

Cuba has fifty-four ports, many of them in a labyrinth of keys and sand bars, but only nineteen lighthouses.

Canada is worried about the increase of her debt, the large growth of her farm mortgages and the constant emigration of her young men.

Trilby cannot be used as a trade mark in England, the name being employed too generally. So the Court of Chancery has just decided.

The Danube flows through countries in which fifty-two languages and dialects are spoken. It is 2,000 miles in length, and bears on its current four-fifths of the commerce of Eastern Europe.

An English woman has won an action for breach of promise of marriage brought against a man who was a lunatic at the time of the action. His trustees were condemned to pay \$2,500 for him. This is law.

A recent expert estimate of the extent of the anthracite coal fields in the United States places their contents at 11,921,400,000 tons. The annual production averages 45,000,000 tons, at which rate the supply would last some 265 years.

Cotton manufacture in the South is not likely to be discouraged by the fact that last year some of the better equipped cotton mills paid not less than twenty percent per annum upon capital invested, observes the New York Recorder.

Within the last few years it has occurred, through legal trickery and despotism, that there has not been a single Cuban in the board of aldermen of Havana, declares the New York Tribune. Every seat was filled by a Spaniard, imported from Spain. From 1878 to the present time the province of Matanzas has had twenty governors, eighteen of them Spaniards and two Cubans, and one of the latter was an army officer who had fought against his countrymen in the ten years' war. These cases are mere samples, which might be duplicated a hundred times. They show how Cuba is misgoverned by aliens, and why her people desire home rule.

An experiment has been lately made by the Charlesbank gymnasium, in Boston, of free public hot and cold water baths. At first, relates Harper's Weekly, the attendance was very slight, but as the people have come to know about it, there has been a steady growth in numbers. On Saturday, which has already been the traditional cleaning-day in New England, over one hundred were turned away on account of the hot water giving out. Many were even willing to brave the terrors of the cold bath. The population of Boston have been offered for years privileges of summer bathing in the not too clean waters of the harbor and its tributaries, but this is the first experiment in supplying free hot water baths to the public on a Saturday. Perhaps free beans on Sunday will be the next advance in the civic progress towards "bread and circuses."

If Italy's national tendency toward homicide could only be centered upon King Menelek's Abyssinian warriors the crafty and pugnacious African would soon be defeated, the Washington Star maintains. Aaron Garofolo discussed the statistics of homicide in Italy before a Roman audience recently and threw considerable light upon a topic which must be interesting alike to Italians and tourists who may be sojourners in Italy. During 1895, said the baron, the total number of murders in Italy was about four thousand, or one homicide every two hours. In no other civilized country does such a sanguinary condition of affairs prevail, the ratio even in excitable France being only one-tenth of the Italian, while in Denmark—the best-behaved of European countries—the ratio is one thirty-fifth. The baron declared, after careful investigation of the subject, that Italy's phenomenally sanguinary disposition is due, to the vendetta, the duello, and to the unrestrained influences of heredity. No effective effort to better the prevailing conditions seems to have been made, for ever since 1862 there has been steady increase of delinquency and mendacity to such an extent that criminals and beggars abound in all Italian communities. The remedy, says the baron who so frankly criticizes his own people, can only come through religious instruction. Purely moral teaching is good enough so far as it goes, but he deems it insufficient; he gives to religion the credit for a fifty percent reduction of delinquency and mendacity within forty years in

### Cows in the Meadow.

When springing meads are freshly dight,  
And trees new leaved throw scarce a shadow,  
The green earth shows no fairer sight  
Than soft-eyed kine and blowing meadow.  
Too calm for ears, too slow for mirth,  
Amid the shower, and the gleam,  
The great mild mother creatures seem  
Half-walking forms of the dreamy earth.  
And down the pathway through the grass  
To school the merry children pass,  
Singing a rhyme in the April morn,  
How—There's red for the furrows, and white  
For the daisies,  
Brown eyes for the brooks, for the trees  
Crumpled horns!

