NOTES AND COMMENTS.

America there are 250,000 pupils public secondary schools, and 200,- in private schools of the second- grade.

intense prejudice exists against introduction of electricity into key. The only application of tricity in that country is the tel- ph. Large sums have been of- d the government for electric ting and telephone privileges, but have been refused.

APTAIN J. M. TODD, of Decatur, who is now eighty-three years is one of the few survivors of the -bellum steamboat men of the nessee River. Between 1832 and 5 he made thirty-two trips from atur to New Orleans, in charge of loaded with cotton. It required weeks to make the trip. The re- trip was a tedious one, as the tain and the crew, which consis- generally of eight or ten men, ed most of the way.

PROPOS of the Canadian complaint whalers owned in the United es are trespassing in Hudson Bay, whaling barks from New Bedford e reported last year in Hudson it bound for Hudson Bay, and a t many were reported from vari- parts of the North Atlantic. y of these latter were in pursuit perm whales. The sailing whalers more and more confined to the ntic and its tributary bays now steam whalers are so successful he North Pacific and the Artic.

PORTS to the English stockhold- of the Buenos Ayres Western lway claim that there is every ap- rance (of improvement in economic condition of the entine Republic. Political irs had become more settled, y rains had fallen, sheep were well, the lambing season had a very good one, and the clip of l would be in excess of that of year. Moreover, agriculture extending in the districts served he line and the harvest promised e larger than that of 1893.

he International Meteorological ference, recently held in Sweden, ded that the time is not yet ripe an international weather Bureau over the Continent of Europe, as Signal Service does the United es. Efforts are being made to re special dispatch for weather grams, and it was decided to pub- in a report a summary of the s adopted in the different coun- to communicate the results of ther observations for the benefit rmers. It is probable that at next conference in Paris in 1896 o will be taken to carry out the

ir pine cones of the California ts are in great demand in Europe ong the landowners who wish to e plantations of the superb trees he Sierras. One naturalist has ding orders from Kew Gardens, don, from the Emperor of Ger- y, from the Egyptian govern- t, and even from Cape Colony. market price of the cones is $2 a nd, which cannot be called exorb- t when the difficulty of obtaining n is considered. The most pic- sque figure among the collectors he seeds is G. W. Dunn, who is eighty-one years old, and has ed fifty years of his life out of s on the Pacific Coast.

is not generally supposed that have a peculiar commercial im- tance in certain lines of trade. ine insurance in some parts of country does not cover damage to the cargo by the depredation s, but if the owner of the cargo damaged can prove that the was not furnished with a cat he recover compensation from the l's owner. Then, again, a ship is found under certain circum- ces without a living creature on rd is considered a derelict, and ac- ing to certain conditions is for- d. It has not infrequently oc- red, after all the crew have been or the ship otherwise abandoned, a live canary, domestic fowl, but frequently a cat, being found on d, has saved the vessel from condemned as derelict. Conse- ly ship owners, considering the proverbial tenacity of life, as its presence being a bar to of damage by rats, always are not to send a ship to sea out having a cat on board.

WESTERN man is responsible for ory that fish have contributed part to the growing scarcity of fowl. Some years ago German were planted in the streams intersect some of the marshes rthwest, famous as the haunts ld ducks. According to the an man an examination of the ths of the carps has revealed t that they were gorged with ots and seeds of the wild rice, was the food that formerly ed the marshes so attractive to The disappearance of the rice s investigation of the causes, e result stated. The fact that ps fed upon the roots of the e well as the seeds, precludes of any renewal of the As a foil to this pessimistic k, there has rarely been a season when aquatic plants have shown such abundant growth on many of the smaller bays of Long Island, as this one. The duck shooting on these waters is now most excellent, and promises to become better with each succeeding week.

AN extraordinary statement was recently made in the Public Ledger of Philadelphia to the effect that the scarcity of ruffled grouse in Pennsylvania may be attributed to the fact that the eggs of that bird are largely collected for use in the manufacture of a certain drug. One man with the aid of six boys and several bird dogs, it is asserted, secured as many as 10,000 eggs in one section of the State. This is hardly credible, and is quoted merely to call attention to the fact that in almost all the States of the Union a very large business is conducted by taxidermists in the sale of the eggs of all wild birds to collectors, who make up a very large constituency. One taxidermist has very modestly acknowledged that in a single season—that of last year—he disposed of 20,000 eggs of wild birds to amateurs. Under these conditions it is surprising that a single one of the feathered species survives. As a matter of fact as regards song birds, none is seen or heard now except immediately about habitations or in public parks. Two or three years ago those interested in the preservation of bird life were gratified by the passage of the New Brunswick, Canada, Legislature forbidding the taking of the eggs of aquatic fowl which nest on the Labrador coast. From a recent Washington despatch it seems that this law is not enforced, inasmuch as it was stated the albumen used in the manufacture of artificial eggs was mainly procured from those of the aquatic fowl which nest on the northern Canadian coasts.

