

have at last awakened a sluggish public to take account of the license of certain writers in England. This is a move in the right direction; for the managers of the libraries are not dealing in such cases with literature, and any attempt to indict them as lacking in artistic sense will utterly fail. What they are trying to do is to exclude from their shelves stories and memoirs prepared especially for the market which always exists for scandals. It is printed indecency, and not in any sense literature, with which these libraries are dealing, and it is high time that some such action as this were taken to protect innocent readers from books which are an offense to every decent person. So far, American writers, as a rule, have not entered into competition with the English scandal-mongers and celebrators of adulteries, though one young American novelist, who is capable of better things, is rapidly approaching the danger-mark; and as he approaches the danger-mark, he shows steady degeneration in his work. American readers do not want prudish books. They are not afraid to see life, if it is life for the sake of life in the spirit of art that is presented to them; but they do not wish to have their lower natures pandered to by books on dangerous themes written for the express purpose of securing a large sale.



#### GEORGE P. FISHER

Professor George Park Fisher, who died at Litchfield, Connecticut, last week, was, like his colleague in Yale University, Professor Lounsbury, a striking refutation of the ancient superstition that a learned man must be dull. So delightful was Professor Fisher's personality, so nimble his wit, so genial his spirit, that it was not always easy to remember that he was one of the foremost scholars of his time. As a boy his intellectual powers were so promising that his grandfather undertook his education; he went to Brown University, where his career was stamped by unusual activity and energy. After graduation he studied law; but, becoming deeply interested in the religious aspects of life, he went to the Auburn Theological Seminary, and later pursued special studies in Germany. At the close of his student days he accepted a Profes-

sorship of Divinity in Yale, and became also the pastor of the College. In 1861 he was transferred to the Professorship of Ecclesiastical History in Yale Divinity School. This was the beginning of his career as a writer, and the long list of books which stand to his credit form a remarkable illustration of the fruitfulness of a thinker and a scholar who also had the gift of expression. His "Supernatural Origin of Christianity," his "History of the Reformation," his "Beginnings of Christianity," his "Grounds of Theistic and Christian Belief," his "History of the Christian Church," his "History of Christian Doctrine," to select a few titles, established his reputation and authority as an exact and erudite scholar and as an original thinker. From his professorial chair he was one of the leaders in the movement which has resulted in the reconstruction of the theology of the Congregational churches. His leadership was notable for absence of the destructive spirit, for its irenic temper and its profoundly constructive character. While the battle was raging fiercely between the old and new schools of Congregationalism, brought to a crisis by the theological tests which were imposed on candidates for foreign missions, Dr. Fisher was never in the thick of the fray, and yet was one of the most influential leaders of the liberal movement; conservative in temper, but candid, progressive, and courageous. As a story-teller Dr. Fisher was almost in a class by himself; but he was not a *raconteur* of idle tales. His stories were instinct with character, humor, and keen observation of life. They were not only very amusing, but they were often illuminating. He had a charming wit, never caustic, but often penetrating; a happy faculty of putting a situation in a phrase and condensing an argument in an epigram. To be his companion was a piece of rare good fortune; to be his friend was a rare privilege.



#### CHARLES LEDYARD NORTON

The death of Charles Ledyard Norton, at Sandwich, Massachusetts, in the seventy-second year of his age, recalls the early days of The Outlook when it was the "Christian Union," when the editorial staff included Mr. Beecher, Mr.

Oliver Johnson, Mr. George S. Merriam, Mr. John Habberton, with Mr. Norton as managing editor. Mr. Norton was graduated from Yale University, and was in the Yale Scientific School at the outbreak of the Civil War. He enlisted in 1861, and remained in the service of the Government until 1866, when he retired with the rank of Colonel. In 1868 he became managing editor of the "Christian Union," a position which he filled until 1878 with great efficiency, and in a spirit which made all his associates his warm personal friends. Mr. Norton had the prime quality of a managing editor; he always kept his desk clear. No man could have been more faithful in his devotion to his duties, nor more exact in discharging them, while his geniality and kindness lubricated the work of the office and made association with him a pleasure. Colonel Norton was one of the earliest apostles of the outdoor life, devoted to athletics and to certain kinds of sport, and bringing indoors the freshness and vitality of the man of the habit of vigorous exercise. He was very fond of boys, and one of his chief interests was the writing of stories for boys, with the notes of courage, manliness, and health running through them all. After leaving the staff of the "Christian Union" he contributed to many periodicals, largely in the field of out-of-door life; and his later years were spent in the beautiful village of Sandwich, on Cape Cod. His friends were always glad of a sight of him when he revisited the scenes of his earlier life, for he brought with him an air of sincerity, health, and friendliness. He was one of those who make work easier and life sweeter.

**FURNITURE AT THE  
METROPOLITAN  
MUSEUM**

Mrs. Russell Sage has once more made New York City her debtor. Some months ago she provided funds for the planting of rare rhododendrons in Central Park. She has now planted another memorial there, namely, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Unfortunately, the Museum buildings are located in a playground every foot of which should be devoted to the people's outdoor life. But wherever the Museum is, its collections should be as completely as possible representative of

art in general and of American art in particular. It has just received a notable addition in American domestic art, for Mrs. Sage has bought and given to the Museum the famous collection of American furniture and allied arts gradually brought together with marked intelligence by Mr. H. Eugene Bolles, a Boston lawyer. Visitors to the Hudson-Fulton Exhibition at the Museum may remember the pieces of furniture lent by Mr. Bolles to the American section of the exhibition. To him the Museum authorities turned in their hope to secure a collection of colonial furniture as a permanent feature of the Museum. This was natural when we realize that the collection covers a period extending from the earliest settlements in New England to the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and that its duplication would now be practically impossible owing to its present prohibitive cost. It embraces not only objects made in England, Holland, and France, but also the American-made products of the same periods and styles, such as the oak furniture of the Jacobean age; the walnut and cane productions of the succeeding era, when Spanish influences were felt; those with Dutch characteristics; the transition pieces showing the unification of various styles into the forms later developed by the cabinet-maker Chippendale and others; and finally the work of the period of Sheraton and Hepplewhite. The collection comprises nearly seven hundred items. Among them the Jacobean examples seem most to merit notice; certainly Mr. Bolles has given most attention to them. The collection is specially rich in the cane-covered chairs in vogue at the end of the seventeenth century and in the early spindle chairs, specimens of the wainscot type of chair, in slat-back chairs, and in others that came into use during the first half of the eighteenth century. The representative pieces of the entire eighteenth century, as well as of the first quarter of the nineteenth, are also numerous. Thus from earliest colonial times to the first quarter of the nineteenth century the Metropolitan Museum will now possess a fairly complete collection of American domestic art. For to furniture Mr. Bolles added mirrors, clocks, and utensils in copper,