

letter-press, while always interesting and amusing, is sometimes invested with a certain dry humour of its own.

One can get an admirable idea of Homer, the man and the poet, from reading Mr. Gladstone's clever *brochure** on the subject. The author of *Juventus Mundi* has managed his material well, and in the compass of a brief booklet of some hundred and fifty pages has contrived to furnish his readers with something pertinent on almost every phase in the great Greek's career. Students and others will find this primer a genuine *vade mecum*.

'Safar-Hadgi'† will afford to the most inveterate novel reader a new delight. It abounds in accounts of the most terrible cruelties, which the author never fails to describe at a length which is positively disgusting. But having said this much, our objection to the story ends. It is most graphic, most interesting and most spirited. Fiction is enriched by the introduction of at least two perfectly original portraitures, and the incident is always striking, and the descriptive portions are bold and fresh. There is a good deal of dramatic force in the book, and the glimpses we get of Arabic life and character will add largely to the world's knowledge of these peoples. The scene of this romance is laid in Samarcand, and the *dramatis personæ* comprise Russians, Arabs, Turks, Turcomans, Persians and other Eastern peoples. A love story is deftly worked into this historical legend, and the adventures through which the leading characters pass are quite exciting and are told with great skill.

* *Homer*, by the Right Hon. WM. E. GLADSTONE, New York, D. Appleton & Company; Toronto, Hart & Rawlinson.

† *Safar-Hadgi*; or, *Russ and Turcoman*—Collection of foreign authors—from the French of Prince LUBOMIRSKI. New York, D. Appleton & Co.; Toronto, Hart & Rawlinson.

The Appletons are doing a particularly good work by publishing at a cheap rate some of the finest things in literature in their series of Handy Volumes.* The stories to be found in this list of books are always of great merit, while the essays and glimpses of travel are from practised and scholarly hands. Among those on our table at this moment are two or three volumes which are worthy of more than a mere passing notice. The first comprises that brilliant bit of theatrical gossip and biography which so recently enriched the pages of *Temple Bar*. It is divided into eleven chapters, and much new light is thrown over the old lights of the British stage. We are told all that one cares to know about the theatrical life of Burdage, the Cibbers, Garrick, Macklin,—'the Jew that Shakespeare drew,' Peg Woffington, the Kembles, the great Siddons, Cooke, the Keans, Charles Young, Mrs. Jordan and their contemporaries. Stage reminiscences are always entertaining, and the present sketches are very delightful reading. Mr. Julian Hawthorne's clever little sketch—for it is only a sketch—of 'Mrs. Gainsborough's Diamonds' is a very neat piece of writing, and the dramatic element is quite skilfully maintained throughout. The story is rather surprising at the finish and apt to disappoint some readers, who are unprepared for the *denouement* which concludes the adventure at Kohlstein. Mr. Dale's 'Impressions of America' are timely and clever.

"Thos" is a pleasantly written little story of Canadian life and character. The scene is laid in Montreal and vicinity.

* *New Handy Volume Series*, Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. New York, D. Appleton & Co.; Toronto, Hart & Rawlinson.

† *Thos*, a simple Canadian story by GEORGE GRAHAM. Montreal, Lovell Printing and Publishing Co.