THE "Gee-Hing Society," to which "The Atlanta Constitution" calls attention as having a great following in Chicago and existing for the purpose of overthowing the present Emperor of China and restoring the old dynasty, is known in China as the Ghee-Hin. Its central government is composed of the presiding officers of the five Grand Lodges in China, the leading one being that at Fuh-Kien. This governing body has a peculiar sort of control over millions of Chinese, not only in China but throughout the world. The Fuh-Kien Grand Lodge reported a total membership of its subordinate bodies in 1889 of nearly 69,000, and the average increase from 1877 up to that time was about 5,000 a year. There are hundreds of secret societies in China, but all are not political in their character. Those of the Ghee-Hin order have long been objectionable to the Chinese Government, and efforts have been made to abolish them. Their principles are to repudiate all jurisdiction, carry on civil war and murder, defend their members against the police and hide each other's crimes, to assist members in making their escape from justice, and to do other evil things. In the United States the members have been charged with inflicting great injury on those who do not belong to their societies. Owing to their abuses, the riotings and murders committed by them in the Straits Settlements, they have for many years been forbidden to assemble there under the laws which prevails against unregistered associations. There are many other Chinese societies organized for useful purposes.

An Odd Watering Trough.

The noise made by an Indian woman pounding corn in a rock mortar enabled the brave old fighter, Colonel Benjamin Church, to secure the person of Annawan, the right hand man of King Philip, in 1676. There is hardly a town included in the Nipmuc (Mass.) country but has one or more of these crude mills of the red men. Grafton or Haranamisco holds an immense one on the borders of Kitville, not far from the last settlement of that tribe and near the battlefield of Keith Hill, where Philip's men came to grief. There were certain places resorted to by the Indians for growing their corn, and as far as my knowledge extends they were usually on the hillsides.

Some of the small mortars have no doubt been removed from their original places, but others remain where they were used, fixed as the enduring hills. The soapstone vessels used by the Nipmucs are of various sizes and have been numerously found in Millbury and Sutton. Along the streams, in clefts of rocks and on the highest points of land, they have been unearthed, many broken and others in perfect condition. I have in mind one which lies in the western part of Millbury, weighing perhaps seventy-five pounds and within fifty rods of Ramshorn Stream. All that is known of its history is that the occupants of the farm had for generations used it as a watering trough for hens.—[New York Advertiser.

THE utter barbarity of Chinese methods of warfare could not be more clearly signified than in the language of the chief magistrate of Tien Tsin to members of the Red Cross Society who wished to go to the army: "We do not want to save any wounded Chinese," he said.

WHERE LIFE IS CHEAP.

Proxy Plan of Executing Criminals in China.

Three Chinamen were recently arrested in New York and ordered to be deported. It seems that they deserted from the Chinese army and came to this country, where they have succeeded in accumulating a considerable sum of money.

Now, the penalty for desertion in China is death, but these three prisoners are not at all alarmed. They claim that under the laws of China a man of means is allowed to hire somebody to be executed in his place.

This proxy plan of executing a criminal is worked in this way: When a well-to-do man is condemned to death he hunts up a poor coolie and makes a bargain with him. The substitute is allowed his liberty until the day of execution, and his employer has him watched so that he cannot escape, for if the coolie should not turn up at the appointed time the principal would have to suffer the penalty.

Of course this system is very convenient for rich criminals, and the poverty-stricken wretches who sell their lives seem to be perfectly satisfied. These people have no sense of the value of human life, and a poor man thinks that he has made a good trade when he binds himself to die for another man, and receives enough cash in hand to enable him to enjoy a frolic for a few weeks. A coolie who has sold himself in this manner buys fine clothes and plunges into all the dissipations that he is able to pay for. On the day of his execution he presents himself with a smiling face and leaps into eternity, congratulating himself upon having tasted all the sweets of good fortune and happiness at the close of his career.

