

THE NEW BOOKS



American Literature

LTHO American writers are included in the "English Men of Letters" series and in Chambers's "Cyclopedia of English Literature" and in the Tauchnitz "Collection of British Authors," they do not appear in "The Cambridge History of English Literature," which is, however, not to be regretted, for it affords the opportunity for a supplementary or companion series. TINIS nrst vorume CUTLIB nial, Revolutionary and Early National periods. Two more volumes will complete the American work. It is under the editorship of Professors Trent, Erskine, Iberman and Van Doren, and sixteen authors have contributed chapters to this volume. Paul Elmer More, formerly literary editor of The Independent, takes the chapters on Edwards and Emerson. Irving is discussed by Major George Haven Putnam, one of the few men now living who has personal recollections of the author on whose head the hand of Washington rested in blessing; a chain of three linked lives that spans the nation's existence.

The most valuable, because the most American distinctive. feature of the History as of its British prototype is the inclusion of certain people of importance in their day whom we are apt to ignore because their names rarely recur in conversation and current literature. The great mass of reading matter in any period is not supplied by those whom later ages value as classics. Yet a knowledge of this reading is necessary if we are to understand the current movements of thought. Consequently the chapters on the travelers and explorers of the coast and the hinterland, on the political and religious movements and on early newspapers and drama, are of exceptional interest for they contain material never before brought together in such compact and convenient form.

In a word The Cambridge History of American Literature does not fall behind the English Cambridge in either style or scholarship and that is as high praise as could be given to any work of this kind.

The Cambridge History of American Litera-