We often receive requests from subscribers to purchase and forward to their address, various drawing-instruments, books, etc. With every desire to oblige, we, nevertheless, must decline all such commissions; for the simple reason that we could not spare the time. By looking over our advertisements all persons in want of such matters, can find the address of an optician, or a bookseller, to whom a request made would be at once attended to.

PUBLICATIONS.

SCIENTIFIC.


Like Mr. Biddle's previous works, this is truly practical; and so clear and simple that it requires little or no knowledge of geometry to perfectly understand the subject herebefore looked upon as so difficult. Forty accurately engraved plates, drawn in steel, distinctly illustrate the problem, and we speak from the case, when we say that the student building will find in this treatise all that he can require. The demand for it on both sides of the Atlantic is very great, and will increase as its merits are more widely known. We strongly recommend The New Elements of Hand-Railing, as the best book of the class in use.

THE NEW YORKER.—This latest addition to our American scientific series is really worthy of the wide spread patronage we understand it is receiving; and we find, by our former exchanges, that it is well received in Europe, as well as home. This is a pleasing proof of the complimentary fact that American scientific information is deemed worthy of especial notice in the very stronghold of scientific knowledge, founded on an experience very far beyond the limit of that of a young nation like ours. Civil Engineering is the leading specialty of this compendium practical, and on that subject it is already an authority. But the Technologist does not confine itself to a few subjects, its range of thought, as its name would import, is wide and well entailed. The numerous illustrations are well worthy of the excellence of the letter-press; and the whole leads us to wish it an infinite continuation of this success it has already so deservedly won.

THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.—One has read of old friends as ever, maritall the fearful opposition brought to bear upon his long and faithfully held position as a mentor and adviser in practical scientific matters. The Scientific American has closed another volume, and opened a new.

LITERARY.

LITLLE'S LIVING AGE, notwithstanding the recent loss of its surprised founder, shows the same discriminative taste in its selection which was so graphic in its execution. We warmed but such a serial, and as far the want is presently met.

THE FANE MAGAZINE.—No. 7 of this valuable serial, the literary sensation of our University, has but a few pages; but they are of value as novel, satirical, and critical contributions to American literature, which go conclusively to prove that alone matter is not a silent shore.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

AND

BUILDERS' JOURNAL.

SYLVAN TEMPLE.

[FRONTISPIECE.]

GOING still farther back than the antiquity of architecture guides us, we seek even in Nature itself for the first and most beautiful of styles; and would gladly revive it, as pre-eminent among the most fascinating of designs from which man, with all his intelligence and taste has but borrowed his ideas, and created beautiful constructions from that which grew from the hand of nature to be his model, and the lesson of his art. Who that has ever walked in the groves of lofty elms, has failed to appreciate the meaning of that style which we call "gothic." There in all its primitive majesty, stands the unrivalled aisle, with its immemorial stately columns and graceful arches meeting and intersecting, festooned with vines and wreathed in Nature's loveliest modes, is it to be wondered at that the Druid priests sought inspiration in such sacred places; and that even now, in our day of boasted intelligence, the still living groves of that heathen worship in the British isles should be looked upon with awe, if not with veneration. But, the ordinary grove is not altogether consigned to dreary thought, or dread imaginings. It is often the sylvan temple of the mirthful deity, where Monsas reigns supreme, with Apollo and Terpsichore as his advisers.

"All the by still greenwood tree!"

In our own country we have the most ample means of becoming acquainted with the architecture of Nature, as seen and felt in these forest temples; and even the "patch of woodland" spared by the clearing axe of the pioneers who first laid out our villages, is certain to become a chosen spot for Sabbath school recreation, or even for the solemn exercise of prayer. Religion never fails in such a place to bring its children nearer to their God.

But, beautiful in its wild irregularity as this natural temple may be, it is susceptible of such adaptation to our art ideas as may readily combine the two with a link so slight as to be scarcely felt; and Nature and Art be thus united by the simplest law of taste.

We are led to these reflections by the following communication from one whose taste is well known throughout the country, and whose present suggestion is that which speaks for itself, and for which we would claim the most general attention, for it is not alone applicable to Fairmount, or any other park, but to the immediate suburbs of every village.
in the land, as an inexpensive, yet commodious and intrinsically beautiful union of Nature and Art.

EDITOR OF THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

"Dear Sir: Philadelphia has at length secured the land and water for a Park, unequalled in this country in size and in the beauty of its rural scenery.

"Cannot you call the attention of those in authority to the simple, cheap, and everlasting decoration which could be made by constructing theatres on the plan of the Greek theatres, by terracing the head of some semi-circular valley.

"Such a valley can probably be found in the varied accidents of the ground on the banks of the Schuylkill. Turf seats such as are seen in the Amphitheatre or Hippodrome of the Villa Borghese, near the Portu del Popolo at Rome, would cost little, and if properly sodded and drained would last for ages.

"Such a theatre could be almost entirely excavated, and it would afford for Fourth of July celebrations, for Sunday School, and other public celebrations, and for worship on Sundays, a most admirable, convenient, and delightful place.

"A row of trees around the upper edge of the theatre, and two or three rows in place of the prosenium, might be added with advantage, representing the colonnade or porticos of the ancient theatres.

"Then, too, what a noble sylvan temple could be constructed in less time than the great cathedrals of Europe have taken to build, by planting the graceful New England elm in positions of the piers or pillars of a gothic cathedral.

"The plan of Notre Dame at Paris, or the Cathedral of Ulm could be thus planted, and in a few years a temple of unequalled gothic tracery would rise into the air like Solomon’s, without sound of hammer or tool of iron.

"Lofty trees, as pines, might be planted at the west front to represent the twin towers of the temple. Eighteen lofty white pines would have a good effect thus placed.

"I send, herewith, a sketch for planting such a temple, 360 by 260 feet, admitting by successive plantings, of new outer rows, of indefinite enlargement.

"Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"M. C. MEIGS."

Washington, D.C., June 27, 1876.

Such is the plan proposed by General Meigs for growing up natural architecture, which must be as popular as it will be permanently beautiful.

In the laying out of such designs imagination must have much to do, for the growth of the idea is to be developed by time, rather than by the hand of man. The study of the nature of the trees to compose the parts of the whole design, and the stretch into the future which the imagining of the full-grown thought in its perfection, would incur care.

The more the mind reeks upon this proposition, the greater is the variety of added fancies which suggest themselves; and ivy-bound sylvan columns, sustaining graceful boughs which send forth innumerable branches, bearing tiny twigs that lift aloft the leaves which shelter from the fiery sun, yet let the generous light descend in softened flecks upon the moss-clad sward, laid out in seats below. Nor would there be a want of choicest in such a cathedral; for, every aisle would have a choir of its own, most fitted for the music of the skies. The amphitheatre would be circular or elliptic in plan, the chosen trees arranged conformably. But, our limits will not admit of a full review of all the varied and charming uses, to which this sylvan architecture might be most tastefully applied. For the present, we conclude with the hope that our talented friends, the landscape gardeners, will take the subject up and treat it as they know so much better how to do than ourselvess, who are more used to deal in architecture of a solid, but not of such genial a character.