

Extensive educational reforms are projected by the Madrid ministry. The war demonstrated the need of teaching the Spanish young idea how to shoot.

Since July last 990 bicycles have been stolen in Chicago, and the police of that city give out the opinion gravely that some bike burglar is trying for a ten-century record.

The shade of Christopher Columbus, in the Elysian Fields, must smile with amusement to see his countrymen of today carrying his brother's dust to and fro upon the earth under the pious fiction that it is his, while his own rests undisturbed by the side of the resting fetters he once wore.

One of the first acts of General Wood at Santiago de Cuba was to reform and vastly improve the school system. General Kitchener's first act concerning Khartoum since his conquest of the place is to raise \$500,000 for the establishment of a college there. That is what Anglo-Saxon conquest means today—the building not of fortresses to enslave people, but of schools to educate and elevate them.

The Massachusetts Socialists are highly elated by the showing which they made at the recent election in Massachusetts, having a total of 10,000 against 6301 a year ago. This will entitle the party next year to a place upon the official ballot as a regular political party, and they are greatly encouraged by the success in Haverhill of James F. Carey and Louis M. Seates, who were elected to the Legislature on the Socialist-Labor ticket, and will be the first Socialists to hold a seat in any legislative body in the United States, it is said.

The advantages of ancestry and family are worth little in themselves to a young man save in our oldest communities. In the newer parts of the country the day laborer, provided nature has gifted him with brains and energy, may cherish any ambition. Lincoln was a day laborer. General Miles was a clerk in a dry goods store. Blaine taught a country school. Garfield drove mules on the towpath. McKinley practised law in the insignificant little town of Canton, Ohio. Many of our millionaires began as workmen. Other men who are drudging for wages today will be the millionaires of twenty-five years hence.

Birmingham, England, is frequently referred to as the best governed city in the world. Whether or not that is true, Birmingham certainly has made greater progress in municipal socialism than any other city. Almost everything is municipalized. It was a pioneer in municipal tenement houses, markets, slaughterhouses, museums, art galleries, libraries, industrial schools, public laundries and baths, street-car lines, gas plants, electric lighting, and draws most of its revenues from business blocks erected by the city upon the ground which was formerly covered with the slums, and was purchased in order to eradicate them. Municipal sanitation is probably carried to greater perfection in Birmingham than in any other city in the world, and the common council is now spending \$2,000,000 in the purchase of a farm upon which the sewage of the city may be utilized as a fertilizer.

One of the greatest drawbacks to arming in this country, and especially in the New England states, is the difficulty of keeping the boys upon the farm. Fifty girls have taken up the study of scientific farming in the Minneapolis college of agriculture. The progress of these young women will attract general attention, and if the results are practical the innovation will naturally spread to other states, and thus in the end work a reform in farming matters that will not only give a new impetus to the industry, but also rehabilitate many of the now abandoned New England farms, and furnish profitable, healthy and even congenial employment to the superabundant female population of those states. With scientific methods, in conjunction with the labor-saving machines now in vogue, farming is not accompanied by the drudgery that necessarily attended the work in the years gone by. There is nothing in the whole routine of farm labor that cannot be accomplished by the average woman, and in no instance need she unsex herself in its performance. It is to be hoped the movement started by the Minnesota women will result in a reformation in farm matters that will not only increase the quantity and quality of the product, but also render the home of the farmer attractive to the young men of the family.

A LULLABY FROM THE WEST.

Hey, baby! Ho, baby! what's all the row?
Close up the peepers an' go to sleep now!
Pappy's here with him an' no 'n' 'n' hurt—
If there is, some galoot 's got to eat dirt!
Jumpin' Jehoshaphat! hear how he yells!
Wor'n 'n' a herd that's stampeded corralled!
Sounded like Aynchas-a-luntin' a masee!
Hey, baby! Ho, baby! dry up yer fass!

