

whole brood of delicate thoughts, fancies, and reflections arise and cluster around it and us with their subtle indefinable grace. It is not too much to say of Mr. Mabie, as Saintsbury has said of Hazlitt, "He is a born man of letters, and cannot help turning everything he touches into literature."

AN elementary history of Indian literature has long been needed, and the want is now supplied in the manual prepared by Mrs. Elizabeth B. Reed. The work is entitled "Hindu Literature; or, The Ancient Books of India" (Griggs), and, without being a work of original scholarship, is a careful compilation of the results obtained by the last half-century of fruitful investigation. Mrs. Reed is evidently familiar with the best English work done in this field, and makes a judicious use of the writings of Wilson, Müller, and Monier-Williams. The book is, of course, far more elementary, besides being more limited in its scope, than Weber's history of the subject, and is prepared for a different class of readers. Its scope, in fact, only includes the Vedic literature and the epics, nothing being said of the drama, of the great body of Buddhist literature, or of the work done by the later Sanskrit writers in grammar, philosophy, and criticism. On the other hand, the Vedic literature, including the Upanishads and the Puranas, is fully analyzed and described; the epics and the legislation of Manu are treated at considerable length, and there are carefully written chapters upon the subjects of cosmogony and metempsychosis. The chapter upon Krishna has been revised by Professor Monier-Williams, and other portions of the work have had the benefit of Professor Max Müller's authoritative criticism. So the work comes to us with an authority not often possessed by compilations of the sort, and, as far as we have been able to observe, its statements of fact are in accordance with the results obtained by the most advanced scholarship. A characteristic feature of the work is found in the abundance of passages translated and introduced for the purpose of illustration.

THERE is perhaps no more delightful experience in life than to listen to the conversation of a trained scholar or man of letters in his own study, when the company is small (if only *one-to-one* so much the better), when he is without thought of the public, and is under no obligation to be exhaustive or consecutive. Scarcely second to the pleasure of such a personal meeting is the reading of a book which gives the impression of similar conditions,—a full mind loving to talk and sure of the sympathy of his listeners. We feel this charm in Charles Lamb nearly always, in James Russell Lowell very often, in William Hazlitt in his occasional informal moods; and now we have a new volume of essays worthy to be named even with these,—*"My Study Fire"* (Dodd) by Hamilton Wright Mabie. There are thirty-two chapters, the special headings of which are of small consequence. For let the subject be what it may—"The Fire Lighted," "A Text from Sidney," "The Cuckoo Strikes Twelve," or even anything so commonplace as "A New Hearth,"—immediately a

ANOTHER volume of essays in a similar vein as those of Mr. Mabie is Mr. E. Conder Gray's "Making the Best of Things" (Putnam). But the nameless spell of Mr. Mabie is absent in Mr. Gray. It is not that his book is dull, nor lacking in worthy thoughts, nor without a certain value for a large variety of apt quotations; but it seems the work of an artisan rather than an artist. Almost anyone, if so minded, could, we should think, produce such a book, provided he should for a sufficient length of time keep a commonplace-book, or file his notes of the books he reads. For example, in the chapter called "Falling in Love" not only are there brief illustrative citations from Shakespeare, Tennyson, George Meredith, Leland, Matthew Browne, Dante, and others, but Browning's poem of "Evelyn Hope" is given in full with the exception of the first stanza, closely followed by a long extract from Longfellow's "Courtship of Miles Standish" and another from Vere Clavering's novel of "Barcaldine." Still there are doubtless many who will relish the not unwholesome *ragout* served in this book.

A USEFUL and compact little "Handbook of Historic Schools of Painting," by D. L. Hoyt of the Massachusetts Normal Art School, is published by Ginn & Co. The author's aim is to give in a simple and condensed form some general knowledge of the great historic schools of painting, their characteristics, chief artists, and some of the most noted paintings of each. The present condition of painting in the different schools is also briefly touched upon; and at the close of the book are to be found a list of the emblems by which different saints and other characters in old religious paintings may be known, definitions of technical art terms, and an index of artists' names together with their proper pronunciation. This little manual seems to us careful and accurate so far as it goes, and should be especially useful to lay readers who desire a decent knowledge of historic art, and lack courage or time to attack the voluminous works of Lübke and Küger.

MESSRS. MACMILLAN & Co. issue in a well-printed volume of 230 pages the "Tale of Troy," done into English by Aubrey Stewart, M.A., Late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. This little book, containing a compact, clearly-told narrative of the chief events from the carrying off of Helen to the fall of Troy, should prove both interesting and instructive to young readers; and may even serve, in a small way, as a royal road to Homeric learning for those who lack taste or opportunity to go to the fountain-head.