If the Chinese with their utter disregard of death ever become a well disciplined and warlike nation they will make splendid soldiers. All that handicaps them now is their backward civilization.—[Atlanta Constitution.

Facts About Babies.

It isn't always the biggest baby that is the strongest nor finest, for firmness of flesh and bone with a steady if slow increase in weight and bulk is better than any great stature or weight. Of course children are built on different models and one cannot say that a baby should weigh just so much at such and such a time, but some one has gone to the trouble of getting some averages with which mothers may console themselves when they have nothing else to think of. At birth a boy should weigh some 6½ to 7 pounds, a girl somewhat less, or about 6 to 6½ pounds. Twins are always of lower average weight and size than single children, although the two together weigh more than any single baby. In height a boy should measure at birth on an average 18 to 19 inches; a girl some half an inch less—the range of health lying between 16 and 22 inches. The child grows with rapidity during the first year, faster than during any other period of the same length, so that it gains about 8 inches, measuring when twelve months old about 27 inches, its weight being about 19 pounds.

During the second year it gains only 4 inches on an average, and 5 pounds in weight, reaching a stature of 31 inches and a weight of 24 pounds. But these figures represent only the average, the extreme ranging between wide limits. A fact that is seldom taken into consideration with children, with regard to their weight and plumpness, is that about their second year when they are learning to walk, they become thinner, not because they deteriorate in health, but through the increased exercise using up more of the tissues forming the muscles of the body.—[Milwaukee Journal.

A Case of Telepathy.

A singular case of telepathy, or thought transferrence, or whatever one might call it, is related by a doctor of Penobscot County, Maine. Not long ago he was visiting a patient at a considerable distance from home, and while returning in the dark his horse stumbled and fell. Fortunately he was not thrown out of his carriage, though he had a narrow escape, and the only damage done was the breaking of one thill. He was able to patch it up well enough to get on and went home. When he reached his house he was surprised by his wife opening the door for him and saying: "You did meet with an accident, didn't you?" He asked how she knew anything of it, and she said that she had gone to bed and was asleep, when she was suddenly roused by finding herself in a sitting position, and filled with a sense that he was in some dangerous predicament. It had impressed her so that she got up to await his return. On inquiry he found that she had awakened at the identical moment when the accident had happened to him.—[New Orleans Picayune.

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Rings and Their Symbolisms.

When young Russian girls are anxious to know if they will be married (and what young girl is not anxious to know that?) several of them assemble, each wearing a ring. A large basket of corn is brought in, and each girl drops her ring in carefully, stirring up the corn the while. Then a hungry hen is introduced and whichever maiden's ring is first discovered, will be the first one married.

In the marshes of the North Sea coast it was formerly customary in Germany for the bridegroom to give the bride on the day of betrothal, instead of a ring, a valuable coin, called "Echle," or genuine, as a pledge that the compact between them was binding. This is also a remnant of the time when wives were acquired by right of purchase, and the custom is still prevalent in some isolated places.

Among un-Christianized nations betrothal-rings are unknown. For example, a Mohammedan, instead of giving his bride a ring, bestows on her a "Maschkass," or square amulet of pure gold, which the girl hangs around her neck. In India a small amulet is worn by a woman as a badge of marriage. It generally consists of many colored beads, and is about as large round as a bracelet, but there must be some gold in it, however little. An amulet-ring of the fifteenth century, discovered some eighty years ago in England, was supposed to guarantee its wearer against all evil. In the middle is the figure of Christ, with the five holy wounds, from which ooze drops of blood. The surrounding inscriptions are: "The well of everlasting life," "The well of pity," "The well of mercy," "The well of comfort," "The well of grace."

Among the Anglo-Saxons the ring was worn only by the bride or wife, on whose right hand it was placed at the betrothal, being transferred to the left hand at the marriage ceremony. The ring adorned with death's heads, is a masterpiece of the Italian goldsmith's art in the sixteenth century.—[Home and Country. U49

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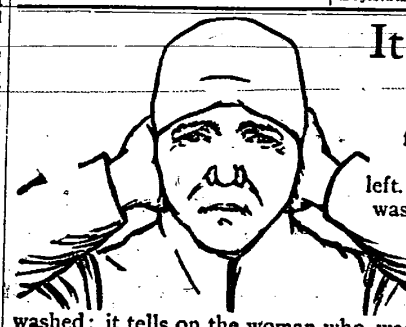

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