Hey, baby! Ho, baby! look out down there!
That's yer Pappy's six-shooter—better take care!
Baby's too little to handle a gun;
When yer in trousers yer Pappy 'll get one,
Learn ye to shoot it, too. Bally for you!
Yer a true son o' West, through an' through!
Look like a tenderfoot yet, but ye ain't—
Hey, baby! Ho, baby! sleep like a saint!

Hey, baby! Ho, baby! Gosh! see him screw
Up his kid face worse 'n coyotes 'll do!
Dry up that noise, er yer Pappy 'll shoot,
Thinkin' he 's trapped by a band o' Pinter!
Mammy 'll come in a minute! Now quit!
Panthers fer yerlin' ain't in it a bit!
What! hev ye quit? put an end to yer fass?
Hey, baby! Ho, baby! cute little cuss!
—Roy Farrell Green, in Paek.

ABIJAH BLAISDELL'S HEN.

It Was Not the Widow Who Gave Way.

BY SUSAN BROWN ROBINSON.

"She's the most remarkable hen in the country. I know she doesn't look it. No, she'd never take a prize at the cattle show. She ain't, so to speak, pure blooded. Some folks would even call her mongrel, but I think it's more respectful to refer to her as a composite. Why, she knows more than some men and most women," and Abijah would gaze admiringly at his solitary fowl.

"You'd think she'd be lonesome, would you? Well, how about me? O, no! we keep each other company. I don't want any better companion than Belinda, and she never finds a bit of fault with me.

"Did I ever tell you how it came about that she was left here all alone? You know I used to keep hens. I had those three houses full. They didn't do well, somehow, and one winter when grain was extra high and the hens didn't lay an egg, I got disgusted and vowed I'd sell off the whole lot of them.

"Well, a hen man came along, and he and I went out and caught the hens, and an awful squawking and dust they made, too. When the man had paid me and gone off, I felt pretty good.

"But just as I tu ned to go into the house I heard a little noise, and there came Belinda picking along as nice as you please. I was mad, and I told her then and there that she needn't think she could get the best of me that way, and just as soon as I'd eaten up a mess of corned beef I'd just got, I'd kill her and have a chicken pie.

"She looked up at me and creaked, the way she has. She gives two or three creaks like an ordinary hen, and then her voice kind of breaks in a long, pitiful wail. It sounded just as if she said 'O, O, O, don't!' if you'll believe me, I said out loud to her, 'All right, I won't.'

"Since then she's had things about her own way. I was going to tear down the henhouses, but Belinda she likes to use all of 'em, so I didn't. She always lays in the first one. The second one she has for a dining room and living room, and she sleeps in the third one.

"Yes, it's some trouble to take care of them all, but as long as Belinda is satisfied I don't find any fault.

"Lay? You never saw a hen that would lay as she does. She hasn't missed a day in six months.

"And it's a funny thing, too. My aunt Nancy came here on a visit and stayed a month. Now, she hates hens, but she likes eggs. Well, what do you think? All the time she was here, Belinda didn't lay a single egg! But she began again the very day aunt Nancy went away. She knew what aunt Nancy was just as well as I did, and she wanted to spite her.

"Why, I don't know but I should have got married before now if it hadn't been for Belinda, but I don't suppose she'd like to have any other woman around."

"Thus would Abijah Blaisdell run on about his hen, as long as any one would listen to him.

The widow Millett, Abijah's next door neighbor, talked a good deal about the hen, but in a different strain. She addressed her remarks to herself or to the hen, so no one was the wiser. She hated hens in general, and Belinda in particular.

"If you'd mind your own business and keep on your own side of the fence, I wouldn't say a word, but I won't have you in my flower beds. Shoof seat!" and she would shake her skirts at the intruder, and with a frown on her usually placid face, chase the hen off her premises.

"It isn't alone that you are a hen," she would say again, as she sat at her window and looked over across at Abijah's yard where Belinda could be seen. "But it's your being his hen, and making him the laughing stock of the neighborhood. He acts just as if you were a person, and he seems to have forgotten my existence.

"To be sure, he never did take much notice of me, but there was a time when I thought—" here she would break off and blush a little; "well, any way, I should think you'd be ashamed to make a grown man act so silly."

