Mr. C. Meriwether, of South Carolina, graduate student of John Hopkins University, has entered the educational service of the Japanese Government as instructor of the English language and literature in the second higher middle school of Japan at Sendal, in the northern part of the main island. The appointment was made through the Japanese Minister in Washington and the engagement lasts for three years.

The *Atlanta Constitution* says: "Candor compels the sorrowful admission that Georgia leads the procession of illiterates. In 1880 Georgia returned a greater number of persons 'ten years old and upward' as 'unable to write' than any State in the Union. In a total population, 'ten years old and upward,' of 1,043,840, there were whites 128,934, and colored 391,482, total 520,416, who could not sign their names. Alabama shows a total of 433,447 'unable to write'—whites, 111,767; colored, 321,680. In white illiteracy Tennessee leads with 216,227, with Kentucky close by with 214,497."

The longest examination of a witness on record, so far as known, has at last been concluded at Newark, and the case of the State against the Morris and Essex Railroad Company for back taxes amounting to a million dollars or thereabouts, has been placed in condition for argument. Richard F. Stevens, the expert who examined the railroad company's books, is the witness who has been so long on the stand. He began giving his testimony two years ago and has been on the stand for hours each week ever since. The testimony, when printed, will fill three volumes nearly as big as the "Revision of New Jersey."

The New York *Tribune* says: "There is a queer story told of E. L. Harper, the wrecker of the Fidelity Bank of Cincinnati. It is to the effect that he has been doing a profitable iron business to the tune of $350,000 a year while serving his sentence in the Ohio penitentiary. Through the efforts of his faithful wife, a joint stock company was formed, and, presumably through the collusion of some of the prison officials, Harper was allowed to direct the movements of this company by telegraph, thus enabling it to make money when other men in the iron business were actually running behind. It is a striking illustration of what a 'smart' man with money can do even when he is dead in the eyes of the law. In the meanwhile the discovery of this little arrangement will be likely to arrest the effort to obtain a pardon for this distinguished criminal."

The New York city Board of Health has introduced into its office, on trial, a machine which, it is claimed, will do automatically and by electricity, with correctness and dispatch, the arduous work of tabulating a vast amount of statistical information, which has hitherto been performed by clerks. If it performs the work properly, it will be a permanent fixture in the statistical department of the board. The device is an exceedingly complex one in its mechanism, but is simple in its operation, and when thoroughly understood by the operator can be worked with great speed. It is certainly a most ingenuous contrivance, and was designed by its inventor with a special view to its introduction at Washington for use in the compilation of the exhaustive statistics of the eleventh census. By only a slight change it has been adapted to the facts and figures which go to make up the records of the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the New York Health Department.

"It's only about a hundred years since checks and bills of exchange were first used in the transaction of business," said John Jay Knox, formerly Controller of the Currency, now President of one of the biggest New York banks, to a *Star* man. "The coin of the realm doesn't play a very important part in the financial operations of the country," he continued. The total coinage of the Government since its foundation has amounted to $1,890,000,000. This sum vast as it may seem, would not last but six days if paid out by the banks of the country in their daily transactions. The coinage of all the mints of the land for the past year would not make the payments of the banks for an hour and forty-five minutes on any average day's business. The total coinage of the United States is estimated at $800,000,000, but it would not last three days if used by the banks in making their payments. Coin, then, plays but a small part in the daily commercial life of the nation. It is the basis, but not the vehicle, with which our business is moved."

The United States is the wealthiest nation in the world, estimated per capita. There is $730 of wealth per capita in the United States, and $625 per capita in France. According to the area, France is of course much wealthier than the United States.

THE COW TREE.

VEGETABLE JUICE THAT CLOSELY RESEMBLES MILK.

It is Wholesome and is Used as an Article of Food in Some Places—Where the Cow Trees Grow.

Several natural orders of the vegetable kingdom include plants that are characterized by the secretion of a fluid closely resembling milk in appearance and consistency, and a familiar example of these is to be seen in our common milkweed, which is well known to everybody. In some plants this milky fluid is of the most venomous nature; in others, it possesses active medicinal virtue; in others, it yields a product (such as India rubber and gutta percha) of the highest importance to the arts and industries; and, in others still, it proves of value as a human aliment. Since the same general properties characterize the plants of each natural family, it seems an anomaly that, in the same order, we should find the species of one genus producing a lactescent fluid of a highly poisonous nature, and those of another yielding one that is entirely innocuous. Yet such is often the case, and we have a striking example of it in the bread fruit order, which on the one hand, includes the celebrated upas tree of Java, which, when pierced, exudes a milky juice containing an acrid virulent poison (antiarin), the smallest quantity of which will kill the largest animal, and, on the other, the famous Brosimum utili of South America, which yields a copious supply of rich, wholesome milk, of as good a quality as that from the cow.