When quivering leaves make leaves of light  
And both the sward beneath them dapple,  
When May bought cream in cording white,  
And strawberry cream doth flush the apple,  
The great mild mother creatures lie  
And grow in absence of the sun,  
One with the moon and stars, and on  
With silvery cloud and hushed dark sky.  
And down the pathway through the grass  
To school the merry children pass,  
Singing a rhyme in the morn of June,  
How—There's white for the cloudlets, and black  
For the darkness,  
And two polished horns for the sweet  
Sickle moon.

—Vida Bliss.

### A Matrimonial Campaign.

BY HELEN FORREST GRAVES.

The old village clock was striking eight in its muffled, asthmatic way, when Mr. Blidgefield came up the garden path with a paper of moist, brown sugar under one arm, and half a pound of paraffin candles under the other.

On each side of him rose up plump heads of cabbages, and blue-green swamps of onions. A thrifty hopvine was waving its tassels against the porch pillars, and a bed of parsley was growing rankly by the gate. For Mr. Blidgefield was a firm believer in the beauty of utility.

In the days of his deceased wife there had been a faint attempt at morning-glory vines, clove-pinks and Johnny-jumpers around the house, but Mr. Blidgefield soon settled that matter.

"Fudge!" he had ruthlessly cried. "They ain't good to neither stew for congl-mixtures, nor to boil up for greens. Looks? What do I care for looks? Ain't a squash bloom every bit as pretty as a marigold, I'd like to know? My daughter must be brought up not to care for empty show!"

And so all the wild, fantastic beauty of nature had been narrowed down into vegetable borders and potato patches, and the souls of the Blidgefield children had been narrowed accordingly.

Money! money! money! That was the god of Mr. Blidgefield's idolatry. He went to church on Sunday, and sat out the service in his hard and cushionless pew, but to him all that the choir sang and the preacher preached was—money!

He attended the prayer-meetings punctually, for he was a member of the church, but he never put more than a copper penny in the plate.

"If every man takes care of number one," he said, with a hard compression of his lignum-vite lips, "the whole world will be took care of!"

He rose up early to economize the sunshine, and lay down late for fear of wasting time. He kept a whole almanac full of proverbs on the tip of his tongue, and denounced "shiftlessness" as if it were one of the seven cardinal sins. Dancing was an instrument of the Evil One; novel reading was the opening wedge to Dante's Purgatorio. Anything in the shape of innocent recreation was a direct flying in the face of Providence. And the Blidgefield children grew up gaunt, careworn and prematurely old under the system of training.

Mr. Blidgefield's first wife had dropped quietly and obscurely into her grave before anyone fairly comprehended that she was not in high health. Hard work and a relentless taskmaster had fairly worried her out of the world. And all the neighborhood marveled, when ten years afterward, Nancy Bloom married the widower.

Nancy was the village school-teacher—a bright eyed, buxom young woman of twenty-eight or thirty. She had taken a fancy to the little Blidgefields, and she was tired of teaching, and wanted a home.

"You'll find Ben Blidgefield a hard nut to crack," said the neighbors, warningly.

"I'll risk it," Nancy had cheerily replied.

And so she married Mr. Blidgefield, and went to the farm-house to live.

The six young Blidgefields had been told that a stepmother was a fearful thing; but to their surprise they found Mrs. Blidgefield, Number Two, a creature of delight.

She showed me how to boil hickory-nuts

chopped up in it," said Simeon, a weird child of eleven, who was popularly supposed to be ignorant even of the notion of a humming-top.

"She give me apple-sass on my bread," whispered Marion, the next.

"We're to have pie every day," chuckled Moses who liked good things to eat and drink.

"And I'm to lay up the berry-money for a blue muslin frock all of my own," added Adelina, who never had worn anything but her mother's faded old calico gowns scantily cut over.

"I'm to raise a bran-fire new tool-chest if I raise the red heifer calf," exulted George, the tallest boy.

And Leroy, the eldest, who had been scolded, snubbed and kept down all his life, felt, with a thrill of happiness, that his new stepmother secretly sympathized with his efforts to rise in the world.

"Now she's here," thought Leroy, "I feel as if I could do most anything."

Mr. Blidgefield had scarcely been married a week when he came home on a raw, rainy night, with the packets of groceries under his arms, and a dissatisfied frown between his brows.

