

AN OLD NEW ENGLAND IVINE.

President Stiles's last years had been as busy as his earlier ones. He had assisted in forming an anti-slavery society, and with fourteen others had signed its constitution and he had published his history of the Three Judges of Charles I., who had fled to America. He was always indignant that the Episcopal minister annually preached in commemoration of the martyrdom of Charles I. "If observed at all," he said, "it ought to be celebrated as an anniversary of thanksgiving that one nation on earth had so much fortitude and public justice as to make a royal tyrant bow to the sovereignty of the people." He wrote most stately letters of inquiry to Sir William Jones about the Jewish colony at Cochim, China, and a letter of seventy pages quarto to the Asiatic Society at Calcutta; hoping thereby "to recover the original principles of first-derived knowledge." The Chronology of the Pentateuch, information about the ten tribes, whom he believed still existed, and the discovery of the original Hebrew copy of the Bible, were subjects of constant anxiety to him. Though naturally delicate in health, he indulged in "antelucane studies," and, with paper and pencil always in his pocket, noted down points of observation and knowledge.

His industry was truly amazing. His Literary Diary of conversation or reading comprises fifteen quarto volumes, each volume consisting of over three hundred pages. When Franklin gave him Fahrenheit's thermometer he made observations with it from 1863 till within two days of his death, which are contained in six quarto volumes. At forty years of age he began to learn Hebrew and Syriac, and in one year translated the Psalms, Genesis, and Exodus, read considerable Arabic, and dipped into the Persic, Coptic, and other Oriental languages. He was eager to obtain a map of the Russian empire, published at St. Petersburg, showing the junction of the two continents—a wonderful fact to him if true. He wrote a Latin letter to the Jesuit college in Mexico and to the Greek bishop in Syria, asking about the Samaritan Pentateuch. These enquiries in no way affected his zeal as a Congregationalist (the title of Dissenter he refused, for he was "under no obligation to return to the mother English church, though in South Britain he would have gloved in the name"); nor did they lessen his foresight, as when, after the capture of Montreal, he wrote, "It is probable that in time there will be formed a Provincial Confederacy and a Common Council standing on free provincial suffrage, and this may in time terminate in an imperial diet, when the imperial dominion will subsist as it ought in Election." Under all his studiousness shines his liberality. "Thanks to God," he says, "in every denomination in the church universal I can read of particular persons and churches, and some clusters of churches eminent for piety as well as soundness in the faith. With all these my soul unites and harmonizes."

Combined with all these great qualities of mind there was a curious vanity, which showed itself in the minute directions that he gave for his portrait. He is represented in a teaching attitude, one hand on his breast, the other holding a Bible. Behind him are conspicuous certain learned books, around him are various emblems, among others that of the intellectual world. In a central glory are the letters JHWH, surrounded with three white spots, also representing worlds. The three ascending hair lines refer to the Trinity. The motto is "All happy in God," "for as there are only two worlds known to have revolted, they count as infinitesimal compared with other dominions." Such emblems, he judged, would serve as descriptive of his mind even if the portrait did not correspond with his face.

—Kate Garne Welis, in *August Atlantic*.

BUSINESS GAMBLING.

It is the fascination of business gambling that, apparently, it offers greater scope to brains than do the ordinary games of chance. Operations on 'change require, for any degree of success beyond occasional luck, knowledge of corporate transactions, the accumulation and co-ordination of other trustworthy information, and nicety of judgment beyond the reach of any but the keenest business intellects. And here again, as in the following of gambling systems of Monaco, confidence and knowledge may be dangerous things. Nothing but *unfair advantage* wins steadily in selling "long" or selling "short" or dealing in "futures." Of course, stock exchanges and produce exchanges are useful adjuncts of honest commerce, and bankers and brokers are necessary to the operations of exchange. But, one year taken with another, the true interests of exchange and bankers and brokers, like the interests of society in general, will be found to lie in the way of real trading. Fictitious trading demoralizes commerce with fictitious prices, and is the cause of extravagance, recklessness, and low business morality. When the gambling transactions exceed the honest investments more than twenty-fold, as some have estimated, it is impossible to have a sound condition of business. And when stocks suffer, as recently, a depreciation of over two thousand millions of dollars mainly because of gambling influences, stocks which are real property dissipate only less rapidly than those which were merely "water," and therefore disappeared like vapor.

Perhaps the most culpable, because the most responsible, of the men who have stimulated the gambling mania are the bankers who supply the capital with which these transactions could not be carried through the Exchange under the guise of transfers of stock. These bankers know very well that the business would be regarded by them as immoral and unsound if the profits were not so captivating. Said one of them to a new firm of brokers whose account he was taking: "What ever you do, don't 'lay down' on your bank";—in other words: "When the day of disaster overtakes you, protect your financial partner from loss, by 'laying down' on somebody else." Of greater significance is the fact that "conservative" bankers and brokers, who are eager to help others into the mazes of Wall street, prefer to have their customers think it is a rule of the firm never to gamble on its own account.—"Topics of the Time," in the *August CENTURY*.

