OF GENERAL INTEREST.

—Mrs. Mulligan, pension agent at Chicago, reports 36,509 pensioners on her rolls, of which number two are widows of soldiers of the revolution, thirty-five survivers the war of 1812 and 452 widows of veterans of that war. Last year she dispersed nearly 37,000,000.

—It is a curious fact that one out of every nine persons you meet on Broadway is a Hebrew. They number in New York City about 120,000, and with their wealth and intelligence, if ever organized politically as a party, would exert a strong, if not controlling influence, on local politics.

—The young folks of West Deer Isle, Me., have organized the Tongue Guard Society, whose object is to guard against saying anything improper to or about any one. Each offense is punished by a fine of one cent, to be placed in a box in the church, the fund to go towards buying a circulating library.

—In the United States arsenal at Watertown, Mass., there is a machine for testing the strength of iron and steel substances, which is looked upon as a wonder of mechanical skill and power. It can test to a nicety, and with equal ease, the tensile strength of a ponderous iron or steel bar, or of a wire, or even of a single hair.

—It is said that there are two sisters living near Delta, whose ages are between fifty and sixty years, who have not seen each other in sixteen years. They live only four miles apart, and are on perfectly friendly terms. No cause whatever is assigned for this seeming indifference.—*Dalton (Ga.) Citizen.*

—In the district court at Waco Tex., Andrew Miller, a negro preacher, charged with the theft of a cow, when brought for trial, wished to open the court with prayer. The judge requested the sheriff to take the prisoner to the judge's private office and let him pray. After prayer the prisoner was convicted of theft, as charged in the indictment, and given two years in the penitentiary.

—The average watch is composed of 175 different pieces, comprising upwards of 2,400 separate and distinct operations in its manufacture. The balance has 18,000 beats or vibrations per hour, 12,960,080 in thirty days, 157,680,000 in one year; it travels one and 43-100 inches with each vibration, which is equal to 9¾ miles in twenty-four hours, 292½ miles in thirty days, or 3,558¾ miles in one year.

—The latest "fad" among wealthy families is to burn "driftwood" in open grate fires. This wood is gathered along the seacoast by Eastern parties, packed in barrels and shipped through the country. It is mostly wreckage. A great part of it has once been the material of ships' bottoms, and was sheathed with copper plates. The copper salts have impregnated the wood, and when burned it gives out most beautiful green and peacock blue flames.

—In parts of India wild elephants give a great deal of trouble to persons employed in road improving, frightening the native workmen and destroying their work and knocking down their houses. A herd will come along the newly made road, and reaching a temporary bridge will send their lightest member across to test it. Being made to support bipeds only, it will generally give way, whereupon the herd will express its disapproval of such workmanship by promptly demolishing it.

—During a volent thunder and lightning storm at Middleton, Fla., lately, an immense ball of fire was seen to fall in the forest near the town. Searching parties were sent out, and parties of negroes found it, but they were too superstitious to handle it. It struck a big pine, demolishing it and splitting the rock into two pieces. One weighed about two hundred pounds and the other twenty-five. It sank into the ground nearly eight feet. It appears to be of iron ore covered with opaque white cystals.

—Turk's Island, one of the West Indies, is only 7 miles long and 1½ miles wide. It contains 2,500 inhabitants, three-fourths negroes. The only product and export of the little island is salt and sponges. Of these it sends out annually 2,000,000 bushels and 2,600 bales of sponges. Two-thirds of the salt goes to the United States and the rest to the Canadian provinces as fishery salt. The best part of the salt is piled up outdoors in stacks 15 to 20 feet high. It is pure, dazzling white and trying to the eyes; in fact, so much so that those who work at the salt usually wear goggles.

HE EXCUSED HIMSELF.

How a Congressman Got Rid of a Territorial Wire Puller.

"My dear sir," said a self-appointed representative from one of the Territories to Chairman Springer, of the Committee on Territories; "my dear sir, I must have a word with you concerning the claims of my Territory, which I am here to urge."

"I am very busy just now," replied Chairman Springer, anxiously, "couldn't you wait till to-morrow?"

"No, sir; no, sir; not unless you absolutely insist. I feel that I must speak and that you must hear me. Our Territory now has——"

"Er—well, couldn't you come in this afternoon, say?"

"No, no; I could not in justice to the great and growing Territory which I represent. I feel it my duty to tell you that my Territory——"

"I must go to the committee meeting in fifteen minutes."

"Give me that fifteen minutes, then! As you must know my Territory is the largest, the richest, the grandest of them all! Large enough to make two great imperial States the peer of any in the Union! I am speaking for 600,000 people whose rights are being trampled under foot, whose——"

"Just before you came in, Colonel Gopher, there was a Kentucky gentleman in here looking for some one to take a hand in a poker game just being started in the next room."

"Say, Springer, just excuse me—I'll tell you the rest next week!" and the Colonel's coat-tails cracked against the casing as he shot through the door.—*F. E. Carruth, in Chicago Tribune.*

COMBUSTIBILITY OF IRON.