"Two candles," he said, peeping gloomily under the ball-fringed window curtain. "And chicken for supper—and apple-sass, and cheese! And every one settin' round, and nobody doin' no work. This won't do. Nancy must learn better than this."

He opened the door and walked grimly in.

Dead silence fell upon the children at the wet-blanketing apparition of "father." But Nancy looked cheerfully up.

"You're late, aren't you, Benjamin?" said she.

"What's this?" said Mr. Blidgefield, ignoring her query, as he glared around.

"It's supper," said Nancy. "Sit down, my dear, and help yourself."

"Chicken!" croaked the farmer, and spring chicken at that, when they're a-fetchin' 60 cents a pair at the hotel! Sweet cake, sass, and the best knives! Moses, put them fowls back in the cupboard. There's plenty o' cold pork left from yesterday, I calculate. Ad'lray, blow out one o' them candles. The way we burn candles is ridiculous—and store candles, too! Why, we never thought o' usin' anything but dip candles when—"

"Moses, let the chickens alone," said Mrs. Blidgefield, in softly deliberate accents. "Adelina, don't meddle with the candles."

"What," roared Mr. Blidgefield, banging the package of sugar down on the table, and rattling the candles beside them like a small spark of artillery.

"I thought perhaps you had forgotten that I was housekeeper here," said Nancy.

The children turned as many colors as the rainbow; Moses, who was constitutionally nervous, got behind his stepmother; Simeon edged a little nearer to the poker; Marion swallowed her last morsel of cake with such precipitation as nearly to choke herself; Adelina began to sob and snivel under her breath.

"Mrs. Blidgefield," said the irate farmer, "will you be so good as to explain yourself?"

"Oh certainly!" said the late Miss Nancy Bloom. "As long as I am mistress here I intend to consult my own inclinations. I shall undertake to give you good food, and to keep yourself and your children comfortably clothed; but I shall choose my own method of doing it."

"Madam," said Mr. Blidgefield, loosening the folds of his cravat, as if there came an apoplectic pressure there, "you will obey me, or you will leave my house."

"Oh no; I guess not!" said Nancy serenely. "It's my house now. You put it in my name the day after we were married, to escape taxation. But you were mistaken then. I intend to pay the taxes regularly on it myself. It is no part of my policy to evade my just debts. And I've money enough saved from school-teaching to run the farm very nicely, with the help of Leroy and George."

"They shan't stay here!" shouted Mr. Blidgefield, the veins starting out on his temples like ragged whiplcord.

"Of course they are at liberty to take their own choice about that," said Nancy, calmly.

"I'll stay with stepmother," said George and Leroy, in one breath of chivalric eagerness.

"So'll I!" squeaked Simeon.

And the three girls clung, with asseverations of the fondest affection, around Nancy.

Mr. Blidgefield eyed the tableau with impotent rage. Mrs. Blidgefield smiled superior.

"Now, Ben," said she in the coaxing tone with which one cajoles a little child, "don't be a fool! You know perfectly well that you are in the minority. If you choose to stay here and conduct yourself as a decent Christian man should, I'll do my very best to make your home pleasant. If not—"

"Well!" shouted Mr. Blidgefield, still tugging at his cravat folds. "Well, madam, and what then?"

"Why, then," said Nancy composedly, "you can go about your business."

Mr. Blidgefield remained to contest the matter no longer. He strode out of the house, banging the door behind him, by way of parting benediction.

"I'll consult a lawyer," said he. "I never, never was so treated before in the whole course of my life!"

He consulted a lawyer, but the verdict was not favorable to his side of the matter. He remained outside the fortress for a week, vainly hoping that Mrs. Blidgefield and the garrison would capitulate.

But they didn't. And then he lowered his own colors. Nancy had been too much for him.

But she never twitted him with his lack of success. She only smiled a gracious welcome.

"And I must confess," he afterward added, "that I never was so comfortable afore as Nancy makes me."

The children—poor souls!—said the same thing. Their stepmother had brought a new sunshine in the dreary old farmhouse. She had even civilized their father, in some degree.

