

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Personal and Literary.

Henry Vincent, the well known English lecturer, is dead.

The oldest newspaper in the United States is the Annapolis (Md.) Gazette. Its first number was issued in January, 1745.

A new opera by Offenbach, "Madame Favart," was produced on Dec. 29 in Paris, and bids fair to equal in popularity any of his previous works.

Senator Sargent's two daughters have both studied medicine, and the elder, having been graduated, is practicing her profession at the Freedmen's Hospital, in Washington.

It is rumored that M. Gustave Dore will shortly visit America, and inspect some of its wonders, such as the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, the Rocky Mountains, the Yosemite Valley, and Niagara.

Turgeneff, the Russian novelist, is 61 years old, but very young in appearance. His crown of snow-white hair, with his snow-white beard and mustaches, seems to be a freak of nature, rather than the proper ornament of old age.

Miss Harriet Hosmer is complimented by the World of London as the greatest of the few female sculptors the world has ever seen, and one of the very few among those who have produced strong work, and not mere prettinesses.

Von Bulow says that music can be cultivated with success in those countries only where the sun shines and the grape ripens; and Sir George Bowyer says that not more than two per cent. of the inhabitants of Great Britain can be taught to sing a tune.

I am almost 71," said Mrs. Myra Clark Gaines to a Washington correspondent the other day, "and I expect to live till I am 150. I came of a long-lived race. One of my aunts lived to 115," and seeing the correspondent scrutinizing her hair, "it isn't dyed," she said, "and it is very abundant, falling below my waist."

Mr. Henry C. North, who wrote the song "My Grandfather's Clock," is reported as saying: "I have written a thousand or more songs, and one of the worst of them all has made me famous—in a small way. Some of the best things I have ever written have had a very limited sale, and a few songs on which I have spent the most time have never sold at all."

In the course of a recent lecture on "The Abuse of Books," Mr. Frederick Harrison, the eminent essayist, said that he was inclined to think the most useful part of reading was to know what to avoid. The enormous multiplication of books is not favorable to the reading of the best. There never was a time during the last three hundred years when the difficulties in the way of making an efficient use of books were greater than to-day.

Science and Industry.

Up to the present time over 20,000 silver mines have been located in Arizona.

A South Bend (Ind.) factory proposes to manufacture 40,000 croquet sets before spring.

The Atlantic cable is being "duplexed," a process which increases its working capacity 70 per cent.

New York has 13 sugar refineries, Boston 4, Philadelphia 3, New Orleans 2, and Baltimore and St. Louis 1 each.

Two locomotives recently ordered from Nicaragua, Central America, will be the first ever seen in that country.

A vacuum automatic brake lately tested in England will stop in 300 yards a train running at 60 miles an hour.

Shipments of English peas to the Northern and Western cities from Florida will commence the latter part of February.

The new Washburn Mill at Minneapolis will have 42 run of stone, and will make 1,680 barrels or 12 car-loads of flour a day.

The Hecla and Calumet copper mines of Lake Superior, since they began to work, have paid to the stockholders \$14,350,000.

American street cars are now running in nearly every large city in the world, and horses continue to be exported from this country to Europe.

A New Jersey man is credited with having discovered a process by which the skin of bullocks, calves and sheep are tanned in from 20 to 40 minutes.

The manufacture of jewelry from pure blood of the ox is flourishing in Germany. The blood is dried, reduced to a powder and then molded and polished. The ornaments thus produced are capable of high polish.

School and Church.

It has been decided to erect the new Agricultural and Military College of Mississippi at Starkville.

The Girl's Latin School, organized in Boston last February, has now 78 pupils, and is extremely successful in its work.

Indiana's school fund amounts to \$9,000,000, and \$4,000,000 are given every year by the people to keep up the schools, while the school property is valued at \$12,000,000.

The Wesleyans of England have determined to build in various parts of the country 100 chapels per year for the

next 10 years. The sum of \$325,000 has been subscribed for the purpose.

There are now in this country 10 Roman Catholic Archbishops and 55 Bishops, against 6 of the former and 27 of the latter in 1850. The number of priests was then 1,800, and of churches 1,073; while there are now 5,634 priests and 5,548 churches. The colleges have increased from 17 to 74, and the Roman Catholic population has doubled.

