

CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE—EDITED  
BY W. AND R. CHAMBERS.

---

7 35  
153

HISTORY  
OF THE  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
AND  
LITERATURE.



EDINBURGH:  
PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.  
1853.

.....



## NOTICE.

---

THIS volume belongs to that department of Chambers's Educational Course which is designed to communicate to young persons the rudiments of useful knowledge. It will be suitable to the more advanced classes in English academies, and serve as a text-book for those lectures on English literature, which are now given in so many institutions for mechanics and others. From its pages, an active teacher in any part of the country may easily form a series of such lectures, little else being necessary than to add to the specimens of progressive literature from the numerous sources at his command. It is further presumed, that such a work cannot fail to be useful to many besides young persons at school,—to all, in short, whose minds have been awakened to a desire of knowledge; guiding them to the stores of English literature, and distinguishing for them those works which are most worthy of their attention.

Being, however humble in object, or limited in extent, the only History of English Literature which has as yet been given to the world, this volume was necessarily the result of considerable labour. Very great pains have

been taken to ensure correctness in matters of fact, particularly in dates, which are so rarely given accurately in similar compilations. It may be mentioned that for a few of the critical opinions, besides those quoted, the author has been indebted to other writers, whose names, however, from a reluctance to multiply notes, he was induced to omit.

R. C.

EDINBURGH, *June 1835.*

## CONTENTS.

---

	Page.
FIRST PERIOD.—From the earliest time till the year 1400,	1
SECOND PERIOD.—From 1400 to 1558, . . . .	11
THIRD PERIOD.—The Reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. [1558-1649], . . . .	21
Poets, . . . . .	24
Dramatists, . . . . .	39
Prose Writers, . . . . .	61
FOURTH PERIOD.—The Commonwealth, and Reigns of Charles II. and James II. [1649- 1689], . . . . .	72
Poets, . . . . .	73
Dramatists, . . . . .	87
Prose Writers, . . . . .	89
FIFTH PERIOD.—Reigns of William III., Anne, and George I. [1689-1727], . . . .	103
Poets, . . . . .	104
Dramatists, . . . . .	115