

NEWS NOTES.

We do not necessarily endorse the opinions of our correspondents in the following notes.

STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERY FOR TEMPLE.

The arts of Siam, on which country popular attention seems again about to be focused, are not of very serious importance. A good deal of the temple and palace architecture is of a decorative and ornamental character, and some of the methods of decorating are in vogue only as fancy-saving contrivances for the Siamese will never work if his wife can help it. For instance, much that looks like lacquer and intricate carving is really lead, cast and painted, and a gorgeous mass of colour is sometimes obtained by cheap and superficial means. One curious example may be mentioned. Many years ago an enterprising merchant imported a shipment of gaily decorated pottery from Siam, and there it is to this day. Practically all the pottery of Siam is now made in China to Siamese patterns.

NORTHERMBERLAND WOLF HUNT.

Twenty-nine sheep have fallen victims during the past week to the wolf which broke away from a collection of wild animals at Shotley Bridge, near Newcastle. The obvious reason assigned for the wolf's breaking away is that it had been kept in a cage for a long while it simply cornered the sheep, until some genius thought to enclose a temple with it. It was carefully broken up into small pieces, which were then stuck together in cement on the outside walls—and there it is to this day. Practically all the pottery of Siam is now made in China to Siamese patterns.

SPREAD OF WIRELESS MESSAGES.

Wireless telegraphy is beginning to take its place in accurate science and to lend it its speed. In measuring differences of longitude the professor was able to have a signal which he observed at the same instant, or nearly so, from two places far apart from one another, and ordinary telegraphy has hitherto been used satisfactorily for this purpose, if there is a wire connecting the stations. The difference of longitude is to be determined. In default of such connection, Professor Albert, of the Prussian Geodetic Institute, has been making some experiments with the wireless telegraph. He has been able to determine the time of transmission of the signal which is a by-product and a necessary one of longitude determination. He found some differences with different dispositions of the apparatus, but a usual one of a second to traverse 66 kilometers (41 miles); at the rate, in other words, of more than 5,000 miles per second.

A NOVEL FLEET.

A very novel and interesting fleet will be mobilized in the Queen's Court Lake at the coming Naval, Shipping, and Fisheries Exhibition, Earl's Court, next summer. It will consist of a specimen of every minor vessel that rides on the water. Equatorial kayaks, Indian dug-outs, and a Malay canoe, Malaya praus, catamarans, gondolas, Irish and Welsh coracles, &c., will all be represented. The directorate of the London Exhibitions Company are especially desirous of securing loans of the last two classes. The fleet will be a realistic model of the world that do not exceed 30 ft. in length. All transit charges to and from will be paid, and every care exercised whilst the exhibits are in the company's custody. As a novelty, the motor article will be displayed, models are not desired.

SECRET AGENTS IN LONDON.

Judgment has just been given by the Council of State in an action brought against the French Government by one of its secret agents in London to recover £100 alleged due for salary in lieu of notice. The plaintiff claimed that he was engaged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to act as its "private correspondent" in London at a remuneration of £20 per month. It was contended that any payments made to him were in the nature of gifts, that he was not a salaried functionary, and therefore had no right to compensation when his services were dispensed with. The Council of State found that the plaintiff had failed to establish any claim on the public funds. The suit was accordingly dismissed.

MEMORABLE SIX-DAY RACE.

Madison-square Garden, New York, last Saturday night saw Eddie Root and Oliver Dorton, the American team, versus the English pair, Arthur Vondersteyn and Arthur Vondersteyn, in a memorable six-day bicycle race on record. So close had the finish been between the teams that the end of the 142nd hour saw one of them over with 2,381 miles and six laps to spare. It was necessary for them to race an extra mile to settle the question of first prize, and it was this last mile that created excitement far above any bars of the whole six days. The record of Miller and Waller, made in 1899, but it beats the record of last year by 68 miles 3 laps. Altogether seven teams finished.

STAGGERING FIGURES.