Conditions Under Which the Metal Will Burn Readily.

Combustibility is not generally considered one of the properties of iron, yet that metal will under proper conditions burn readily. The late Prof. Magnus, of Berlin, Germany, devised the following method of showing the combustibility of iron: A mass of iron filings is approached by a magnet of considerable power, and a quantity thereof is permitted to adhere to it. This loose, spongy tuft of iron powder contains a large quantity of air imprisoned between its particles, and is, therefore, and because of its extremely comminuted condition, well adapted to manifest its combustibility. The flame of an ordinary spirit lamp or Bunsen burner readily sets fire to the finely divided iron, which continues to burn brilliantly and freely. By waving the magnet to and fro the showers of sparks sent off produce a striking and brilliant effect.

The assertion that iron is more combustible than gunpowder, has its origin in the following experiment, which is also a very striking one: A little alcohol is poured into a saucer and ignited. A mixture of gunpowder and iron filings is allowed to fall in small quantities at a time into the flame of the burning alcohol, when it will be observed that the iron will take fire in its passage through the flame, while the gunpowder will fall through it and collect beneath the liquid alcohol below unconsumed. This, however is a scientific trick, and the experiment hardly justifies the sweeping assertion that iron is more combustible than gunpowder. The ignition of the iron under the foregoing circumstances is due to the fact that the metal particles, being admirable conducters of heat, are able to absorb sufficient heat during their passage through the flame —and they are consequently raised to the ignition point. The particles of the gunpowder, however, are very poor conductors of heat, comparatively speaking, and during the exceedingly brief time consumed in their passage through the flame they do not become heated appreciably, or certainly not to their point of ignition. Under ordinary circumstances, gunpowder is vastly more inflammable than iron.

Another method of exhibiting the combustibility of iron, which would appear to justify the assertion that it is really more combustible than gunpowder is the following: Place in a refactory tube of Bohemian glass a quantity of dry, freshly-precipitated hydrated ferric oxide. Heat this oxide to bright redness, and pass a current of hydrogen through the tube. The hydrogen will deprive the oxide of its oxygen, and reduce the mass to the metallic state. If, when the reduction appears to be finished, the tube is removed from the flame and its contents permitted to fall out into the air, it will take fire spontaneously and burn to oxide again. This experiment indicates that pure iron in a state of the extremest subdivision is one of the most combustible substances known—more so even than gunpowder and other explosive substances, which require the application of considerable heat or of a spark to ignite them.—*Iron Age.*

MONEY FOR EVERYBODY.

Value of the Principal Coins of Different Nations.

Austria-Hungary issues a florin or guilder equal to 100 kreuzers, an 8-florin silver piece. The florin is worth about 40 cents of our money. The Netherlands count the same, only they count their kreuzers cents and their florins guilders, and they issue 10-gilder gold pieces. Denmark, Sweden, and Norway have a decimal currency, 100 being equal to one krone, worth about 27 cents. Germans count 100 pfennings to a mark, which is worth about 25 cents, and issue thalers (3 marks), 5, 10, and 20 mark gold pieces. France, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, and Roumania use fractionally the same currency of 100 centimes to the franc, worth about 1 9 cents; but the Italians call their francs lirea, the Roumanians lei, and the Swiss call their centimes rappen, and have ten rappen coins called batzen. Greeks count 100 lepta to the drachma, worth about 16 cents. The Servians use the French currency, but call the francs dinars and issue a gold milan, worth 20 francs, a silver para worth 20 centimes, and copper and nickel coins of 20, 19, and 5 centimes. The Spanish coins are 1 real, worth 100 centimes; 1 peseta, worth 4 reals; and 1 escudi, worth ten reals; the real is worth a little less than 5 cents. The Portuguese chief coin is the milreis, or 1,000 reis, worth about $1. The Russians count by rubles. One hundred kopecks make a silver ruble, which is worth about 75 cents; they issue now a great deal of paper money in denominations of 1, 3, 5, 10, 25 and 100 rubles. The large coins of Turkey are the lira, or gold medjidie, worth about $4.37; the piastre, of which it takes 100 to make a lira; and the becklik and altilik 105 to make the lira. They keep their large accounts by the "purse," equal to 5 liras. The Egyptians have dimes, ten of which makes a piastre, worth 5 cents. Algeria has a pretty gold coin called a sequin, worth a little more than $2, and a mouzonnah, worth about 1½ cents. Morocco issues a blankeel or muzoona, which is equal to 6 floos, worth about one-fifth of a cent; an ounce, or okia, equal to 4 blankeels, and a mitkal, equal to 10 ounces. In Tunis 16 karnubs make 1 piastre, which is worth about 10 cents. In China the unit is the Haikwan tael, worth about $1.25. It is equal to 10 mace, or 100 candereens, or 1,000 cash. Persia issues a silvery kran, worth about 15 cents, copper and silver shahl, and a gold toman, worth about $1.75. The current coins of India are a pie, worth about a quarter of a cent; a pice, equal to 3 pies; 1 anna, equal to 4 pice; 1 rupee, equal to 16 annas, and 1 gold molnir, equal to 15 rupees. The molnir is worth about $7.25. The Japanese count 1 yen equal to 100 sen; the yen is worth about 75 cents. The South American countries generally count by dollars, some times called polsos or soles. The Australian and South African colonies use the British currency.—*N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.*

FOLLOW THE FASHION.

