

have all the more weight because they are accompanied by so fair a statement of the highest argument that can be brought forward in behalf of an opposite conclusion. It would not be just to limit the moral meaning of Mr. Howells's serious, many-sided, and artistic work to what is its most timely, and appears to be its most deliberately intended point; but, unless we are mistaken, the gist of the whole matter, so far as it is directly expressed, is contained in a passage which is printed in its proper connection in this number,—but which is worth reprinting, not only here but in every journal in the United States. It is Atherton, the clear-headed, clean-hearted lawyer and man of the world, who speaks; he speaks to one whose heart and judgment for a while wavered, but whose act remained pure throughout; to a man whom destiny had forced into the attitude of friendship, and then love, for a woman who had been abandoned by a selfish and unworthy husband. "Have you really come back," says Atherton, "have you really come back here to give your father's honest name, and the example of a man of your own blameless life, in support of conditions that tempt people to marry with a mental reservation, and that weaken every marriage bond with the guilty hope of escape whenever a fickle mind, or secret lust, or wicked will may dictate? Have you come to join yourself to those miserable specters who go shrinking through the world, afraid of their own past, and anxious to hide it from those they hold dear; or do you propose to defy the world, to help form within it the community of outcasts with whom shame is not shame, nor dishonor dishonor?"

A Wise Printer.

A DEBT of gratitude, too long deferred, has been recently paid by the printers of London. The first printer in England has had his services acknowledged by the placing of a new stained-glass window in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster. In this window, Caxton, represented as a dignified, elderly man, in a dark-green, fur-trimmed robe, and in front of a printing-press, occupies the central position. To the left, dressed as a monk and writing in a book, is the venerable Bede, the representative of mediæval scholarship and of early book-making arts. In the window to the right, Erasmus, the wise and witty, once professor at Oxford, appears as a corrector of the press (as he was for Manutius and Froben), and as the forerunner of modern thought and science. It is the art that Caxton practiced that brings together the old and the new learning, and makes both the inheritance of the world. The titles of some of Caxton's books—the "Sept Pseaumes," "Dictes," and "Golden Legend," the arms of the county of Kent, where he was born (about 1422), and of the city of London, where he worked,—his trade-mark or device, with the year 1477, when it is supposed he began to print in England—these more clearly identify the man and his work. In its proper place shines the legend *Fiat lux*. From this fitly-chosen text, "Let there be light," on the last day of April, when the window was unveiled for the first time, Canon Farrar preached a sermon to an overflowing congregation.

In this sermon, and in the newspaper criticisms of the memorial, deserved tribute was paid to Caxton's

worth as a man. His gratitude to his parents, of whom he says: "I am bounden to pray for my fader and moder's soules that in my youth sent me to schoole, by whiche, by the suffraunce of God, I get my living I hope truly"; his inferred fidelity as a favored apprentice of the London mercer, Large; his subsequent distinction as governor of the English merchants at Bruges, where he lived from 1442 to 1475; the respect shown him by the government and nobles of his own and other countries; his unwearied diligence as a translator and printer—all these, and more, have been fairly put before English readers. And there has been no lack of praise concerning the good done by printing. Yet there is now, as there has been for many years, a tincture of regret that Caxton did not do more. Gibbon pityingly notices him as a printer of frivolous books. Dibdin, the bibliographer, who aided the Roxburge Club in putting up a tablet to Caxton's memory, cannot conceal his regret that Caxton did next to nothing for the revival of classical literature. Other English authors have too swiftly admitted that Caxton, although a worthy man, was not a great printer,—not to be compared with Froben and Manutius, with the Stephens and the Elzevirs,—and have implied that it is a national misfortune that Caxton did not print classic texts.

Is there not here too much of old-time pedantry? To be a great printer, must one print in Latin or Greek? A great deal of printing has been done during this century, with good results, but how much of it is in the learned languages? And which has been of more benefit to the reading world, the books in dead or in living tongues?

So far from being a fault, Caxton's preference for English is his most honorable distinction. He was the first of the early printers to see that the mission of printing was more to the people than to the patricians—that then and thereafter it was to get its greatest support from the uneducated or half educated. Not one of his contemporaries had the wit to see this truth. At Rome and Paris, at Strasburg and Venice—everywhere but in London—the early printers were catering to the tastes of ecclesiastics, scholars, or men of rank and wealth. More than nine-tenths of the books they printed were in Latin, and unreadable by common people. It is a question whether the new art of printing from types did as much for the education of ignorant people during its first half-century as had been previously done by the ruder art of printing from engraved blocks. Nor were there evidences of any intent to send downward the benefits of printing. The new art was welcomed in monasteries, but they did not found Bible and Tract Societies; in colleges and universities, but they did not aid in the establishment of newspapers and magazines; at courts, but it was not by courtesy that the liberty of the press was conceded. Printing had to begin as all healthy plant-growth begins, at the bottom and not at the top. Its roots stretched deep and wide in the soil, in coarse surroundings, among very rude people, before there was any noticeable flower or fruit.

