

ON THE LINE

THE following is the list of books which, in accordance with the promise made in our last number, we have selected to hang "on the line" this month. It must be remembered that we are endeavouring to act, not as critics, but as showmen. Among the large number of books which have come under our notice during the month, we have found a few which ought not to have been written, some which need not have been written, and many which should have been written otherwise. But these are no concern of ours; we commend to our readers a group of eleven, which we think worth buying and reading; of the rest we say nothing. There are also, no doubt, many valuable and interesting books which we have not had the opportunity of examining; but probably the following will be found to be a sufficiently representative exhibition of current literature in the general sense.

Lord Jim. By Joseph Conrad. (Blackwood. 6s.)—The title-page describes this book as "a tale," and rightly; for though the subject is one fit for an epic, a drama, or a Stevensonian novel, it is presented to us more realistically as a "yarn," told by an English ship's captain: he takes a long time over it, and he is often hard to follow, but the story—a life's voyage, as romantic as the *Odyssey*, and haunted by a mystery as deep as the seas over which it floats—would have lost something in any other form. Apart from the romance