And the neighbors all wondered how it was that Nancy Bloom got along so nicely with that old crab of a husband of hers.—Saturday Night.

### Queer Republics.

The queer little Italian republic of San Marino, with its 33 square miles of territory and its population of 6,000 lies up in the eastern spurs of the Apennine Mountains. It is governed by a Grand Council of 60 who are elected for life, and two Presidents, one of whom is appointed by the Council, the other elected by the people. The little republic has an army of 950 men, who are employed only as policemen. San Marino is the only country in the world that prohibits the introduction of the printing-press. The city of San Marino, with a population of 1700, is one of the queerest old towns in the world. It has undergone no change in 200 years. This republic began in 1631.

A little bit larger than San Marino in population, but six times as large in area, is the republic of Andorra. It lies in a valley of the eastern Pyrenees between France and Spain. It became a free state in 819. It is governed by a Sovereign Council of 24 members, elected by the people, and a Syndic, or president, chosen for life by the Council. It has an army of 1,100 men, and one big gun planted in the centre of the republic. This gun carries a ball twenty miles, and Europe trembles at the thought of its being fired. In Andorra, the capital is the palace—a stone building several hundred years old. Here the Councilmen meet. The ground-floor is the stable where their horses are kept and fed by their masters themselves.—Harper's Round Table.

### Geese That Made an Eclipse.

"While I was on a hunting trip last month at Iaman, Kan. I saw a sight which few sportsmen have ever seen," said Cook Herman. "One night just as it was growing dusk our party was hunting on a lake where we had been having good success with duck. Suddenly the sky seemed to be clouded over so that we thought a storm was coming up, but on looking to see what was the cause of the sudden darkness we discovered that immediately over us was a flight of wild geese which literally covered the sky as far as the eye could reach. I do not believe I would be exaggerating if I was to say that the geese in that flight were numbered by the thousands. For half an hour we watched them flying by forming all sorts of picturesque groups like maps in the sky, shifting rapidly from one combination to another. They were flying just high enough to be out of gunshot reach, but I managed to kill one of the tired stragglers, which had fallen behind one of the big bunches and ventured where he could be reached by a long shot. It was a sight which I shall never forget and I am still regretting that we could not have got a crack at them."—Kansas City Journal.

A Kansas man has been buying thousands of jack rabbits at five cents a head to send to the markets of all the large eastern cities.



### A ROYAL HONOR.

Miss Maria Brooks, the English painter, is entitled to place the royal arms upon all her portraits and pictures. After she won the gold medal at South Kensington, the queen set her an order to paint something for her majesty's possession. The honor carried with it the privilege that all British artists have.

### BLACK WILLOW FEATHERS.

Black willow feathers—rich plumes with uncurled, drooping faces, tipped with fine plumage—constitute the principal trimming of a large hat of rough black straw. At each side of the front is a chon of Dresden ribbon in light colors. At the back are loops of the ribbon, and a trio of the graceful feathers which droop over the crown.—New York Mercury.

### THEY'LL EAT BETTER.

The Wallasey, Mass., college girls will not go without butter for a month, for the sake of the suffering Armenians.

The thirty or more young women who live at Fiske college expressed their desire to abstain from the use of butter thirty days, in order that the money thus saved should go to the relief of Armenia.

The faculty, however, decided that college girls had need of butter, and that contributions to the relief fund could be made in other ways, which, if not so romantic, would be equally effective.—New York Recorder.

### ONE WOMAN'S EXPERIENCE.

"I can easily believe in Cuban atrocities," said a New York woman, whose husband is a native of that sunny isle. "Some cousins of Jose's came to the city, and in an evil moment I invited their children to spend the day with mine, and turned them loose in the nursery. I went up a couple of hours later and found they had gone out and bought a pound of butter, which they had spread on the new carpet to make a slide, and were rushing up and down enjoying themselves immensely. I don't think anything could be more atrocious than that."