Some remarkable figures regarding the growth of the value of our trade during nearly half a century were given on Saturday night at a dinner to Mr. Robert Henderson, Secretary to His Majesty's Customs, at the Hotel Cecil, London. Mr. T. J. Fistar, C.B.E., C.M.G., who presided, remarked that during the course of 1,000 years the Customs had paid to the country £200,000,000. Mr. Henderson said when he entered the service nearly 43 years ago the Customs revenue, notwithstanding a duty of 1s. 5d. per pound on tea and 18s. per cwt. on sugar, amounted to about £24,000,000, as compared with some £28,000,000 at the present time, whilst the value of the imports and exports then reached but £391,000,000, as against nearly £1,000,000,000 to-day.

A BORDER CALL.

Armstrong to the rescue! Everyone who hears that ancient border name must have been thrilled by the heroism of the six Armstrongs who, with Joseph Bell, put out in a noble to succour a ship in distress off Newlyn on Friday morning, but who all save one Armstrong perished in the gallant attempt. The *Globe*, which is owned by Sir George Armstrong, B. Bart., and edited by his son, urges the happy suggestion that the six Armstrongs, in the *Empire*, should contribute to a special fund for the relief of their heroic namesakes' widows and orphans.

CHRISTMAS DINNER IN PRISON.

No day passes without the publication of some new intelligence with regard to the systematic abuse of the prisons, which are rapidly growing in importance as centres of indoor relief without question. In one of the *Church Quarterly* "Inmate" houses there is a man who has spent the last twelve Christmases in goal. He applied to the society for help, and said that if they could do nothing for him "he would have to go to goal again." He had been there for twelve years, and it is hoped that, for the first time in thirteen years, he will eat his Christmas dinner outside a prison.

"STOP THE WAR" AT ST. PETERSBURG.

The street riots at St. Petersburg on Sunday were about "Stop the War" and "Down the autocracy!" and "Stop the war!" are even a more serious sign of the times than the resignations of the Minister of Justice, M. Moraviev, and the Governor of Moscow, the Grand Duke Sergius. The fact that the Tsar has postponed his departure from the capital on a tour of military inspection in the provinces; his ancestor, Paul I., forbade his scientific men to use the word "revolution" in reference to the heavenly bodies, but the subjects of Nicholas II. are now beginning to practice the thing without using the word.

PIED PIPER WANTED.

From the Charcoates come the intelligence that certain of their districts are being infested with a veritable plague of rats, which is doing a vast amount of damage. The invasion began in a great number of houses, and has assumed very formidable proportions. It was started by rats which left the ships in the ports, and marched in single file into the interior of the country, and at the present moment their number is estimated at upwards of one million. The rats are doing a vast amount of damage, and have assumed very formidable proportions. It was started by rats which left the ships in the ports, and marched in single file into the interior of the country, and at the present moment their number is estimated at upwards of one million. The rats are doing a vast amount of damage, and have assumed very formidable proportions.

THE ZOO MONKEY-HOUSE.

No animals are more difficult to keep alive in this country than the monkeys of South America, which perhaps the marmosets are the best known. For such delicate creatures a special cage has now been set up in the London Zoo monkey-house. It is a small cage, but of wood and fitted with glass, and is so arranged as to have a special regard to proper ventilation. Such a cage would seem to be proof against the penetrating draughts which have no difficulty in finding their way into the hollows of the animals. No animals are more curious than the monkeys of tropical America—the spider monkeys, the squirrel monkeys, the howling monkeys, the Saki, and the Leagot, to say nothing of the howling monkey. The London Zoo monkey-house is a small cage, but of wood and fitted with glass, and is so arranged as to have a special regard to proper ventilation. Such a cage would seem to be proof against the penetrating draughts which have no difficulty in finding their way into the hollows of the animals.

THAMES "SALMONS."

Two cases of alleged Thames salmon have just been brought to the attention of the Fish Commission. One of the salmon was about 10 lb. in weight, and the other was about 15 lb. in weight. The salmon were caught in the Thames, and were found to be of a very fine quality. The Fish Commission are now investigating the matter, and it is hoped that the Thames salmon will be found to be of a very fine quality.

"ENGLISH SORT OF CHRISTIANS."

Amusing extracts from letters sent by Russian soldiers to their relatives from the Far East are published in Paris. One is particularly comical. A soldier writes: "We hear every day that the English ships are being sunk by the Russian fleet. 'Should you like to fight the English on land?' he asked, and naturally we all declared that this would be a fine move. It seems that the King of England has decided to fight the English on land, and that our men are about to start to help the Russian fleet. I asked the sergeant if the English were Christians, and he answered that they are a sort of Christians, who worship a god named Jeloudok, signifying stomach. In our army there are men who fought against the English in the Crimean War. Borovsky, an old fellow who served in the Crimean War, told me that he had seen the English in the Crimea, and that they were a sort of Christians, who worship a god named Jeloudok, signifying stomach.