At present there are only about 600,000 Protestants in France. That religious enemy, however, has nearly altogether died out may be inferred from the fact that no fewer than five ministers in the present Cabinet belong to the Reformed faith. The Protestants are not numerous enough to cause trouble, and the general feeling in France is one of indifference.

The Congregational ministers of Chicago have had a discussion of the amusement question, and have gone into details on cards, billiards and dancing. They agree for the most part to pronounce against these, not directly as evil in themselves, but because of the associations which are generally inseparable from them. They did not go so far as thus to denounce croquet, and they do not consider the associations of that game as pernicious as those which cluster around the billiard-table.

In February next the French Government will open a school for instruction in matters relating to electricity and telegraphy. This step has been considered necessary in consequence of the union of the French telegraph and postal service, the working of which is at present far from efficient. The course of lessons will extend over a period of five months, and each session will be terminated in time for the examination appointed by the authorities.

The Rev. Dr. Bartlett, of Dartmouth College, urges in the Congregationalist that the cause of religion is becoming deeply concerned in the question of ministerial standing. "It has become possible," he says, "for reckless clerical adventurers to range almost unhindered from place to place, corrupting and harassing the flock." He gives the following as cases within his personal knowledge: A student was expelled from a Western theological seminary for vulgarity, obscenity, and falsehood; yet he went directly to New England, was ordained, and made a pastor. A dissolute young pastor in New England was formally turned out of the ministry; but within a year he was in charge of a church in a distant State.

An Englishman came over with forged credentials, and almost destroyed a Vermont church that employed him; but as often as exposed he found new pulpits. A Michigan preacher fled from Michigan to escape a trial, and was immediately engaged by a Minnesota church, where his "low-lived deportment" got him again into trouble. A New England church in a large city engaged a pastor whose private life was so bad that a council had refused to settle him. Dr. Bartlett thinks that his own denomination, the Congregational, ought to adopt stricter methods of examining into the characters of clerical candidates and of investigating charges.

Haps and Mishaps.

At Lake Crystal, Minn., a German named Miske fell upon a circular saw in motion and was absolutely torn in pieces.

Lewis Collins, an old citizen of Keokuk, Iowa, attempted to lift a hog at a butchering, in doing which he ruptured a blood-vessel and died.

Marion Fitch, a prominent grain and stock dealer, of Colfax, Ind., while assisting in loading cattle was gored by a ferocious steer, receiving probably mortal injuries.

Maggie Eder and Katie Mitchell, young ladies, while skating in the Raritan River at Snyderville, N. J., went down in a hole in the ice made by some fishermen, and both were drowned.

John Baumeier, a young farmer, who lived near Davenport, Iowa, was smothered to death by a sled load of rolled straw overturning upon him, burying him completely.

In Franklin Township, Appanoose County, Iowa, a little 3-year-old daughter of S. McCann lost her life, being shot by her little brother of 7 years, who was fooling with a loaded gun.

George King, a druggist of West Middlesex, Mercer County, Penn., while filling a prescription, mistook tincture of aconite for whisky, and drank about an ounce, which caused his death in three-quarters of an hour.

At Olin, Jackson County, Iowa, S. Johnson, an old resident, took down a barbed-wire fence to make a short cut home, when his team started suddenly, pulling him against a wire with such force that an artery in his leg was severed and he bled to death.

Jules L. Denninger, of Cincinnati, broke in two a cake, giving half of it to his two-year-old child and eating the remainder himself. The cake had been poisoned for the purpose of killing rats and carelessly left lying around. The child died, but the father recovered.

Foreign Notes.

Before 1870 Germany had only seven railway bridges over the Rhine; now she has 16.

The mandate for a general mourning for Princess Alice has been largely disregarded in England—a change from the days when even the milkmaids in the Park put on mourning for the death of a Stuart.

The Emperor of Austria, at his summer retreat at Ischl, is an inveterate smoker, and has on the writing-table of his bed-room a number of long, coarse Virginia cigars. The Emperor is tall and spare, with close cropped sandy

hair, just turning iron gray; regulation military whiskers and mustache; small, restless gray eyes; blunt features and heavy lips, and he wears the light blue uniform of a General. He speaks six languages.