A Famous Chicago Rabbi Talks on the Mode of Dress.

Fashion, said Dr. Hirsch, is indeed the great ruler of this world. It is an unconscionable despot to which men are willing slaves. The heavy artillery of the pulpit made no breach in its ramparts. Eve forfeited paradise, and the result is the thralldom of mankind to fashion. Let the world denounce fashion as it will, men are infected by it. The question whether nascent modesty forced man to cover himself is not yet decided. The origin of dress, though generally thought to be arbitrary, would, if all the facts were considered, show rationality. In northern climes it first originated, for there protection against the cold weather was most needed. The loins were first covered. When weaving was discovered the style of dress became more varied. The garment worn then by the Greeks was thrown around the body much after the fashion that plaids are now worn. The garment later on assumed the appearance of a sleeveless shirt tied in the middle. This was the first type of dress and from it sprung the swallow-tail. The pantaloons were also the invention of northern climes. In Egypt cloth was worn around the legs. To the Germans the credit of first introducing pantaloons into Europe is due. It was composed of two parts, tied at the waist. Hence the name of the garment in every language is in the plural. The name was given to it by the people of Venice, who were the first to join the two parts together. Dress also had a symbolical value. By it the different classes of society were distinguished and it also marked the differences of nationality, as each nation had a costume of its own. The dress of the peasant was different to that of the miner, and the drawing-room called for a garment different from that worn while traveling. The play of fancy, therefore, had not as much to do with the introduction of dress as generally supposed. Political ideas, too, influenced the change of dress. A hat for years had been the exponent of certain political proclivities. The Spaniards, prior to the Thirty Years' War, wore a stiff silk hat. After the war the soft hat was assumed. In England, political parties were symbolized by their headgear. The Puritans wore a stiff hat. That style of hat was imported to America and it became the symbol of independence. It was taken back to Europe, and it was so obnoxious to rulers there that the Czar of Russia banished a man who wore it from his realms, and another ruler put a man to work on the streets for the same offense. The Kossuth hat put an end to the autocracy of the silk tile in America. Before Kossuth came here to walk the streets with a soft hat was to invite a crowd to follow you. Modern democratic ideas are leveling all distinctions in dress. The colored waiter and the guest appear in the banquet hall wearing the same style of dress. The dudes, noticing this, sought to effect a difference in attire by requiring the members of their set to wear swallow-tails of a different color. The head-dress also serves the sense of beauty, but this applies more particularly to the dress of women than men. In nature, Darwin says, the male bird puts on his finest plumage to be in favor with the female. Women put on their fine hats for men, or, perhaps, to arouse the jealousy of their own sex. The "loud" colors were at first in vogue because the people were uneducated. Their place is now taken by a profusion of shades of colors toned down. As one man is no man all have to admit, no matter how they object, the dictates of fashion. The genius had the prerogative of standing aloof from all fashions. The crank and dude also had their own styles. As the people were not all geniuses, cranks or dudes, they will obey fashion. Sensible men will submit to it as long as it does not injure health. When it does common sense will protest against it. Fashion is an evidence of civilization, and as such the scepter will never depart from it.—*Chicago Herald.*

CHILDREN'S ROOMS.

Alarming Practices Which Are Altogether Too Prevalent.

Too much attention can not be bestowed on children's sleeping rooms, especially in the matter of pure air and sunlight. It is, above all, important to prevent foul and steamy vapors from the kitchen and laundry, damp emanations from the cellar and the impurities from gas and other lights from concentrating there. Some means of ventilation are indispensable in every dwelling to prevent the rising of impure atmosphere toward the roof. Shut off the children's bedrooms from the rest of the house, and open a window somewhere near for the escape of the impure air.

An alarming practice, and one altogether too prevalent, is the burning of lamps in children's bed-chambers, and this, too, all night with closed windows. Now, it should be known that the flame of a lamp consumes vitalizing portions of the air, and that a room in which a light has been burning for hours is not fit for sleeping in. In addition to this evil, a burning lamp produces another, and that is, restless slumber, as the light causes the brain to respond even through the closed eyelids, and thus make an effort which should be avoided. Teach children to sleep in the dark, by all means. They must, of course, be prepared for bed by lamp light in winter, but the room may be instantly purified after the lamp is extinguished by opening the windows and doors and letting in fresh, cool air.

Teach a child also that it is just as safe from all harm in the dark as in the light, and that it will be healthier and happier, and it will believe it, because children have inexhaustible faith in the mother's word. Never allow any one to tell children fear-inspiring, hobgoblin stories, and don't punish them by sending them or threatening to put them in dark places; thus you will be enabled easily to train them to sleep in the dark.—*Babyhood.*

—Canada now furnishes more sheep for the Boston market than any State in the Union.