

American readers and students of Goethe's works will esteem it a boon to have presented to them Herman Grimm's lectures on *The Life and Times of Goethe* in so admirable a translation as that which Miss Sarah Holland Adams has made, and which Messrs. Little, Brown & Co. publish in a substantial volume. These twenty-five lectures present the most thoughtful, symmetrical and well-considered account of the great poet which has yet been given us. They are psychological and philosophic as well as literary and historic in their scope and temper, and they treat the subject not merely as a commanding and creative intellect, but as an important phenomenon in the history of human development. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to Mr. Emerson for the suggestion of the historic view of Goethe, and the translator dedicates her own share of the work to Mr. Emerson, in acknowledgment of his relations with the author, his friendship for translators and translations, and his intellectual influence. The author considers Goethe's life as divided into two periods—the Frankfort period, from 1749 to 1776, and the Weimar period, from 1776 to 1832. The second period he again divides into two epochs, separated by the journey to Italy, and he proceeds to connect the incidents of Goethe's life with his principal works as they appeared in the course of the three epochs, thus following the natural divisions of his life and the progress of his works. The material for the study of Goethe's life he divides into two parts—his own account and the testimony of others; and in both departments he finds an abundance of it. The volume is profoundly interesting, and although the translator speaks deprecatingly of her work and asks especial charity for its defects, we are of the opinion that most readers will agree that her rendering is a very faithful one.

LIFE AND TIMES OF GOETHE.

Mrs. Sarah Holland Adams has translated with great fluency and apparently with close conscientiousness this remarkable work of Herman Grimm on the great German master; and the result lies before us in a richly printed and fascinating volume. A letter from Grimm is prefixed to the book, expressing entire approval of the translator's labors, and making cordial acknowledgement of the author's indebtedness to Emerson. "Although I grew up in the study of Goethe," says Herr Grimm, "and had had much intercourse with those who have known him personally, I am indebted to Emerson for the historical view of Goethe which taught me to regard him as the great phenomenon in the universal development of mankind." Some may gainsay the extreme enthusiasm of this profound Goethe student; but we rather rejoice that Goethe is one of the few themes on which the denying spirit of the present permits enthusiasm, and that the author of this volume has availed himself of that privilege to the full. The book is composed of lectures, and eminently adapted for popular reading. The events of the life are taken up in their order, and the discussion of the works introduced naturally in the periods of their production. Then at the end follows a very interesting estimate of Goethe as a student of natural science and as a politician, with a study of *Faust*. What Grimm says of the great German as a scientific investigator is especially fresh and well worth perusal. He claims for him an anticipation of Darwin, and, on Agassiz's authority, the first intimation of the glacial epoch. We also commend the portion preceding this, in regard to the *Elective Affinities*, which the critic explains on the largest principles of sympathetic insight, in a manner to surprise the most orthodox with the soundness of the conclusion arrived at in Goethe's own mind. All the lectures are written in the most charming manner, with the inspiration of deep study and quick appreciation, and with the ready illustrative power supplied by wide knowledge and a keen practical intelligence. So important a work, however, needs little introduction and less praise. [Little, Brown & Company, publishers; Boston.]