Caxton saw that the world was getting ready for a new literature; but how little he found ready-made to his hand! Who were the readable English authors, and what were the books of merit, not scholastic or dialectic, of the fifteenth century? Begin counting on

the fingers, and you will soon stop. To provide the new reading, Caxton was obliged to translate from Latin, French, and Flemish. The character of the man and the literary tastes of his times are shown by his works. His first translation, "Stories about the Trojan War," begun, reluctantly, at the order of the Duchess of Burgundy, and finished in 1471, was so sought for that he "lerner at my [his] grete charge and dispence to ordeyne this sayd boke in prynte, after the manner and forme as ye may here see." The success of this book determined his future. Returning to England, he devoted his time, from 1477 to his death in 1491, to the translation and printing of books, of which he published fifty-six, in all about eighteen thousand pages, mostly in folio,—a great task for a man after he was fifty-five years old. One-half of these books are distinctly moral or religious, but of the most elementary form; the other half are histories, romances, poetry, and legend,—all translated, as Caxton assures us in one of his prefaces, "for the amendement of manners and the increase of vertuous lyving." Whatever critics may think of their literary merits they did a great deal for the making of England. No doubt Caxton builded better than he knew, for in providing good books that people would buy and read, he whetted a rapidly growing taste for books of a higher order. In a century English readers were ready to put away childish things, and were ready to read, and did read, Bacon and Shakspeare. How wisely English-speaking people have made use of the printing-press is not to be told in a paragraph. It is enough to say that with them printing is as practical now as it was in the beginning—that it does something more than keep the records of the past: it makes the present and molds the future.

"American Art Students Abroad."*

As will be seen by the following correspondence, we were not mistaken in supposing that Mr. Frelinghuysen would do what he could to lighten the burden upon American artists abroad who desire to send their works home. In his letter to us, Mr. C. M. Moore, Secretary of the American Artists' Club, Munich, stated that, "Virtually, the works of an American artist are free of duty; but they have always been subject to the payment of the small sum of fifty cents for consul's certificate. This last year, however, when the consular fees have been reduced on manufactured goods to a minimum, the same certificate for an American artist's work has been raised in value, so that the American artist must now pay two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50) for consular certificate, and an additional two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50) for the invoice. That, at least, has been the law practiced in Munich. From various consuls who have been questioned in regard to the matter, a diversity of opinions have been received in regard to the value of an invoice, or, in fact, whether an invoice is at all necessary."

By the following letters it will be seen that artists will not, hereafter, be mulcted in the unreasonable sum of five dollars. But we hope that the Government will yet see its way clear to throwing off the two dollars, letting the odd fifty cents, formerly an optional rate, stand as the legal rate.

* See page 459 THE CENTURY for July, 1882.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON,
August 9, 1882.

EDITOR OF THE CENTURY MAGAZINE, NEW YORK.

SIR: Mr. Adee showed me the letter, addressed to you on the 17th of April last by Mr. Moore, Secretary of the American Artists' Club of Munich, Bavaria, and which you had informally submitted to him for the purpose of obtaining an answer to the inquiries therein made touching the proper fee to be collected by the United States consuls abroad for the certification and invoicing of the original paintings of American artists shipped to the United States.

As the question so presented was one of considerable interest to a large class of American citizens abroad, and was one, moreover, for which the precedents found in this department afforded no certain solution, I referred Mr. Moore's letter to the Secretary of the Treasury. I have just received Mr. Folger's reply (a copy of which I inclose herewith), in which he decides that the ordinary certificate required upon all invoices, whether on the free list or not, may be combined with the special certificate that the article invoiced is the production of an American artist, and a single fee of two dollars and fifty cents charged therefor.

I am pleased to be able to communicate to you this decision, made in the interest of a meritorious class of our citizens abroad.

The letter addressed to you by Mr. Moore is herewith returned.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

FREDERICK T. FRELINGHUYSEN.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, August 4, 1882.

HON. F. T. FRELINGHUYSEN, SECRETARY OF STATE.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, submitting a copy of a letter from Mr. C. M. Moore, Secretary of the American Artists' Club, of Munich, addressed to the editor of THE CENTURY MAGAZINE, in regard to the exaction by United States consuls of a fee of two dollars and fifty cents for the declaration attached to the invoices of works of American artists (form 156, Consular Regulations), in addition to the usual fee of two dollars and fifty cents for certificate to invoice.

I concur with you in the opinion that American artists, in sending their productions to the United States, should not be subjected to the imposition of greater consular fees than those paid by shippers of dutiable merchandise, and would suggest that the certificate (form 156) may be properly consolidated with the ordinary certificate (form 149), and the fee of two dollars and fifty cents charged for the combined certificate. This modification is suggested for the reason that an invoice without the ordinary certificate would not be a certified invoice.

In regard to the suggestion of Mr. Moore that the consular invoice should be dispensed with, I would state that the rule is that such invoices shall be procured in all cases, whether the goods be dutiable or free, and the production of such invoices is advantageous, not only to the Government, but also to the artists, who frequently wish to have their works shipped to interior ports without examination at the original port of entry, which privilege could not be allowed in the absence of a regular consular invoice.

Very respectfully,

CHARLES J. FOLGER, Secretary.

Murder by Burial.

No scientific discoveries have been made in our generation of greater importance than those of M. Pasteur. As many of our readers are aware, they relate to the propagation of disease through living organ-