

## BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

### *The Eclectic Magazine.*

New York: T. R. Pelton.

The August "Eclectic" supplies an admirable selection of articles from the foremost English periodicals. The regular readers of this magazine have an opportunity of keeping themselves well read up in current literature at very small expense.

### *The International Review.*

New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.

The August number of the "International Review" keeps well to the front in the interest and importance of its contents. E. de Pressense writes an article on "Current Politics and Literature in France." There is a paper on "Cabinet Government in the United States," by Thos. W. Wilson; and C. W. Baird furnishes a timely account of "The Zulus."

### *The North American Encyclopedia.*

Montreal: F. Baker.

This publication is "A Journal of History, Science and Art" in encyclopedic form, which renders the large amount of useful information contained in it easily accessible at a moment's notice. No. 1, which is now before us, contains sixteen pages, and gets as far as *Abz*. The correction of some verbal and grammatical inaccuracies, and the removal of not a few typographical errors, would go far towards making this publication fit for use as a permanent work of reference.

### *On the Use of Words.*

Philadelphia: Eldredge & Brother.

This excellent little book belongs to the series of "Manuals for Teachers" which we have commended in former notices. The volume now before us seems to call for stronger commendation than we have yet bestowed. The subject is a most important one, especially to the teacher; and it is treated in this book much more exhaustively than in many larger and more pretentious works. It is no abridgement, but an original treatise, concisely written, properly arranged, and evincing on the part of the author a comprehensive grasp of the whole subject and a clear insight into its underlying principles. Were every young teacher in Ontario to master the contents of this little work, we should have still greater reason than we have hitherto had to boast of our educational progress.

### *Sunday Afternoon.*

Among the (comparatively) heavy articles in the August number of "Sunday Afternoon" we find "The 'As If' of Atheism," a fresh and forcible application and elucidation of Paley's argument from design, "Some Opinions about Opinion," a well-written paper evidently the work of one who thinks closely and justly, and has enjoyed the benefit of extensive reading in mental science and general literature; "Election of College Studies," favourable to the further extension of the privilege of allowing students to choose their own subjects from a large list presented to them in addition to the prescribed course; "The Hebrew Faith in Immortality," an able and conclusive reply to a writer who had credited Socrates with the introduction of the notion of immortality into the world; and a plea for vegetarianism, or something very closely approaching to it, entitled "The Problem of Intemperance." The stories are as usual very lively and attractive in style, but the lessons taught in them are always useful and sometimes very serious and important.

### *The North American Review.*

New York: D. Appleton & Co.

The articles in the "North American" for August are all important and inviting to the intelligent reader, but perhaps the most remarkable is a contribution furnished, at the special request of the publishers, by the famous German musical composer, Richard Wagner. It is entitled "The Work and Mission of my Life," and makes us acquainted with the writer's aims, views, efforts, failures, successes, and even with his character and powers—all this without exposing himself to the charge of egotism, for he analyzes himself as coolly and critically as if he were analyzing some other person. The autobiography is not brought up to date in the present number, but will be continued probably in the next. "The Diary of a Public Man," will be read with intense interest—and that not by Americans alone—as supplying hitherto to "Unpublished Passages of the Secret History of the

American Civil War." Some will read Wendell Phillips's paper on William Lloyd Garrison because it is written by a great man, some because it is about a great man, some for both of these reasons, and with those who know not the man, or who deny their greatness, it is pretty sure to make its way on its intrinsic merits.

### *The Atlantic Monthly.*

Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co.

The August number of "The Atlantic" brings to its readers a rich and varied collection of articles replete with refined thought and good literary taste. This magazine does not very often, in the choice of subjects cross the limits of the secular, but the present number opens with a long and well-written paper on "Preaching." It exhibits on the part of the writer considerable knowledge of the subject and no small skill in its treatment. He may be himself a preacher or he may not; all we can say is that he knows what to say about the matter and that he is not afraid of saying it. From amongst the many shrewd guesses at truth which he makes we can make room only for the following:

"The history of Christianity shews that the ministry has never possessed great power or authority, or the Church a high degree of spiritual vitality, at any time when ministers were accustomed to pass a great portion of their time among their people in ordinary social intercourse with them. It is one of the features of the life of our time that pastoral visiting, that is, short calls devoted to conversation upon religious subjects has given place to ordinary social visiting and intercourse between the minister and his people. This change is closely connected with important features and tendencies of the religion of the age. It has had a great effect upon preaching. The modern practice has made impossible, in great measure, the habit of solitary study, and has thus shorn the preaching of the time of the peculiar authority and impressiveness which belong to utterances which come from lonely heights of thought and experience."

### INFIDELITY.

Infidels tell us that God has flung this world from His hand, and has left it to shift for itself, and deprived it entirely of his paternal care. God points to constant care of man, and tells them that they lie. Infidels have insinuated that if there be a God, He dwells in some far-off laboratory of power, but that this world of His creation is now orphaned of His grace. God points to all the creation, rejoicing in its fitness and in its harmony, and bids them listen to its song.