There are several other instances in the vegetable kingdom of such an association, in the same natural order, of plants that produce a noxious lactescent juice with others which yield a wholesome one adapted for man's use, and which may, therefore, be designated as "vegetable cows." To speak only of the latter class, the most remarkable example in the species of Brosimum just mentioned, which was discovered and made known by the celebrated traveler Humboldt. This tree forms extensive forests on the mountains near the town of Coriaco, and elsewhere along the seacoast of Venezuela—growing to upward of 100 feet in height, with a trunk six or eight feet in diameter, and branchless for the first sixty or seventy feet of its height. It is popularly known as the cow tree, Palo de Vaca, or Arbol de Leche. Its milk, which is obtained by making incisions in the trunk, so closely resembles the milk of the cow, both in appearance and quality, that it is commonly used as an article of food by the inhabitants of the places where the tree is abundant. Unlike many other vegetable milks, it is perfectly wholesome and very nourishing, possessing an agreeable taste, like that of sweet cream, and a pleasant balsamic odor, its only unpleasant quality being a slight amount of stickiness. The chemical anlaysis of this milk has shown it to possess a composition closely resembling some animal substances, and like animal milk, it quickly forms a yellow, cheesy scum upon its surface, and, after a few days' exposure to the atmosphere, turns sour and purifies. It contains upward of thirty per cent. of a resinous substance called galactin by chemists. Speaking of this tree, Humboldt says: "They (the natives) profess to recognize, from the color and thickness of the foliage, the trunks that yield the most juice, as the herdsman distinguishes from external signs of a good milch cow. Amidst the great number of curious phenomena that I have observed in the course of my travels, I confess there are few that have made so powerful an impression on me as the aspect of the cow tree. A few drops of vegetable juice recall to our minds all the powerfulness and fecundity of nature. On the barren flank of a rock grows a tree with coriaceous and dry leaves. Its large woody roots can scarcely penetrate into the stone. For several months in the year, not a single shower moistens its foliage. Its branches appear dead and dried, but when the trunk is pierced there flows from it a sweet and nourishing milk. It is at the rising of the sun that this vegetable fountain is most abundant. The natives are then seen hastening from all quarters, furnished with large bowls to receive the milk, which grows yellow and thickens at the surface. Some empty the bowls under the tree itself, others carry the juice home to their children."

In the Dogbane order, the Apocynachæ, which includes plants that are mostly of a venomous nature and possess an exceedingly acrid and drastic juice, we have a second example of a tree that secretes a wholesome milk-like fluid. This is the cow-tree of Demerara, or hya-hya of the natives. This tree grows in abundance in the forests of British Guiana, and its bark, when tapped, yields a copious supply of thick, sweet milk, resembling that of the cow in appearance, but rather sticky from the presence of caoutchouc. This milk mixes freely with water, is of a pleasant flavor, and the natives employ it as a refreshing beverage.

Two "cow-trees" are employed in the order Sapotaceæ, which embraces numerous plants valuable for their suculent fruits, such as the marmalade, star apple, etc. One of these is called by the natives massarandaba or aprain, and which Professor Orton, in the "Andes and the Amazons," describes as one of the noblest trees of the forests of Para. It stands from 180 to 200 feet in height, is 20 feet in circumference, and is crowned with a vast dome of foliage. The milk yielded by the bark has the consistency of cream, and is used for tea, coffee and custards. It hardens by exposure, so as to resemble gutta percha, which, indeed, is the product of a Malaisian tree belonging to the same natural order. The other tree is the bully tree of English, French, and Dutch Guiana. The milk of this species is sometimes employed with tea or coffee, instead of cow's milk, but has the disadvantage of hardening very rapidly upon exposure to air.

The natural order Asclepiadaceæ consists of plants that are almost always milky, and the milk is usually acrid and bitter, and always to be suspected, yet one of the plants of the family, Gymnema lactiferum, the cow plant of Ceylon, called by the natives kiriaghuna, yields a milk which the Cingalese make use of as food.

Another example of a "cow tree" belonging to a dangerous natural order, the Euphorbiaceæ, which embraces plants having acrid and purgative juices, is the Euphorbia balsamifera, or Tabayba dolce, of the Canaries. Notwithstanding the fact that the plants of this genus have juices that possess very active medicinal qualities, and are in some cases so venomous that they are used as arrow poisons, the juice of the species under consideration is innocuous, and according to Leopold von Buch, is similar to sweet milk, and is eaten as a delicacy after being thickened into a jelly.