Dr. Abel, the Berlin correspondent of the London Times, has been lately staying with Lord Beaconsfield at Hughenden Manor. Dr. Abel is known to read and translate upward of 70 different languages, and though a German by birth, yet his Times and other English writing is clear in meaning, simple in diction, and polished in style. When Lord Beaconsfield was introduced to him at the Berlin Congress, he said: "Dr. Abel, you are the author whom I have most studied."

The late Karl Gutzkow, the distinguished German writer, died from the effects of an accident. On going to rest one night a few weeks ago, he took according to custom, a strong chloral draught, as he suffered from sleeplessness. But he left a lighted lamp too near the sofa, which seems to have caught fire during the night. It and some cushions and chairs were burned. Access of fresh air being cut off, a great quantity of smoke filled the room. It is supposed that Gutzkow awoke feeling the suffocation of the smoke, and made for the door to open it, but he was overpowered before he reached it, and fell to the floor, where he was found in the morning dead from suffocation.

Odds and Ends.

Despise not small things; the largest corn is always found on the smallest ear.

Never play euchre with a one-armed man. He always holds a "lone hand," you know.—Norristown Herald.

The new cook-book, "How to Get a Good Dinner," should be in the hands of every tramp.—Boston Traveller.

The writer who uses weak arguments and strong epithets is like the landlady who gives weak tea and strong butter.

It is vulgar to call a man "bow-legged." Just speak of him as a parenthetical pedestrian.—Hacksack Republican.

A man and a lion met one night, but they'll never meet again. For the man ran away with all his might, and the lion with all his name.

If you're any thing to say, say it. If you're any thing to pay, pay it. But, with naught to pay or say, don't fret yourself about it, pray.—Boston Post.

A rapid and emphatic recital of the following simple narrative is an infallible cure for liping: Hobbs meets Snobbs and Nobbs; Hobbs bows to Snobbs and Nobbs; Hobbs bows with Snobbs and Nobbs; Hobbs bows "This is," says Nobbs, "the worst of Hobbs's jobs;" and Snobbs sobs.—Worcester Gazette.

"Is this a fair?" said a stranger, stopping in front of a place where a festival was in progress, and addressing a citizen. "Well," returned the citizen, "they call it fair, but they take every body in." He probably had invested in a ticket in an oyster-soup lottery and had drawn a blank.—Toledo Commercial.

Oh, George.

They were on the ice yesterday afternoon, he in the glory of his new pair of love, and she with a brand-new pair of skates on her pretty feet. They were very sweet on each other and skated hand in hand, now forward, now backward, gliding smoothly and gracefully, totally unconscious of the smiles of the spectators, and the chaffing of the bad small boys. He was skating backward, and had hold of her hand—a strong hold, with just the least more pressure than would have been desirable under other circumstances. He was pulling her along and talking the meanwhile: "Darling Celeste, shall we always glide together through life as smoothly as we do now?"

"Oh, George, dear, I hope so!" smilingly.

"And shall we ever be to each other as dear as we now are?"

"Oh, George, always!"

"And, Celeste, shall our clasp of the hand be as warm in the future as it is now?"

"Oh, George, it will!" lovingly.

"Dear Celeste you are so kind to keep me first in your affec—"

"Oh, George!"

There was a crash before that last exclamation. George was skating backward and they were looking into each other's eyes. His skate caught in a crack in the ice and there was a fall—Celeste on top. A series of mild shrieks, a vision of dimity, and then two skaters left the ice. George has a lump on the back of his head as big as the prize pumpkin, and Celeste's nose looks like a ripe fig and all skewed around like a mule's jaw. Oh, George! —Bradford Breeze.

Tooth Pulling Extraordinary.

At about 11 o'clock on Saturday evening, an aged woman, thinly clad, waited at the Grove Street crossing of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Jersey City, and as the train approached and the gate was lowered, she drew close up to the gate, and as the gate was thrown up she gave a sharp shriek and plucked something from the gate. Then she hurried up Newark Avenue toward the Heights. When asked for an explanation of her behavior, she reluctantly said that she had tied a string around an ulcerating tooth and attached the string to the gate, so that when it was raised it might extract the tooth. She had not 50 cents to pay for its pulling.—New York Sun.

Weather Prognostics for the Year 1879.

