

*A Manual of English Prose Literature, Biographical and Critical; Designed mainly to show Characteristics of Style.* Pp. xiii.-552. By WILLIAM MINTO, M.A., Professor of Logic and Literature in the University of Aberdeen. Boston: Ginn & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Price \$1.50.

We are glad to know that the classics of English literature are receiving more systematic and scientific study in our schools and colleges than ever before. The time was when men professedly educated knew far more of Greek and Latin writers than they did of the great authors of their own language. That time is past, and now some degree of acquaintance with those great writers is absolutely essential to any claim of a liberal education. Yet, few men have the time or opportunity for reading very widely in the vast library of English literature. That is the work of a life-time.

The advantage of the book before us is that, under judicious guidance and criticism, we have the marked characteristics of the great writers set forth and illustrated by quotations, with biographical and biological notes of great value. Professor Minto's book has the honour of reaching the third edition in Great Britain, as well as being republished in America.

An introductory analysis of style describes its elements and qualities, and the critical notes point out the merits and defects of style, enabling the student to acquire the one and avoid the other.

One hundred and fifty pages are devoted to the critical study of the great modern masters, De Quincey, Macaulay and Carlyle. The author then takes up, in historical order, the chief prose masters from the fourteenth century. Special attention is devoted to Sidney, Hooker, Bacon, Johnson, Burke, Paley and Hall, and more brief criticisms, with citations to many scores besides.

We are convinced that the reader will derive a much more intelligent, just and comprehensive view of

English literature as a whole, and of its great masters individually, by a study of this book, than by ten times the amount of desultory and unguided reading. The book is closely printed, and its 570 pages contain a fine body of English literature.

*Documents Illustrative of the Canadian Constitution.* Edited, with notes and appendices, by WILLIAM HOUSTON, M.A., Librarian to the Ontario Legislature. 8vo. Pp. xxii.-338. Toronto: Carswell & Co., Law Publishers; and Wm. Briggs.

In this volume Mr. Houston has given us a very valuable collection of historical documents. Upon his theory of education, which we deem unquestionably a sound and just theory, these documents form the true material for the scientific study of Canadian history. Of course, they must be supplemented by connecting links and records on matters of fact. But to comprehend the spirit of our constitution its origin should be studied at first hand.

Mr. Houston justly condemns the unintellectual method of "cramming" history by the deglutition of either books or lectures. He recommends strongly the seminary method used in the most modern universities, which is to be largely adopted in our own Victoria College. In this manner the study of the old English chronicles of Hollingshed and his fellow redactors in English history, and of Bradford's Journal and other contemporary records in colonial history give a new life and interest to the study of the social and political developments of the English-speaking race. The advantage of this mode of study is that it teaches the student to think for himself, which is the real and only intelligent method of education. Mr. Houston's long journalistic training and his politico-economic studies have given him special advantages for the editing and annotation of the documents herein contained. These annotations embrace much that is very valuable.