

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

According to the last Israelitish Annual, the number of Jews in the world at present is but 6,300,000, of whom 5,400,000 are in Europe. There are 230,000 Jews in the United States, 2,552,000 in Russia, 1,644,000 in Austrian Hungary, 668,000 in Galicia, 638,000 in Hungary, 562,000 in Germany, and in France, notwithstanding all the fuss that M. Deumont makes about them in his "Jew France," only 63,000.

Of the number of American girls who swell the ranks of nobility in the old world, New York alone has contributed four princesses, two duchesses, nine marchionesses, two viscountesses, seven baronesses, and twenty-two countesses, while the wives of baronets and "honorables" increase considerably more the sum of American aristocracy in this channel.

Mrs. Robinson, of Massachusetts, desired to go to Europe, and, being short of funds, poisoned her family to get the insurance on their lives. She will go to her rope, but not to Europe.

There is a tree in Mexico called the oily cocoa. Its seed is almost wholly composed of a fatty substance, which has sometimes been used for making soap. A quantity of this seed was recently shipped to Europe, and a Stuttgart baker has successfully used the oil as a substitute for lard in making bread and cake.

"The first silk stockings made in England were knitted by Queen Elizabeth's silk-woman, Mistress Montague, who presented Her Majesty with a pair of black silk ones, which she liked so well that she kept the donor knitting silk stockings as long as she lived," says the writer in the *Philadelphia Press*. "Before the end of her reign stockings were made of silk, jamsey, worsted, crewel, or the finest yarn and thread that could be had, and Stubbs remarks that the ladies were 'not ashamed to wear hose of all kinds of changeable colors, as green, red, white, russet, tawney, and also what not, cunningly knit and curiously indented in every point with quirks, clocks, open seams, and everything else accordingly.'"

One of the papers read at a recent meeting of eminent scientists in Buffalo declared that thinking men lived 33 years longer than men who do not think.

The presence of mind of a Pennsylvania man's wife saved him from a peculiar and possibly serious danger. He woke up in the night with a strange thumping in his ear and twinges of pain that almost crazed him. His wife could see nothing in the ear, although she suspected some kind of a bug was there. Unable to bear the pain the husband prepared to start for the nearest doctor, eight miles away, when his wife remembering that certain insects were always attracted by light, held a candle close to his ear, and out crept a formidable looking beetle an inch long.

There is no power of love so hard to get and keep as a kind voice. A kind hand is deaf and dumb. It may be rough in flesh and blood, yet do the work of a soft heart, and do it with a soft touch. But there is no one thing that love so much needs as a sweet voice to tell what it means and feels; and it is hard to get and keep it in the right tone. A kind voice is a joy like a lark's song to a hearth and home. It is a light that sings as well as shines. Train it to sweet tones now, and it will keep in tune through life.

The city of Paris has lately become the possessor of a remarkable collection of documents, which will have great interest in years to come for historical investigators. This was the series of death warrants, extending from April 7, 1808, to December 8, 1832, belonging to Sanson, the notorious headman of the Revolution. The collection was bound up in nineteen volumes, and Sanson had prefixed to each volume a summary of the contents. It appears that during twenty-five years he executed 7,143 capital sentences, being an average of 217 executions each year—rather a busy life. During the twenty-five years he only twice ascended the scaffold without a fatal result—once in 1815, when General Count Lavalette was to have been executed for complicity in the return of Napoleon, but escaped the night before his intended execution through the heroism of his wife. The second time was 1817, when Phillippo Jean Antoine, a noted coinor, was respited at the last moment by Louis XVIII.

The first African city lighted by electricity was Kimberley, with forty-two lamps, each of 2,000 candle-power. The current is also utilized there for the killing of dogs, a step suggesting the execution of death sentences by the same means, as proposed in America and in France by M. Charson, a member of the Senate.

Without doing the slightest perceptible damage to the paper, check-raisers appear to be competent to remove any kind of ink and leave the paper in as good a condition as new, so far as writing on it is concerned. Not only this, but they successfully obliterate the stamped figures. Even those figures that are cut clean out of the paper are not a sure protection against the raiser's skill, as the original perforations can be filled in with papier mache.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed." Such a friend is Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup, which should be in every family. It costs only 25 cents. Give it a trial.

One bottle of Salvation Oil can change a frantic victim of rheumatism into a dove of gentleness.

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

"NIGHT."