While the attention of the public is just now turned to the subject of cold weather and meteorological changes, Richard Mansill, of Rock Island, a scientific weather prophet, publishes his "Almanac of Planetary Meteorology for 1879." Among its other peculiarities he describes what appears to be a general outline of the complexion of the seasons for this year, as supposed to be affected and governed by the position of the planets. Mr. Mansill is not an encouraging prophet for those who enjoy fine weather all the year round; but if Troy and this particular section shall prove exceptions to the prevailing storms and severity of temperature, as has been the case during the recent meteorological disturbances, we may not have reason to complain. Mr. Mansill says: If the positions of the planets affect the temperature of our earth's atmosphere during the year 1879 as they have done when in similar positions during past years (particularly the positions that gave us the mild Winter of 1877-78 and early Spring of 1878), we may expect very erratic seasons during 1879. Agreeable to this theory, there will be tolerably steady cold weather through January, with temperature below the mean; Winter will continue through February, followed by a cold March. We shall be flattered by the prospect of Spring during a few days about the middle of April, while Mercury is about passing its inferior conjunction with the sun; but this will soon pass away, and the weather, or temperature, sink below the average of the season, and will probably remain below the mean through May, June, and July, while we shall move in a hot, stormy Summer about the last days of August; and these conditions continuing through September and most of October. Between the Autumn and Winter months, cool drouths will likely prevail over large landed countries in the temperate zone, located far from the sea, while an excess of cool rains will probably occur on and about seacoast countries during the same term. These abnormal irregularities of the season of 1879 must affect the crops in many and great parts of the earth during the year.—Troy Times.

"Cuss the Woodchuck."

In 1646 the Rev. Samuel Whiting, D. D., was minister of Lynn, Mass. One Obadiah Turner kept a journal at that time, in which occurs the following:

"1646, June ye 3d. Allen Brydges hath bin chose to wake ye sleepers in meeting, and being much proud of his place must have a fox taile fixed to ye end of a long staff needs wherewith he may brush the faces of them yt will have naps in time of discourse, likewise a sharp thorne wherewith he may prick such as be most sounde. On ye laste Lord his day, as he strutted about ye meeting-house, he did spy Mr. Tomlins sleeping with much comfote, his head kept steadie by being in ye corner, and his hand grasping ye rail. And soe spying Allen did quicklie thrust his staff behind Dame Balloud and give him a grievous prick upon ye hand. Whereupon Mr. Tomlins did spring upp much above the floor, and with terrible force strike his hand against ye wall, and also, to ye great wonder of all, prophainlie exclaim in a loude voice, 'Cuss the woodchuck!' he dreaming, as it seemed, yt a woodchuck had seized and bit his hand. But on coming to know where he was, and ye great scandall he had committed, he seemed much abashed, but did not speake. And I think he will not soone againe go to sleepe in meeting. Ye women may sometimes sleep and none know it by reason of their enormous bonnets. Mr. Whiting doth pleasantly say yt from ye pulpit he doth seem to be preaching to stacks of straw with men jotting here and there among them."—Hartford Courant.

His Gallant Action.

About mid-afternoon yesterday the cry of "Runaway—look out!" was started in Michigan Avenue, near Cass Street, by a dozen persons. A young man, with the peach-blossoms of the country on his cheeks, and his pants tucked into his boot-legs, had just come out of a harness-shop, and, seeing the runaway horse coming down the street, he dropped the horse-collar off his arm and made a dash for the flying animal. Just how it happened no one could say, but horse, and man, and sleigh were all piled up in a heap the next moment, and from the mass issued such a string of yells as it did not seem possible one man could utter. The crowd separated one from the other after awhile, and the man appeared to have been dragged through several knot-holes and then run through a thrashing-machine. Some wiped the blood off his ear, while others hunted up his broken suspenders and missing boot-heels, and when he got his breath he said:

"Oh! I don't care about these few scratches. Where are the ladies whose lives I saved?"

"There was no one in the sleigh," answered one of the crowd—"no one but a sack of buckwheat and a quarter of beef, and they are safe."

"Didn't I rescue any body?" demanded the young man.

"No; but you are a hero, just the same."

"I'll be tetotally mashed if I am!" he indignantly exclaimed. "Here, some o' you put that boss-collar over my head, hitch a swill-cart to me, and drive me to death for a mule, for I don't know enough to be a first-class fool."—Detroit Free Press.

Sherry is the name of a much-respected Lynn shoemaker. Probably the original Sherry, cobbler.

A Glacier Meadow of the Sierra.

