Pattison wishes that Milton had been, could never have produced a "Paradise Lost." If this view is well-founded, there is not only room but need for yet another miniature "Life of Milton," notwithstanding the intellectual subtlety

and scholarly refinement which render Pattison's memorable. It should be noted that the recent German biography by Stern, if adding little to Professor Masson's facts, contributes much valuable literary illustration ; and that Keighley's analysis of Milton's opinions occupies a position of its own, of which no subsequent biographical discoveries can deprive it. The present writer has further to express his deep obligations to Professor Masson for his great kindness in reading and remarking upon the proofs—not thereby rendering himself responsible for anything in these pages ; and also to the helpful friend who has provided him with an index.

CONTENTS.



CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
Milton born in Bread Street, Cheapside, December 9, 1608 ; condition of English literature at his birth ; part in its development assigned to him ; materials available for his biography ; his ancestry ; his father ; influences that surrounded his boyhood ; enters St. Paul's School, 1620 ; distinguished for compositions in prose and verse ; matriculates at Cambridge, 1625 ; condition of the University at the period ; his misunderstandings with his tutor ; graduates B.A., 1629, M.A., 1632 ; his relations with the University ; declines to take orders or follow a profession ; his first poems ; retires to Horton, in Buckinghamshire, where his father had settled, 1632	11

CHAPTER II.

Horton, its scenery and associations with Milton ; Milton's studies and poetical aspirations ; exceptional nature of his poetical development ; his Latin poems ; "Arcades" and "Comus" composed and represented at the instance of Henry Lawes, 1633 and 1634 ; "Comus" printed in 1637 ; Sir Henry Wootton's opinion of it ; "Lycidas" written in the same year, on occasion of the death of Edward King ; published in 1638 ; criticism on "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," "Lycidas" and "Comus" ; Milton's departure for Italy, April, 1638	35
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