

NOON.

FULL summer, and at noon : from a waste bed
Convolvulus, musk-mallow, poppies, spread
The triumph of the sunshine overhead.

Blue on the shimmering ash-tree lies the heat ;
It tingles on the hedgerows. The young wheat
Sleeps, warm in golden verdure, at my feet.

The pale, sweet grasses of the hayfield blink ;
The heath-moors, as the bees of honey drink,
Suck the deep bosom of the day. To think

Of all that beauty, by the light defined,
None shares my vision ! Sharply on my mind
Presses the sorrow :—fern and flower are blind.

—MICHAEL FIELD.—*The Spectator.*

THE MAGAZINES.

THE *Church Review* contains as the first of its half-dozen scholarly articles a careful and important paper upon the labour question by the Right Reverend F. D. Huntingdon, S.T.D. The Rev. G. W. Dean defends the church regarding the deceased wife's sister agitation in an article entitled, "Marriage : the Table of Kindred and Affinity." As usual the critical department of the magazine is exceptionally well sustained.

THE August number of the *Andover Review* is one of decided excellence. Dr. Cheesebrough, of Saybrook, Connecticut, contributes an elaborate and appreciative critique on the theological position of Horace Bushnell, and Professor Andrews discourses on "Political Economy, Old and New." There are several other papers by able writers on subjects of interest to the general reader ; while the ordinary departments contain much that will be acceptable to all intelligent observers of the course of modern theological speculation.

TIME was when so slight a paper as Octave Thanet's "Six Visions of St. Augustine," or so gay a little story as Sarah Orne Jewett's "The Two Browns," would have been denied admittance to the exclusive pages of the *Atlantic*. But that time has gone by, and what the Boston monthly has lost in distinctive literary flavour it has probably more than made up in its wider scope and increased popularity. It has certainly lost its position as the foremost vehicle of American culture, but its present management finds more points of contact with social life, more active participation in popular affairs, and hence a more widespread interest for the semi-literary *vulgus* to which every publication of the sort must look for support.

THIS is what Ella Wheeler Wilcox thinks of Massachusetts in the current *Lippincott's* :

"The East is a land of dead men's bones
Laid tier on mouldering tier,
And the damp malarial wind that moans
Is the breath of those dead men near.

And its slow, pale people seem merely wraiths
That have strayed away from the tomb,
Clutching their cold ancestral faiths,
And wrapped in the garments of gloom."

The poem is entitled, "The West," and may be called a pæan of Illinois. The pæan is all right, and shows nothing more reprehensible than an exaggerated predilection for pork and corn-dodgers ; but why this unnecessary defamation of Boston ! One trembles to contemplate the effect of this gruesome portrait on the high-strung New England temperament. The spirit that dictated it is really to be deprecated. If inter-state amenities are to take the form of such rhyming nightmares as Mrs. Wilcox's, the future of poetry in America is a sad one. Moreover, that a magazine of the standing of *Lippincott's* should publish such rubbish is simply preposterous.

THE second of Mr. Richard Ely's "Social Studies," in *Harper's*, concerns "Economic Evils in American Railway Methods." The enormous waste of national resources in the construction of railways is Mr. Ely's first serious charge, and it must be admitted a justifiable one. Vast tracts of land needlessly bestowed, and vast sums of money needlessly expended in the encouragement and carrying out of railroad enterprises, with a simple view to profitably cut the throat of similar existing enterprises, surely form fitting subjects for the sorrowful indignation of every well-regulated, social philosopher. But, like many another sorrowfully indignant deprecator of existing institutions, Mr. Ely adds up one side of the balance only, and that, of course, the wrong side. When he says that needless expendi-

ture in American railway construction has been estimated at one thousand millions of dollars, and adds that this "is waste of national resources which ought to have benefited the people," and that "one thousand millions of dollars is a sum sufficient to build homes for one million families," he takes no account whatever of the economic purpose which even needless railway expenditure serves in providing temporary and constant employment for vast numbers of people. This may be but an item in comparison to the million families who might be provided with homes by the funds invested, but it is surely worth considering, especially in connection with the fact that the thousand million dollars if not embodied in railway construction, would assuredly contribute no more directly to the popular provision aforesaid. The waste of competition is, of course, painful to the economist, but it has long been shown that private interests *à l'outrance* best serve the non-combative public, and so long as railways are built and operated for the primary benefit of the stockholders, it is difficult to see how the secondary benefit to the people can be attained by any but the competitive plan. The evils of railway speculation, and especially the great and insufferable injury to business interests of discrimination in freight rates, are also trenchantly placed before the public. No remedy is suggested, nor easily seen. Perhaps by the absence of all optimistic discussion of the present state of things, Mr. Ely would imply his belief that until the people become their own stockholders, no remedy is possible.

IF a journalistic blush is a possible physical phenomenon, Mr. Joseph Bishop's arraignment of the American press in this month's *Forum* should invoke it. Taking as his text the contemptible and revolting espionage kept over the President on the occasion of his recent marriage, Mr. Bishop proceeds to bestow upon the gentlemen (*h*) of the fourth estate, who kept it, such a castigation as they richly deserve and are not likely, if one may suppose them possessed of any vestige of sensibility, to forget. Heretofore American comment upon the outrageous conduct of the press at that time has been of a semi-ironical, humorous nature, as if the matter were hardly worthy of serious treatment. Even the occupant of the "Easy Chair" of *Harper's* has rolled his ponderous guns into line, and laboriously laughed with the rest. But there is no hint of ridicule in Mr. Bishop's article. It is the indignant protest of the good taste and right feeling of the whole nation, and by and by, when there is enough of this to constitute a preponderating element in American public opinion, there is no doubt that it will be reasonably effective in abolishing the newspaper nuisance. To the unhelpful this will probably take an æon or two, and the most sanguine will hardly expect it in Mr. Bishop's time. "Why not let the vulgar and ill-bred people have their own newspapers, and give decent people theirs also?" he queries. The primary reason is that newspapers are not usually "run" with an eye solely to the gratification of the well-bred, this being in America too small a proportion of the vast paying public to make a financial return for such ventures. Moreover, papers that cater to the great unwashed, and the greater, whose ablutions are imperfect, find such profit in the nefarious business as enables them to command every facility for obtaining legitimate news, and thus become indispensable even to the most scrupulous as to moral soap and water. The relations between journalism and society, moreover, are so extremely easy among our neighbors of the democracy, that the offenders stand in little fear of the law ; and last, but by no means least, the average "newspaper man" of the United States is by no means an educated person, except through contact with the world as he meets it on his way from the type-setters' stand to the editorial chair. To one graduate of Harvard or Yale among American editors, one meets five who know "little Latin and less Greek ;" whose present position is the result of instinct for the work, shrewdness, and enterprise. The editor of that phenomenal success, the *New York World*, Mr. Joseph Pulitzer, whose personal income from the paper is one thousand dollars per week, was a waiter in a Washington restaurant not so very many years ago, and his case is only exceptional in its pecuniary aspect. The average journal is the pure intellectual product of its editor, with his idea of the wants of his public added, and the sum divided by his financial ability to supply them. His personality permeates it throughout. Shall we gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Nay, verily.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

WE have received the following publications :

THE CHURCH REVIEW. July. New York and Boston : Houghton, Mifflin and Company.
ANDOVER REVIEW. August. New York and Boston : Houghton, Mifflin and Company.
OVERLAND MONTHLY. August. San Francisco : 120 Sutler Street.
ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE. August. New York : Macmillan and Company.
LITTELL'S LIVING AGE. August 7. Boston : Littell and Company.
QUERIES. August. Buffalo : C. L. Sherrill and Company.