Still another "cow tree" is found which embraces plants that secrete an acrid, purgative, yellow gum resin, such as gamboge. This tree is a native of Venezuela, where it is known as Palo de Vaca. It has a thick bark, covered with rough tubercles, and its internal tissue becomes red when exposed to the light. In extracting the milk, the inhabitants make incisions through the bark till the wood is reached. These cuts are said to be made only before full moon, it being imagined that the milk flows more freely then than at any other time. One tree will yield a quart in an hour. The milk is freely used by all, especially the children, although it has a somewhat astringent taste.

In the order Moraceæ, which includes the mulberry and fig, there are several species of ficus that are known as cow trees, and the milky fluid of which is bland and used as a beverage, although in most of the species of the genus the juice is exceedingly acrid.—*Brooklyn Citize.*

Capers of Cannon Balls.

Captain Meredith, John Ritchie and George Shields, known as "old hosses" and "old-timers," sat around in the Press club one afternoon recently and talked about the times of the war and told of the funny capers that cannon balls and musket balls cut. Captain Meredith said he once found a dead Confederate behind a big tree. The dead man was resting on one knee, in a position to shoot. His musket was in his hands, the butt of the gun was against his shoulder, and one eye was open, squinting along the gun-barrel. There wasn't a mark on the body, but the man was stone dead. There was a ten-pound cannon ball buried in the tree. The man had been killed by the concussion. Mr. Shields said that he saw a cannon ball go into the ground about 200 yards in front of where he was standing. He thought that was the end of the matter, but in about three seconds the ball came out of the ground fifty yards beyond the place it struck. It then in its flight struck a stump, careromed off, broke a soldier's leg, and, rolling on a few yards further, upset a camp kettle and scalded a man's hands.

John Ritchie said he saw a man hit with a "spent" cannon ball. He walked over to where the man lay to see what he could do for him—give him a drink out of his canteen, or a chew of tobacco, or something—but all that was visible was a mass of about 160 pounds of flesh and blue cloth, mixed up like sausage, with an eye and two teeth sticking out on top.

Captain Meredith said that, speaking of cannon balls, one of the most novel sights he witnessed during the war was a cannon ball about as big as a flour barrel going through a horse lengthwise—that is, lengthwise of the horse. There was left of the horse its head, its four feet and the lower six inches of its tail. The Captain said he could always tell the body of a Confederate soldier from a Northern man on a battle field, because whenever a Confederate was wounded corn-bread oozed out.—*Chicago Mail.*

Cornell University has a Japanese nobleman among its students.

CURIOUS FACTS.

Kentucky has a mail carrier ninety years old.

In Chile the street-car conductors are all women.

The word "and" occurrs 46,227 times in the Bible.

Philadelphia is to have a new church for colored Catholics.

Toddy is from the Hindostanee tari, tadi, the juice of the palmyra tree.

A Vienna criminal recently made his escape from justice by means of a balloon.

An Illinois man who bet that the world was round and failed to prove it had to pay over $25.

The largest ruby known is among the crown jewels of Russia; its size is that of a pigeon's egg.

The age of Sato Yukichi, the Japanese dwarf, is about fifty years. His height is fifteen inches.

A pair of elephant's tusks of average length weigh about 200 pounds, and are worth about $500.

The three Presidents who died on July 4 are John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe.

The American mosquito has appeared in England, and the people are vastly excited by the discovery.

The descendants of Rebecca Nourse, who was hanged as a witch in 1622, had a reunion in Danvers, Mass., recently.

British people drink annually five pounds of tea per head per annum. The French average is only half an ounce.

It is against the city ordinance in Castile, N. Y., for a donkey to appear on the streets unless accompanied by a man.

A cloud-burst in Nevada the other day dropped enough water on a region two miles square to form a lake of ten acres in extent and ten feet deep.

John Moore, of Indiana, declared himself guilty of robbery, paid a constable $2 to arrest him, and then hired a carriage for $3 to take them to the county jail.

Punch is from the Hindostanee panch, Sanskrit panchan, meaning five, because the drink was originally composed of five ingredients, viz.: Sugar, arrack, tea, water and lemon juice.

Italian excavators at Adulio, near Zula, Africa, have come upon public buildings and coins. In the sixth century a marble slab was found there giving the conquests of Ptolemy Evergetes.

A number of strange fish, formed like the white fish of Lake Erie, have just been caught at the dam near Meadville, N. Y. Some think they are ciscoes. They are in color regular strawberry blondes, with reddish gills and tails, and, so far as reported, entirely new to those waters. How they got there is a mystery.

Business Blocked by Bees.