The solemn mountain lifts its head, the Almighty to proclaim,  
The brooklet from its crystal bed doth leap to greet His name;  
High swells the deep and titful sea, upon its billowy track,  
And red Vesuvius opens its mouth to hurl the falsehood back.

No God! With indignation high yon fervent sun is stirred,  
And the pale moon turns paler still at such an impious word;  
And from their thrones in heaven, the stars look down with angry eye,  
That man, a worm of dust, should mock Eternal Majesty.  
—Dr. Punshon.

### THE TOO SHORT EYE.

Besides the condition of near-sightedness which consists in too great a length of the eye, there is another where the eyeball is too short, or the hypermetropic eye, and which, though less dangerous to the organ, is even more distressing to the subject, because less apparent. For a short eye can, by making an effort, see in the distance usually as well as a normal eye, the only difference being that where a normal eye is using no effort to see an object clearly, that is, in the distance, a short eye is making a physical exertion proportionate to the amount of the defect—a strain which always fatigues and sometimes exhausts the nervous energy not only for the eye, but also of the whole nervous system. All this is even worse for near objects, and the result is that a hypermetropic eye never, from the beginning to the end, sees an object distinctly without an effort. From the fact that by making this effort those affected with this trouble can see both distant and near objects clearly, the defect is rarely recognized, unless of a very high degree, until the near approach of adult life, though a number of symptoms and complaints may have shown themselves in former years whose true cause was unsuspected by even the sufferer himself, such as headache, vertigo, neuralgia, and general nervous exhaustion—symptoms so grave that they occasionally lead to either a temporary reduction of or a total abstinence from all study for a shorter or longer period, during which the sufferer is supposed to have all possible ills, especially those of a nervous character.

Towards adult life—that is, from eighteen to twenty-two—however, a new symptom begins to appear. Vision which up to this time had been perfectly clear, notwithstanding the strain with which it had been performed, now begins to fail, and the page to be blurred at one moment, to become perfectly clear in the next. The temporary vanishings of the type increase in frequency, accompanied by a tense feeling over the brow, and since there is now a falling of sight, attention is called to the eye for the first time, an examination is made, and the evil remedied by the proper glass. But this is at the end of the education, not, as it should be, at the beginning, or rather before it was begun.

This extra strain must have an effect upon the character of the child and its natural disposition, and it must tend to render it often, when least expected, peevish and fretful, desponding and wanting in self-reliance. The mere effort to see must react on what is seen, and there can be no doubt that the physical exhaustion which follows the effort to adjust the eye, which is a muscular action, subtracts from the quickness of perception, and therefore of comprehension, and it must impede that maintenance of attention which is the surest evidence of mental vigour, just as the maintenance of power, not its production, is the surest sign of physical perfection.

With those who are affected with the too short eye the result is just the reverse of what it is with those who are near-sighted. People with this defect even in very early life acquire, without even knowing why, a distaste for books.

A boy with this deficiency of optical power sits down to study, apparently fresh, and with a determination to perform his task. After a little while a vague feeling of uneasiness creeps over him, and he becomes restless. He has a craving for more light. If a dark day, he wishes to get near the window; or if at night, he gets as close to the lamp as he possibly can, and so sits that the glare shines full in his face and eyes, as he has found by experience that he sees a little easier in this way, as the pupils are contracted.

To his natural defect is added another evil. The glare irritates the eye, the lids become heavy and congested, and the face feverish and flushed. He spurs his flagging will, and makes an effort; but struggle as he may, it is of no use, and his head finally droops over the table, and he falls asleep.

He is shaken up only to be sent to bed, with his lesson unlearned, and ten to one, if a city boy, with his dinner undigested, and his first thought in the morning is of past neglect and future punishment; and when, a little later, he presents himself at school, how many equivocations, prevarications, or downright falsehoods are forced from his young lips in order to meet and repel the cutting rebuke, or even the wrathful violence, of his teacher, until he becomes, so far as his studies are concerned, habitually deceitful!

This unequal struggle between intention and performance goes on day after day, until the boy, no matter how bright he may have been originally, becomes in reality what he has always appeared to others, backward if not stupid, and from sheer discouragement idle and truant, if not mischievous and perverse. He loses the habit of application and the power of concentration, and he continues through life, as a rule, unobservant and unthinking, and all on account of a physical defect which might have been corrected before his education began.

But besides producing an effect upon the health and mind, this physical defect often leads to a personal deformity, for it has been shown that of those who are cross-eyed, eighty per cent. is due to the fact that they have too short an eye.—*Harper's Magazine for August.*

DUTIES are ours, events are the Lord's. It is our part to let the Almighty exercise His own office and steer His own helm.—*Rutherford.*

THOUGH Christianity is an enemy to profane mirth, yet it encourages joy and gladness, and the proper expression of these in the professors of it.

THE same Bible that says, "Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely," says, "Whosoever was not found written in the Lamb's book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

THE Fountain of Joy became a man of Sorrows; and the Lord of Glory was covered with shame: and why? Amazing mystery! that we might be raised to happiness and glory.