MISJUDGED QUEEN DRAGA.

It is said that just before she was murdered Mrs. Draga had been reading a book of St. Augustine's "De la Morale." One of the assassins, not well acquainted with French literature, picked up the volume, and said to a comrade, "Just the sort of thing a beautiful woman would read." The other worthy had some literary taste, and, examining the book, was very much struck by the notes in the Queen's hand on the margin of many a page. According to a German paper, he wrote to a friend this interesting confession: "What moved me most deeply was not my share of that horrible drama, nor the sight of the mutilated corpse, nor the ferocity of that bloody night, but the revelation in this little book of a certain nobility in the soul of this ambitious Queen, whom hatred and fanaticism had caused me to misjudge."

OVER-EATING AND ENERGY.

Of late years a considerable amount of attention has been paid to the food of the people, and much degeneracy and ill-health have been ascribed to malnutrition due to insufficient or unwholesome nourishment. It is remarkable, on the other hand, that all the most recent and most accurate scientific investigation of this subject tends to show that a large proportion of those classes of society, who are supposed to do so, eat too much, and that the excess of food leads to a direct loss of energy. Dr. Atwater, of Middletown, Connecticut, and Professor Christensen, of Yale University, pursuing independent lines, and each arriving at practically the same result: that a portion of the energy of the system is frequently, and in many persons habitually, absorbed and wasted in the task of dealing with excess of food. When the stomach is overburdened, the system is properly adjusted to natural requirements the amount of work put out, Professor Christensen finds, "is proportionally increased, in some cases by as much as 60 to 70 per cent." It will hardly be a surprise to those who have seriously thought out the matter that too much food means, not gain of energy, or that it often means not health, but disease.

DRIVEN INSANE BY A GIPSY.

An inquest at Finchfield on the wife of a labourer, who hanged herself two days after being discharged from the county asylum, the husband stated that a gipsy woman called at his cottage in the previous year's harvest time, and told his wife that she could cure her "troubles" if he received enough money. His wife gave the gipsy £8 and some clothing, and afterwards worried about it so much that she had to be taken to the asylum.

TWELVE MONTHS FOR A KISS.

Enraged because his "young lady" resented an attempt to kiss her, Mathew Fleming, a Wandsworth butcher, made a scene outside her house, and when a constable was called stabbed him in the back with a knife. He was sentenced to 12 months' hard labour.

SUSPENSION BRIDGE SNAPS.

By the collapse of a suspension bridge, which had long been condemned for its rottenness, twenty school children were drowned in the River Elk at Charleston, West Virginia. The children were on their way to a school treat. There were six waggons loaded with them. While all the waggons were on the bridge one of the suspension cables snapped, and two others were dragged from their moorings. The bridge collapsed bodily, and turned turtle as it fell into the river—a fall of about fifty feet. The waggons were precipitated into the water, which was covered with floating blocks of ice. The screams of the children were heartrending, and all the people in the neighbourhood came running to help in the work of rescue. Boats were got out, and such of the children as were floating, or had managed to climb on the ice blocks, were saved. Two little girls, picked up by a boat, told a vivid story of the accident. They were laughing and singing, when they heard a sharp crack like the noise of a gun. The bridge swung up, and then turned completely over on its side, and when they came up they were beside a sheet of ice, which crumbled as they touched it, but as the second attempt gave them a firm hold, and they climbed on the ice, and were there shivering with cold. When the body was dragged from the ice, it was found to be a child. A doublet was disposed of for a few pence by a boy.

TRAPPED ABOUT LONDON FOR A WEEK.