A swarm of bees took possession of Main street in Meriden, Conn., a few days ago and blocked traffic on that bustling city's busiest thoroughfare for over an hour. A few venturesome drivers sent their horses through the buzzing mass, but those that made the trip paid the penalty of the folly of their owners. People in the neighborhood were compelled to shut down their windows, for the day was hot and the bees were angry. The bees banged themselves against the windows in attempts to get inside. Staid business men threw handkerchiefs over their heads and ran skipping away like school boys. The bees were a stray swarm just let loose, and although at one time they occupied a space as large as a load of hay, they finally became compressed into a half bushel wad and lit on one of the low branches of an evergreen tree in the Baptist church lot. At sundown the church janitor spread a white cloth on the ground under them and placed a large keg at an angle on the cloth. The lower head of the clock had been knocked out, and the inside of the keg was smeared with molasses. Then the limb was sawed off and the bees dumped on the cloth. The queen bee made for the keg, and in an hour a royal swarm was housed.—*Chicago Journal.*

Richest of American Chinamen.

I had the pleasure of meeting Sam Lock, recently. Mr. Lock is probably the richest Chinaman in California, and is possessed of an acuteness which would do credit to a Sam Slick. He is one of the very few Mongolians who have become citizens of this country, and has cut loose in every way from his native land, and as far as possible from his people. He wears "store" clothes and keeps his shirt inside of his trowsers. He has a large ranch in this country, and possesses a number of mines in Montana. He spoke quite casually of building a canal seventeen miles long to take water to a mine which has not been profitable heretofore because of the lack of that article—*New York Tribune.*

The honor of inventing the steam fire-engine is claimed by the late Captain John Ericsson, of New York. The date of his invention is 1838.

A Harpoon in a Whale's Blubber.

There has just been received at the National Museum, in Washington, to be placed in the fisheries section, an interesting souvenir of the Arctic whale fishery which Captain J. W. Collins, the superintendent of that department, greatly prizes. It is an old-fashioned, hand molded swivel harpoon, which has quite a story, as gleaned from the papers accompanying it.

While in the Okhotsk Sea last summer, the ship Cape Horn Pigeon, commanded by Captain L. Nathan Rogers, captured a whale, in the blubber of which was imbedded a foreign substance. On investigation this proved to be a harpoon, broken off at the junction with the lance, which had been in the whale over thirty years. On the hinge of the harpoon was stamped in plain letters "S. T. D."—ship Thomas Dickerson—and the name of the maker, not so plain, could also be made out. This was the first and only messenger from the good ship Dickerson, which sailed from New Bedford, Mass., in 1856 and was lost the next year in the very waters where the crew of the Cape Horn Pigeon secured the harpoon thirty-two years later.—*New York Herald.*

Birds and the Insects They Destroy.

The following birds are to be classed among the most helpful kinds in the general warfare against insects: Robins (cut, and other earth worms), swallows, night hawks, purple martins (moth catchers); pewees (striped cucumber bugs), wood thrushes and wrens (cut worms), cat birds (tent caterpillar), meadow larks, woodpeckers, crows (wire worms); blue-throated buntings (canker worms), black, red-winged birds, jays, doves, pigeons and chippies (strawberry pests); quails (chinch bugs, locusts), whip-poor-wills (moths); hawks, all night birds, owls, etc., tanagers and black winged summer red birds (curculios); nut crackers, fly-catchers, chimney swifts, indigo birds, chipping and song sparrows, blackbirds, mocking birds, titmouses, vireas, orchard orioles.

The Moods of a River.

Flint River, Ga., like a human being, appears to have its moods. Now it will be all brightness and sunshine, its placid waters scarce seem to be moving, but in its quiet, crystal depths the lordly magnolias along its banks are reflected, and the wild fowl plume their feathers over its mirror like surface. Again, it looks dark and angry. The water, of a yellowish red color, resembles the complexion of a choleric man with his bile all stirred up. On it dashes, resistlessly bearing along great waves of foam, where it has fretted over the rocks, or the limbs of forest monarchs which it has angrily uprooted and torn away, as worried by up-country rains it has overflowed its banks and swept all before it.—*Atlanta Constitution.*

Our Girls.

Kittty is witty,
Nettie is pretty,
Lutie is cute and small;
Irene is a queen,
Annette is a pet,
Nell is the belle of the ball;
Diantha is wealthy,
Bertha is healthy,
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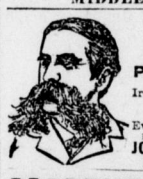

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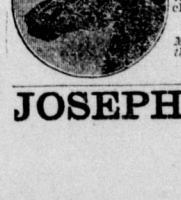

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