

accounts of the many works treated often without any mention of style. The book is therefore a history of English prose from its real beginnings in Wycliffe down to Bacon, more than a history of English prose style. Many will feel that there is far too much biography and too much repetition of the ordinary facts easily accessible in the text-books. We could wish that Professor Krapp had used some of this space to discuss, for example, the much vexed problem of the essay form. These are, however, not vital objections. The volume throws light into many dark and unknown corners. The attitude of the author is broad and humane throughout. The style is always readable. Now we want from Professor Krapp another volume to cover the period from Milton to G. K. Chesterton.

*The Switzerland of New England.*

From Indian legend and history to competitive automobile ascents of Mt. Washington, Mr. Frederick W. Kilbourne's "Chronicles of the White Mountains" (Houghton) presents in full and readable form a more detailed and systematic history of our New England Alps than has before been attempted. No other mountains, except those of Switzerland, declares a student of the literature of the subject, have been more written about, and it is rather strange that a really comprehensive chronological survey of the theme was not long ago given to the world. In Mr. Kilbourne's four hundred ample pages we find the earliest legends and history of the region, an account of its exploration and settlement, its first and later hotels, its visitors from abroad and their impressions of the country, its invasion by scientific exploring parties and also by railway-builders, its famous trails, its notable characters, its lumber industry, its devastating fires, the disasters overtaking its too adventurous mountain-climbers, and many other details of historical and human interest. Maps and numerous illustrations are not wanting, and, in short, the book seems to be exactly the right one for White Mountain visitors and intending visitors, as also for those who would like to be but cannot be visitors, to read and enjoy at this season or any season of the year.

*The beginning of English prose.*

In his latest volume Professor Krapp of Columbia shows that he is more than a philologist and Anglo-Saxon scholar. "The Rise of English Literary Prose" (Oxford) establishes him as a literary historian of wide and accurate learning. His object is to trace from Wycliffe to Bacon "the growth of a temper and attitude of mind towards the use of speech." His method, except for separate chapters on Wycliffe and Bacon, is to summarize historically in six sections various genres or movements or groups such as the Courtly Writers, the Modernists, History and Antiquity, etc. There is surprisingly little technical discussion of style itself except in the chapter on Courtly Writers. Indeed a large part of the book consists of rather detailed

*A study of comedy.*

"The Drama of Sensibility" (Ginn & Co.), by Dr. Ernest Bernbaum, makes an attempt by skilful argument to establish a new view of sentimentalism in the eighteenth century. The author finds that in direct contrast to the humanistic view of life, sentimentalism is based on the confidence in the goodness of human nature. Thus, "true comedy" holds up the vices and follies of mankind for ridicule; sentimental comedy distorts and palliates these vices and follies, and by an illegitimate appeal to the emotions makes them appear mere peccadilloes. "Domestic tragedy," moreover, makes us weep with pity and joy over the suddenly reformed and blissfully virtuous sinner. Most of us will find it impossible to believe with Dr. Bernbaum that restoration comedy has consistently high moral purpose, but his argument always provokes thought.