Imagine yourself at the Tuolumne Soda Springs on the bank of the river, a day's journey above Yosemite Valley. You set off northward through a forest that stretches away indefinitely before you, seemingly unbroken by openings of any kind. As soon as you are fairly into the woods, the gray mountain-peaks, with their snowy gorges and hollows, are lost to view. The ground is littered with fallen trunks that lie crossed and re-crossed like storm-lodged wheat; and besides this close growth of pines, the rich moraine soil supports a luxuriant growth of ribbon-leaved grasses, chiefly bromus, triticum and agrostis, which rear their handsome spikes and panicles above your waist. Making your way through this fertile wilderness—finding lively bits of interest now and then in the squirrels and Clark crows, and perchance in a deer or bear—after the lapse of an hour or two vertical bars of sunshine are seen ahead between the brown shafts of the pines, and then you suddenly emerge from the forest shadows upon a delightful purple lawn lying smooth and free in the light like a lake. This is a glacier meadow. It is about a mile and a half long by a quarter of a mile wide. The trees come pressing forward all around in close, serried ranks, planting their feet exactly on its margin, and holding themselves erect, strict and orderly like soldiers on parade; thus bounding the meadow with exquisite precision, yet with free curving lines such as nature alone can draw. With inexpressible delight you wade out into the grassy sun-lake, feeling yourself contained in one of nature's most sacred chambers, withdrawn from the sterner influences of the mountains, secure from all intrusion, secure from yourself, free in the universal beauty. And notwithstanding the scene is so impressively spiritual, and you seem dissolved in it, yet every thing about you is beating with warm, terrestrial, human love, delightfully substantial and familiar. The rosy pines are types of health and steadfastness; the robins feeding on the sod belong to the same species you have known since childhood; and surely these are the very friend-flowers of the old home garden. Bees hum as in a harvest noon, butterflies waver above the flowers, and like them you live in the vital sunshine, too richly and homogeneously joy-filled to be capable of partial thought. You are all eye, sifted through and through with light and beauty.—John Muir, in February Scribner.

Sunday-Night Receptions in New York.

One of the recent developments of the city on the social side are quiet receptions by people of literary, dramatic, and artistic taste on Sunday evenings. Cultivated people who are engaged in their pursuits but are cut off by their professional engagements from the enjoyment of social meetings during the working days of the week, long for the gatherings in the parlors of their friends from which their duties exclude them. The social longings of many artists have been gratified in a measure for several years by the holding of regular afternoon receptions on particular days of the week at the homes of several of the most cultivated people of the city. These receptions are generally made attractive, not only by the presence of many of the best ladies of the city, but also by the presence of distinguished singers and musicians, and there is always a great deal of music at them. The parlors of the people who give these charming receptions are havens of rest to professional people. But the afternoon gathering does not fully satisfy the demand for this sort of thing, and the Sunday evening receptions have been initiated, and are rapidly becoming popular. They are very quiet. There is no rush of carriages to the door, as at a kettledrum or afternoon reception on week days. Those who have them leave them behind. The company gathers without ostentation, and enjoys an evening of sober, but delightful sociability. There is often music. The receptions are frequented by persons like Mrs. Florence Rice Knox, Remenyi, and other persons of fame, and there is a great rush of those who have the privilege of attending to meet and lionize the eminent artist who is the guest of the evening. There are not many houses in town open on Sunday evening, but there are a few, and of good position in society, and the literary and art world here could not do without them. Happy is the hostess who can get these people to like to come to her drawing-room.—New York Letter.

"Pa," said little Johnny, the other evening, "where is the Iceod Sea?" "Why, really now, Johnny," his father began, as he hastily ran over his geographical attainments; but it was of no use. "I never heard of any such sea," he said finally. "Why, pa, you said to mother at tea when you were telling about the snow blockade, that freight-cars stretched along the track as far as the Iceod Sea." Pa sees and explains, though Johnny is not a little disappointed.—Boston Transcript.

A youth of about 20 winters exhibited the respect for age prevalent among the youth of this country by the following remark: "There's my old father now, he's most 70 years old, and knows nearly as much as I do."

Thomas Bailey Aldrich, the poet, has gone, in company with ex-Congressman Pierce, of Boston, for a journey of a year or more in Greece, Turkey, and Russia.

California has a profitable and growing cheese trade with China, Australia, and South America.