

he always refused, preferring the quiet life of a farmer. In his religious views he was a Free-Thinker. Mr. Suel Briggs' mother, whose maiden name was Sally Townsend, came West and lived in La Crosse county several years. She died in Minnesota, at the age of eighty-four. She was a member of the Free-Will Baptist Church.

The subject of our sketch was reared on a farm and received his early education in the common-schools. He studied early and late in the chimney corner, has continued his reading all through life, and much of his education has been obtained by actual business experience. In 1842 he took a trip West and was in Janesville, Wisconsin, when that city contained only a half dozen cabins. He returned East, and in the spring of 1856 again came to Wisconsin, and spent the summer in Dodge county, selling goods, and in the fall settled in La Crosse county. After his arrival he taught a district school for two terms, and taught a private school in his own house four terms. In 1859 he entered the law office of Cobb & Messmore, of La Crosse, as a student, and was admitted to the bar in 1860. In 1863 he located on his present farm and has since made this place his home. He has 160 acres of fine farming land, all kept in first-class order. He has a two-story residence, good barn and fences, and every thing about the premises bespeak prosperity.

In connection with his agricultural pursuits, he has transacted considerable legal business, and has always been regarded as a conscientious and safe counselor. In early life he was a Whig, but on the formation of the Republican party, he became, and has continued a strong advocate of its principles. He has filled nearly all the offices in his town, was chairman of the Board of Supervisors for twelve years, was one of the county Commis-

sioners, before the change in the law, and for thirty-four years has served as Justice of the Peace, having served as long if not longer, in that capacity, than any man in the county. He was elected to the Legislature in 1877, and for two years filled that honorable position, with credit to himself and to the satisfaction of his constituents. He is still fond of books and study, and is almost as much of a student as at any time during his life. In 1890 he read the Bible and the works of Josephus both through, comparing them. He has never been a member of any church, nor is he a believer in any of the religious creeds of the present times. His religion is *to do good*, and is an essential part of his every day life. He is of a robust constitution, and is remarkably well preserved, and young-looking for his years, and appears to have many years of active life before him. Free and easy in manners, jovial in disposition, with a kind word for all, he is held in high esteem by a limitless circle of friends.

September 16, 1846, in Erie county, New York, he was united in marriage with Miss Phebe, daughter of Levi and Sallie (Trevitt) Ballou. She was born in Otisco, Onondaga county, New York, January 11, 1827, and was descended from a long line of eminent scholars and thinkers. Her parents were natives of the Green Mountain State, and numbered in their family tree many names not unknown to fame, especially her grandfather, David Ballou, and his brother Rev. Hosea Ballou, the celebrated writer and Universalist divine, and one of the founders of that church.

Mrs. Briggs died at her home in the town of Holland, March 7, 1892, after a long and painful illness, which was the result of injuries sustained when a young woman, and from which she was almost a constant sufferer. She was a woman of culture, sterling integ-

rity of character and strong individuality. She was loved and respected by all who knew her, and her loss was felt by the whole community; while to the bereaved and aged husband, who has enjoyed her faithful and happy companionship for upwards of forty-five years, the loss is irreparable. The only surviving member of Levi Ballou's family, is Miss Sallie Ballou of Buffalo, New York. Leavitt Ballou, the eldest brother of Mrs. Briggs, died in New Amsterdam, Wisconsin, February 19, 1885, leaving a daughter, Lucy D., who afterwards found a pleasant home with Mr. and Mrs. Briggs, and still brightens the home of Mr. Briggs.



HON. SUEL BRIGGS, New Amsterdam, La Crosse county, Wisconsin, is one of the prominent early settlers of this place. He dates his birth in Erie county, near Buffalo, New York, April 7, 1821. His father, Ephraim A. Briggs, was born in the town of Orange, Massachusetts, a son of Captain Samuel Briggs, a sea captain and a man of prominence in his native village, where he owned a mill and was known far and wide. He was drowned while removing logs from the the mill pond on the stream near his mill. Suel Briggs was the seventh-born in a family of seven sons and four daughters. His father was among the pioneers of Erie county, New York, and on what was then the frontier of civilization he developed a fine farm and reared his large family of children. He passed all his life in agricultural pursuits, and died at the ripe old age of seventy-eight years. He was strong and active, and walked twelve miles over a rough country the day before he died. In politics he was a Whig. Although frequently urged to accept office,