### "THE LIGHT OF ETHIOPIA."

The wife of Menelek of Abyssinia is Queen Taidou. The Light of Ethiopia. The London Graphic describes her as a very warlike lady, who is said to have desired to lead her body-guard in person to the assault of Makale the other day. Travelers who have seen her speak in favorable terms of her personal appearance and intelligence. A native of Semien, she is a member of one of the noblest families in Ethiopia. Menelek fell in love with her, and has ever since his marriage been her most devoted slave. Every state question is referred to her by the King, and on more than one occasion she has herself written important documents. She dresses in Ethiopian costume, but with much elegance and taste.—New York Post.

### FAMILY PETS AND WOMEN.

The family of the late general McClellan were devoted to animals. Indeed, Miss McClellan carried her devotion so far that she used to take her white mice (which were named, by the way, after the kings of the ancient Egyptian dynasties) to the Italian opera, as Mrs. Van Rensselaer Cruger did her celebrated turtle, Mile. Michette, which, attired in its rosy-colored sash, used to be brought in on a tray by the butler to show to casual callers. When the McClellans' house down town was burned some years ago the family pets included an elderly and infirm cat, Samuel J. Tilden by name. Mrs. McClellan stood on the sidewalk watching the destruction of her household goods, and exclaimed, in great anxiety: "Oh! where is Samuel?" A kindly fireman overheard her. "Do not fear, madam, the children will all be saved."

It is pleasant to record that Samuel was rescued uninjured.—New York Journal.

### THE LATEST ABOUT SKIRTS.

Modes have grown more fluffy, and skirts spread, ripple, and rustle more

than ever. There are those who think this indicates a return of ruffles, flounces, and other elaborate skirt trimmings; but skirts must lose half their present width before any trimming more than a narrow border at the foot can be tolerated.

An occasional effort is made to vary the monotony of plain skirts by the introduction of vertical trimmings, in the form of panels bordering the front breadth, narrow vines of silk or spangle embroidery—or of passementerie simulating it—on the seams, and fan-plaitings introduced between the gores. This last method is convenient for remodeling narrow skirts of rich fabrics. A vest can thus be widened with plaitings of satin, of laces, monizing shades, extending from the waist to the foot, and inserted between the back breadths as well as on the sides of the front. This is not an economy, however, except to utilize expensive stuffs, as a whole breadth of silk or satin is required for each plaiting.—Demorest's Magazine.

### AUSTRIA'S WOMEN BARBERS.

The Austrians take no chances with their barbers. They must be good, and the Barbers' and Wigmakers' union of Vienna sees to it that they are. Provision is also made for women barbers, who carry on the business in case of illness.

But in Austria, as in other countries, the apprentice must appear in Vienna in the presence of judges of the union and show their skill before they are allowed to open shops of their own.

A properly certified barber must have a knowledge of and pass an examination in shaving, hair-cutting, hair-curling, and wig-making, and during the period before the issuance of a certificate the poor and others who are frugal serve as subjects for experiment.

At the examination the young men have their razors dulled by four strokes in a pine plank, and they must then sharpen them. A subject is assigned to each, who must be tonsorially perfect, in the opinion of the judges, when the apprentice has released him.

After this a certificate is issued and the apprentice serves two years as a journeyman before he may open a shop as an employer. The average age of apprentices when they begin to learn their trade is 13 years.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

### FASHION NOTES.

All the new bodies have ripple backs.

The latest wedding envelopes are oblong.

Rose pink figures largely in summer fabrics.

Poster collecting is the latest fad of the up-to-date woman.

Green is undoubtedly the reigning color. In all its various shadings is more prominent than any other.

The silk waists still form part of the costumes, and the gowns that are made with waists to match are a rare exception to the rule.

Aigrettes are a feature of many of the season's hats; white ones are more than any other, and they appear in most unexpected places.

Percales that have madras effect sell well for early wear, but there is no doubt but the thinner fabrics will be in great demand later on.

Black and white ribbons are much sought after by fine retailers. Black satin grounds overlaid with white and white taffeta grounds with black figures and stripes are also freely.

As a substitute for the single small white feather was used. It will stand up very well with the tip curling over. This is seen on a few of the excellent French hats.

The jackets shown are exceedingly smart, and there are fortunately several different styles to choose from that both stout and slender can choose what is most becoming to their respective figures.