Early on Thursday morning a police-constable saw a body floating in the Serpentine. It proved to be that of Lieutenant Alexander J. H. Murray-Thomson, of the Royal Garrison Artillery. The tragic story of the young man's death was unfolded in the *Westminster Courier's* Court, London. Only 21 years of age, he had the prospect of a brilliant career. Recently he gave way to drink, and trouble arose in connection with his professional duties. On Wednesday week, without leave, he left Wandsworth, where he was stationed, and was not seen again. His commanding officer, anxious to go to his mother, the wretched young man, who had no means of providing himself with food or shelter, was trapped about London for a week, until a fish-dealer happened to see his troubles in the Serpentine. When the young officer suffered during that period it is impossible to realize. In addition to great mental distress, he endured the agonies of hunger and cold. When his body was dragged from the Serpentine, a trace of food was found in it, and a farthing of money was in his pocket. A misunderstanding was mistaking. It had doubtless been disposed of for a few pence by a boy.

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While lying on a bed of sickness in Swansea Hospital, Job Lawrence, a young negro, of Jamaica, was confirmed by Bishop Owen, of St. David's. Lawrence, who is a seaman, developed phthisis some weeks ago, and during the time he has been in hospital he has paid great attention to religious duties. He has repeatedly expressed a desire to be fully admitted into the Church his case was mentioned to the Bishop, who was present conducting a series of confirmation services in Swansea and district. As a result the Bishop visited the hospital.

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In connection with the distress in Ireland, a letter has been addressed to the chairman of the board of guardians in the western districts by Sir Anthony Macdonnell, the Under-Secretary, stating that where the distress is any poor or highly-landed, the Government will be prepared to make a grant from public funds. The Government had reason to hope that in the majority of unions the grant of loans, repayable in two instalments, would be sufficient to meet the exceptional calls for relief, and the above offer has been made in view of the chronic poverty in some districts and the failure of the potato crop.

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EPITOME OF NEWS.

The Cambridge University Cobden Prize has been awarded to Maunoh Lal, B.A., of St. John's College. James Webber, a Dover seaman, was landed at Yarmouth on Monday with his right arm torn away, the result of an accident with a steel hammer. Griffith Davies, of Garnetdown, Bethesda, was crushed to death by his sweetheart's good-night in Duke's-avenue. Mrs. Webb, of St. John's, was killed by a young man, and fell down from heart failure. Griffith Davies, of Garnetdown, Bethesda, was crushed to death by his sweetheart's good-night in Duke's-avenue. Mrs. Webb, of St. John's, was killed by a young man, and fell down from heart failure.

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It is asserted by a Mrs. Soar that owing to a minor dispute between her and the late Mrs. Soar, she buried in a wrong grave at Lambrook Cemetery, near Aylesford, and she has an application to the urban district council that town that the bodies of the two women should be exchanged and reburied in their proper graves.

PAUPERS RACING "KLUTTERS."

The doctor who attended Henry Sturgees, the sporting paragon of Eton Workhouse, stated at the inquest that Sturgees told him that instead of spending money he received on beer and tobacco like other inmates, he saved it up to have a "dinner" on racoehores. His winnings for the season only came to 17s. 10s.

TEN SUBMARINES ORDERED.

The Admiralty has placed orders with Messrs. Vickers, Sons, and Maxim, of Barrow, for 10 additional submarines of the B1 type. The first of the B1 in the Irish Sea recently, which showed that boats of this type could remain under water for a longer period, and with greater comfort, than the A class. The B1 class will be 150 feet long, with a depth of 60 feet, and will embody all the improvements which experiments with the existing flotilla have suggested to Captain Bacon and other Admiralty officials.

EAST-END GIFT FOR THE POPE.

On Friday the Pope granted a private audience to the Earl of Bedford, who presented to him a copy of the "Paradise of Palladis" in Syriac and English, translated by Dr. E. A. Wallis Budge, of the British Museum, together with an offering from the poor children of the Commercial-district of East London. The Pope thanked Father Vaughan in the warmest manner, and handed him a fine medal for Lady Mear.

ARMED BURGLAR WOUNDED.

Frederick Bayliss, the armed burglar who had a desperate struggle on Tuesday with Mr. Anber, a jeweller, of Burton-on-Trent, cut a sorry figure in the dock. His head was swathed in bandages, and he showed signs of great weakness. When Mr. Anber described how he used a knife on the prisoner until the blood poured out Bayliss made as if he would jump out of the dock at where the burglar was sent to the prison, but after his complaint was removed to Stoke-on-Trent, where he is wanted for housebreaking.

CONVERTED