HER BONNET.

When the meeting-bells began to toll,
And pious folks began to pass,
She deftly tied her bonnet on,
The little, sober meeting-lass,
All in her neat, white-curtained room, before her tiny looking-glass.

So nicely, round her lady-checks,
She smoothed her bands of glossy hair,
And innocently wondered if
Her bonnet did not make her fair;—
Then sternly chid her foolish heart for harboring such fancies there.

So square she tied the satin strings,
And set the bows beneath her chin;—
Then smiled to see how sweet she looked;
Then thought her vanity a sin,
And she must put such thoughts away before the sermon should begin.

But, sitting 'neath the preached word,
Demurely, in her father's pew,
She thought about her bonnet still,—
Yes, all the parson's sermon through,—
About its pretty bows and buds which better than the text she knew.

Yet sitting there with peaceful face,
The reflex of her simple soul,
She looked to be a very saint,—
And may be was one, on the whole,—
Only that her pretty bonnet kept away the aureole.

Mary E. Wilkins, in *Century Brû-a-Bra*.

A DEGREE.

A degree was originally merely a license to teach, and was bestowed as a sign that the student had learned enough to be qualified to instruct others. It means nothing more than a step, and the lower degrees indicated the steps by which a man mounted to the doctorate where he was a fully-prepared, trained and authorized teacher. In the very first days there were, of course, no such titles, and when they began to be used they were not so much titles as descriptions; but in the progress of time, the degree being the natural conclusion and crown of a course of study, it came to be regarded as the legitimate fruit of the university years, and not only those who meant to teach, but all others sought to obtain it as a title. Since only universities gave the degree, men got to think that the peculiar attribute of a university was to give it, and the popular notion of a university in most minds both here and in America, is that it is a degree-conferring no less than a teaching body. When our two great English schools began to shake off the sluggishness of last century, their efforts at reform took the direction of reviving their degree examinations and awarding honours in them. Little was done directly for the teaching, though it improved as the reform spirit strengthened. This, together with the fact that many men, in last century most men, came away from Oxford and Cambridge untaught, but with degree, has made us in England think of the degree-giving power as the chief characteristic of the university, and suppose that he who has got the degree has got not merely what he went to seek, but all he needed to seek.—*The Contemporary Review*.

WOMEN AS ARTISTS.

If, in the domain of art, we wish to come to a fair judgment of the yet undeveloped possibilities of woman, it will be instructive to go back to the remote past and contemplate her actual achievements during the centuries in which she had the most feeble chance, by reason of her almost universal infidelity concerning her capabilities in any other functions than those of maternity and housewifery.

In gathering up the scraps of history which help to illustrate my theme, it became a part of my duty, some years ago, to count, one by one, the names of all the artists of all ages mentioned in the four volumes of Müller's "Künstler-Lexicon," and I found the grand total to be 12,938, of which 243 were the names of women. Of this small fraction—less than one-fiftieth—only the most insignificant minority received any extended biographical notice, chiefly no doubt, by reason of the fact that the large majority of women artists, through all the centuries, has represented only the most subordinate departments of art, such as flower-painting, etching, embroidery, and the illuminating of manuscripts.

HERE is a mathematical definition for the average fisherman: A rye-tangled try angle.

PASSENGER: "Any fear of my disturbing the magnetic currents, captain, by going near the compass?" Captain: "Oh, no, sir. Brass has no effect on it, whatever, sir!"

DR. MCCOSH has a broad Scotch accent, and the habit of gnawing at the point of his thumb when busily thinking. Some years ago he was lecturing before the senior class in Princeton. He had been discussing Leibnitz's view of the reason of evil, to the effect that mankind was put upon the earth because there was less evil here than elsewhere. One of the seniors inquired: "Well, doctor, why was evil introduced into the world?" "Ah!" said the doctor, holding up both hands, "ye have asked the hardest question in all feelosopy. Suckrates tried to answer it and failed; Plato tried it, and he failed; Kehnnt attempted it and made bad work of it, Leibnitz tried it; and he begged the whole question as I've been tellin' ye; and I confess" (gnawing at his thumb knuckle) "I confess I don't know—what—to make of it myself."

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

THE Rev. L. W. Rennison, Alloa, has accepted an appointment to the Scotch Presbyterian Church, Souva, Fiji Island.

THE Empress of China has sanctioned a railway from Tientsin to Peking. The materials have been constructed in Germany and shipped.

