

TWO HANDSOME BOOKS.

"THE HOME OF SHAKESPEARE."

The handsomest and most interesting book about Shakespeare ever printed will be "The Home and Haunts of Shakespeare," which the Scribners are about to publish. So little is known about the immortal William's personality that innumerable "cranks" have tried to prove, first, that there never was such a man; second, if there was he must have been somebody else. Of his life in London as actor, playwright, and manager nothing whatever is known, which shows how lamentable was the condition of a city which lacked live daily papers, with their corps of interviewers and their semi-detached auxiliary force of "press agents" to drop down town daily and tell the editor anything he might care to print about where the actor, author, or manager was going to spend the summer, get married, or produce a new play.

It is not doubted, however, that Shakespeare spent his youth and his retiring years at Stratford-on-Avon, so Mr. James Leon Williams, author of the book named above, has confined his work to the poet's birthplace and environs. He began none too soon, for although the Warwickshire of Shakespeare remained little changed for centuries, the houses, lands, and landmarks remaining about as they had been when the poet lived, the march of improvement has reached the land; an ugly railway station with an uglier water tank rears its horrid front to mar one of the prettiest views of the village, and changes still more radical have been planned. The author describes Stratford and its environs as they are, and does it gracefully. His greater work, however, has been to select hundreds of subjects for illustration and to have the pictures handsomely and faithfully made. The book is to be of a magnitude befitting the subject. The size will be large folio, the pages measuring thirteen by seventeen inches. The paper is thick and fine, the print large, and the illustrations, of which there will be more than two hundred, are almost all from photographs of actual scenes and objects. Forty-five of them are to be full-page photogravures of the highest quality—plates so fine that many purchasers will be tempted to rob the book in order to frame the pictures. Besides these there are to be a hundred and fifty "half tone" pictures, presenting photographic views, which lack the "dead" appearance of photographs proper. Those which have appeared are so good as to fully justify Horace Howard Furness, the Shakespearean critic, who writes the introduction, in saying:—

"Surely, therefore, it is an extremely pleasant feature in the following illustrations, that, together with the still life of field and bolt, we have so much of human life; of that human life which seems almost as unchanged since the days when Shakespeare was a part of it as is the azure vault above it. The self-same folk meet us here that lived their cribb'd and cabin'd life under Shakespeare's eyes so many years ago. Surely, this must be Jane Smile, whose chopt hands wielded the batlet that Touchstone (with the sigh, 'We that are true lovers run into strange capers') confessed that he had many a time kissed. And we are ready to be supposed upon a book, nay, upon this very book now before us, that we here behold Francis Pickbone and Will Squele and Old Double; and if our ears are keen enough we shall catch the answer to 'How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?' These are the people with their russet yeas and honest kersey noes, among whom, if Shakespeare did not pass the years of his busy manhood, certainly to whom he re-

turned, as his only real, outward home, to pass his last days; and pictures of that home cannot be quite complete without them. So charming, however, are these photogravures of Mr. Williams, so happy has he been in his choice of views, according to the seasons of the year, or even to the hour of the day, and so admirable moreover, are these plates which have been most skilfully colored, that whether or not they give us glimpses of Elizabethan life, we nevertheless fairly breathe therein the enchanted atmosphere of Shakespeare's Warwickshire, whereof the mere sound of the name 'hurls dazzling spells into the spongy air.'

Besides the photographic reproductions, great and small, are many vignettes by Kenyon Cox and initial letters by W. Hamilton Gibson. But there is still more, the book is enriched by fifteen prints in fac-simile of water colors painted specially for this work by Geo. H. Boughton, Carlton T. Chapman, Charles C. Curran, W. Hamilton Gibson, Homer Martin, Francis D. Millet, E. Percy Morah, J. Francis Murphy, Alfred Parsons, Charles Sprague Pearce, Charles S. Reinhart, William T. Smedley, F. Hopkinson Smith, Wm. L. Taylor, and Robert W. Van Boskerek. The book, which will be issued in monthly sections, is one which everyone interested in the personality of Shakespeare will prefer to any and all others on the same subject. (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.)

"STORIES OF THE GREAT WAR."