The sun went down in the distant west,
And set in a sea of gold;
The mountains bathed in a purple light,
Their cliffs so grand and bold.
The bells of "Saint Agatha"
Chimed out the Vesper hymn;
Against the sunset tinted sky,
Its walls rose dark and grim.

Night swoop'd down with wide-spread wings,
Like a bird of ebony hue.
The birds all hushed their even songs,
And away to their nests they flew.
The solemn hoot of a lonely owl,
Broke the silence all too soon;
The hills echoed back the mournful cry,
With the mocking laugh of a loon.

The timid stars peeped forth at last,
And jewelled the darkened sky;
While o'er the mountains wrapped in gloom,
The moon rose grand and high;
The fleecy clouds like cowbells brushed
Across her silvery face,
And idly floating past her, they
Vanish'd into space.

Across the sea Diana threw
A path of silver light;
While on the grass and trees there hung
Millions of dew-drops bright.
The moonbeams pierced the forest gloom,
The night wind stirred the trees;
Like a fast imprisoned spirit,
Mournfully sighed the breeze.

The night begins at last to wane,
The morning star has gone;
The moon fades out in the rosy sky
As a new day's sun is born.
The birds begin their matin song
Within their leafy bowers;
The humming bird and busy bee
Flirt gaily mid the flowers.

COLLEEN BAWN.

ASCENT OF MOUNT ETNA.

The guide collects our spare clothing and refreshments and puts them across his mule, and then, calling on us to mount, he leads the way. On the left we pass the Monti Rossi, two mountains between 6,000 and 7,000 feet high, thrown up by one of the eruptions of Etna. Then there are nothing before us but masses of tiny vines some two or three feet high, which we suppose are the last traces of vegetation we shall see. But no, we soon came to quite a distinct zone or belt of woodland, called *Il Bosco*, or the wood, which extends in width about six miles, and is three miles deep. Hitherto we have been ploughing our way through loose cinders with a dreary waste of land on either hand, but now the scene changes suddenly, and as pleasantly. For an hour we are riding through a wood of small trees, of oak, beech, and cork; the roadway is no longer of loose cinders, but of huge boulders of lava, over which, or around which, the mules mount or creep, may seem best to them; for by this time we are quite persuaded that we are at their mercy, and that these patient, hardy animals will well earn the money charged for them. The moon has risen, and this part of the ride is as pleasant as it is picturesque. But beyond the wood the dreary waste begins, not to end till we retrace our steps on the morrow. After a little more than two hours' ride we come to the Woodman's House, of which we avail ourselves for a rest and for some water for selves and beasts. Again mounting, we start for our next stage, the English House, or *Casa dell' Inglese*, at the base of the cone of Etna, and which has been placed there by the Italian Alpine Club, where travellers may rest and get a shakedown before ascending to the crater. This stage of three hours and a half is probably the most depressing ride either of us has ever had, or could possibly have. Usually in mountain climbing there is much to delight and to reward one in the ascent. There are halting-places where one gets visions of beauty delightful in themselves, even if they are not an earnest of still more extensive ones to come. But here there is nothing for the eye to rest on to please, everything by way of vision or suggestion is gloomy and depressing. Leaving behind all trees, and after a while even the hills on which a few hardy shrubs had struck root and asserted themselves, we enter on a dreary waste of lava, unrelieved by any object to cheer or enliven us. Far as the eye can see—and the moon is at the full—there is nothing but a scene of sombre vastness—one vast waste of present desolation and of former destruction. After some well-intentioned efforts to throw off the gloom which oppresses us all, we are forced to yield to the influence of the surroundings, which settles down upon us like the nightmare, our one hope—to come to the end of our funeral ride. By-and-by the white front of the English House presents itself, shining like a friendly beacon in the moonlight; but even then this relief is tempered with disappointment, as we learn we are more than an hour's ride from it. The way is almost perpendicular, so that the mules toil on at a snail's pace, quite at their own discretion, for the cold has become intense, and we are glad to thrust our hands in our pockets. We could have slept away the tedious minutes, and thus skirted out the dreary panorama, but the cold prevents us. We have nothing to do but to stare at the whitewashed front of the English House, and wonder if we are ever to reach it. Never was hostelry more welcome when at length, at half-past twelve, we reach the top; and never had hostelry less to offer to tired and dispirited wayfarers. A bundle of straw is all that is available as a bed, and from this two men have to be aroused, who had gone to sleep. The cold is intense, and no covering is provided. Fortunately, we creep