At a meeting at the Mansion House, London, it was stated that there were in the Royal Navy fully 12,000 officers and men teetotallers.

THE result of the Good Templar movement in Sweden has been a diminution in the consumption of spirits in 1883 as against 1882 equal to 6½ per cent.

THE Rev. Principal Brown, of Aberdeen, is to supply the vacant pulpit of Oban during July, and for six weeks thereafter it will be occupied by Dr. Mackay, of Hull.

A MAN was tried in Dublin for polygamy. He was the possessor of five wives. The verdict returned was: "insane with regard to his matrimonial engagements," and he was consigned to an asylum.

IT has been proposed by the Perth Gaelic that the Highlanders throughout the world should erect a monument over the grave of the late Rev. Mr. Stewart, of Killin, the translator of the Gaelic Bible.

MISS BAXTER, of Ellangowan, who recently presented a house in George-square, Edinburgh, for a congregational theological hall, has now given \$2,500 to put it in order and furnish the class-room.

FROM the will of a Quakeress, Miss Haughton, who recently died in Dublin: "I bequeath the sum of \$5,000 to the national cause for the independence of Ireland—liberty for my country to rule herself."

THE Rev. Clason Porter has been presented with a congratulatory address on reaching the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the pastoral charge of the Old Presbyterian congregation at Larnie, Ireland.

MR. GLADSTONE sent an autograph letter to Mr. Spurgeon, congratulating him on his jubilee. "Mr. Gladstone has always been very kind to me," said Mr. Spurgeon, and when I was ill he used to send to inquire for me.

THE locusts in several districts of South Russia are committing frightful ravages. In Elizavetgrad the peasants have just received a reward from the Imperial Agricultural Society for the destruction of 1,700,000 of these insects.

THE Rev. James N. Hill, Presbyterian minister at Dwight, Illinois, U. S., has been admitted by St. Andrew's Presbytery to the Church of Scotland. Mr. Hill has been appointed minister of the new church at Pringlows, Leslie.

THE eminent English Congregational minister of Kingsland church, the pastorate of which he has filled for forty-six years, has died suddenly at Reedham, only a few days before the one fixed for the presentation of the testimonial.

GEN. NORTON is in London making preliminary arrangements for an American Exhibition there in 1886. It will include American products and manufactures, practically displaying all the processes which are of American invention.

THE Provostship of Eton has been conferred on the headmaster, Dr. Hornby, who will, it is expected, be succeeded by the Rev. Edmund Warre, at present an assistant-master at the college. Dr. Hornby has been head-master since 1868.

THE Rev. Harry Cowgill, late of Miles Platting, has been licensed to a curacy in Derby, by the Bishop of Southwell; and with the full consent of the Bishop of London, the Rev. A. H. Mackonochie is again at work in Holborn, close to his old church.

FROM New Guinea comes the news of the discovery of a river about seventeen miles inland, which will probably turn out to be a continuation of the Hilda, whose mouth was found in 1873; but whose course has ever since remained a matter of conjecture.

PRINCIPAL T. GOADSVY, Baptist, says that in England laymen are broader in thought than ministers, while in America ministers are broader than laymen. In Germany they study theology, but do not preach it, in England they preach theology, but do not study it.

THE late Mr. George Burns, of Melville, Dumbarton, has bequeathed \$5,000 to the Dumbarton parish church, and after the death of four annuitants the residue of his estate, from \$50,000 to \$60,000, is to be divided by his trustees among religious and charitable institutions connected with the Church.

THERE has been set up in Edinburgh a handsome tablet in bronze bearing the inscription: "In this house were born the Hon. Henry Erskine, Lord Advocate for Scotland, b. 1746, d. 1817, and Thomas, Lord Erskine, Lord Chancellor of England, b. 1749, d. 1823. No poor man wanted a friend while Harry Erskine lived."

AT a recent meeting of Caithness Free Presbytery at Wick, the Rev. Donald Munro, resigned his position as a Free Church minister, as the Assembly had refused to cancel the decision permitting instrumental music in public worship. The Presbytery refused to accept the resignation, and appointed a committee to confer with Mr. Munro.

A CASE of Ghazeism is reported from Thal, in India. A man ran amuck in a small village occupied by railway workmen. He was caught, sent to Thal, and confined in a guard room. Breaking away, he snatched a sentry's bayonet and stabbed him severely, but before he could attack any other persons he was shot and his body burned.

DR. Robert Stawell Ball, professor of astronomy Dublin University, and royal astronomer of Ireland, has been appointed Thomson lecturer for next session in Aberdeen Free Church college. The lectureship was founded by the late Mr. Thompson, of Banchoy, and an annual appointment is made. The object is to establish the affinity between science and religion.