The great series of pictures which Mr. Edwin Forbes has long been making from his sketches taken during the civil war is at last published, complete, in book form. "An Artist's Story of the Great War" is the title, which is doubly true, for Mr. Forbes has made the text as well as the pictures. The letter press sketches are short and without literary pretension, being merely descriptive of the pictures, although much is written that will answer questions frequently asked by persons too young at the time of the conflict to know anything about it. Necessarily the pictures are the principal attractions of the book. All of them are slightly reduced in size from the artist's large etchings, yet still make full page plates on paper measuring about fourteen by eighteen inches. The second and concluding volume contains, among many others so good that any distinction seems invidious, a few which will peculiarly affect old soldiers. The subjects are:—"The Halt of the Column," "Among the Batteries," "Crossing the Pontons," "Supporting a Battery," "Cavalry Raids" and "Winter Marching." There are also equestrian portraits, from paintings by Mr. Forbes, of Sheridan, Buell, Rosecrans, Burnside, Sedgwick, Thomas, Gilmore, Reynolds, Halleck and Schofield, and a great number of initials, vignettes and tailpieces, all of which are illustrative and after sketches made in the field. It is a book which every survivor of the war will want to own, for, although not all of the scenes may be familiar to him, the action, which is distinct in all, is true to military movements every way on both sides during the conflict. I have talked with many veterans of Northern and Southern armies about Mr. Forbes' pictures, and find that all are impressed by the artist's fidelity, nothing untrue to fact having been introduced, no strong situations neglected nor any phases of camp life forgotten. I have seen men who, twenty-five years ago, wore the twin stars of a major-general showing the book to brilliant Confederates whom they had fought wisely, yet not too well—just well enough—and both agreed as to the accuracy with which the stronger scenes of march and fight were depicted. It is a book for all old soldiers to show their children and grandchildren in the coming

days which will be far enough from the time of conflict to allow great men and events to appear in their proper magnitude. (Fords, Howard & Hulbert, New York.)

HE SQUEEZED HER FEET.

"A cork leg is no end of a bore," said the man who limped. "Just think of it—I was at a dinner party the other night, and it was my happy lot to have a most charming damsel fall to my share at the feast. We conversed most pleasantly through the oysters and the soup, but when the fish came on she became silent and seemed unaccountably embarrassed. To draw her from this mood I redoubled my efforts to please, but in response she only flushed and looked angry. Finally, interrupting me in the midst of my little *mot* which I had composed carefully while dressing for the dinner, she said indignantly, though *sotto voce*:

"Sir, I will thank you to stop squeezing my foot!"

"Imagine my embarrassment! I had been treading upon her toes with my cork foot—of course without knowing it. Could anything have been more innocent? It is an annoying thing to have to explain to a young lady on an occasion of social festivity. Nevertheless, I was forced to do so. She accepted my apology, and then proceeded to injure my feelings by giggling."

THE MAID OF THE MATINEE.

BY KATE MASTERSON.

You may sing of summer maidens
And the haughty winter girls,
You may praise their voices' cadence
Or enthuse about their curls;
But there's one that still is sweeter,
Spite of all that you can say;
There are none of them can beat her,
The Maid of the Matinee!

Down the aisle she comes a swaying,
Flushing, blushing like a rose,
In time to the music playing;
How she does it no one knows,
But she seats herself sedately
All unconscious by your side,
And you make room for her, greatly
By her presence edified.

And she wears a gown close fitting.
You are sure it's tailor made,
As you watch her graceful sitting,
Fan and flowers together laid.
In her lap, her left hand clasping,
A bejeweled bonbonniere;
And her right, coquettish, grasping
At a dagger in her hair.

Oh! that wicked silver dagger,
How it will unfastened get,
But it's so intensely swagger,
And her tortoise shell kerfuffle,
Through it she can place securely
Every man within the house,
Flirting all the while demurely
As a kitten or a mouse.

O'er the dresses, how she gushes!
And the handsome leading man;
On her face a wild rose flush is,
But she hides it with her fan,
You're so glad you're sitting near her;
It's much nicer than the play,
More entrancing—thrilling, dearer!
The Maid at the Matinee!