As time went on her hatred of Belinda increased. There seemed to be an irresistible fascination for the bed in Mrs. Millett's garden, and nearly every day found her scratching there.

"I never did see a hen that knew anything," the widow would say wrathfully, "and I believe you know the least of any of them."

was light of weight, and could fly over anything constructed of laths.

One day the widow found the hen busily digging a large hole in the midst of her pansy bed. Thereupon in the heat of her anger she gave vent to dire threats.

"If I find you over here scratching again, you, Belinda Blaisdell, I shall kill you. Do you hear? You think I wouldn't do it, but I just would. I have had to kill hens before now and I didn't like the job, but I almost think I'd enjoy killing you, you mean old thing. Now remember! I'm a woman of my word and I shall keep it, if I have to chase you all the way home to catch you."

As she went into the house, she began to repent of her threats. "I suppose I should hate to kill her," she soliloquized, "but I said I would, and, yes, I will, if she scratches any more. But I'll keep a close watch of her and keep her away so that I won't have to do it. And I'll get Abijah to build his fence higher."

After that Belinda was on Mrs. Millett's mind most of the time. She was driven home many times a day, and never got a chance to have a good scratch.

But this thing could not go on forever. As cold weather came on, and the frost had taken most of her flowers, Mrs. Millett's vigilance began to relax, and one day Belinda came over and found a nice sunny place in a grassy banking, where she scratched and dusted to her heart's content for half an hour before she was discovered.

There she lay her feathers full of dirt and her eyes blinking sleepily, when Mrs. Millett came along and saw her.

The widow pounced upon her, but Belinda was too quick for her. Thereupon began a chase which only ended in the middle house, which Belinda had always used for a dining room and living room.

The next day there was news for the gossips. Abijah Blaisdell had lost his hen.

"You see, I was away from home all day," he said, "and I didn't get home till dark. But I'd left feed enough for Belinda's dinner and supper, so I didn't worry about her. I went out and shut the door of the third house, because I supposed she'd gone to bed, but I didn't look in, as I was in a hurry to get to my supper.

"Well, this morning I went to let her out, and she didn't come. The house was empty. The other two houses were empty, too, but in the second one there were some feathers. Now, I suppose for some reason she took a notion to sleep in the second house, and as I didn't shut that, some varmint got in and caught her. 'Twas a fox most likely."

For a day or two Abijah was low spirited, but he was of a philosophical mind, and he decided to make the best of it, so he began to tear down the henhouses, as there was no further use for them.

It was the fourth day after Belinda's disappearance that Abijah went to do some whitewashing for Mr. Millett. "You'd better stay to dinner," she had said, "then you can work longer," and Abijah had agreed.

The widow was up early that morning and had her dinner started betimes. Only a few minutes before Abijah came she removed the cover of a kettle which was singing on the stove and looked in anxiously.

"I expect you'd a-been as tough as a billed owl if I hadn't kept you so long," she said. "As it is, I guess you'd better boil pretty steady till noon."

Abijah worked busily and cheerfully, and as the savory smells from the kitchen came to him, his spirits rose and he whistled his favorite tunes.

When dinner was announced he dropped his brush instantly and came without delay.

He enjoyed his dinner immensely, and as he took a second helping of the central dish he said, looking across at the widow.

"I believe this is the best chicken pie I ever ate."

"I'm glad you like it," she answered, and he noticed that she blushed at his compliment.

They say that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. If this is true, that chicken pie must have been the entering wedge in the case of Abijah Blaisdell.

Be this as it may, he and the widow were married last June.—Boston Herald.

A Dog Stops a Runaway.

A butcher boy in Chicago, four years ago, taught a Great Dane pup to sit on the seat of the delivery wagon, hold the reins in his mouth and pull back on them if the horse started while the boy was away. It was a pretty trick, and has been the pride of the butcher boy ever after he got a shop of his own and had other boys to deliver for him. A few days ago, as the Great Dane was trotting beside the wagon, the horse shied so violently as to throw the driver from his seat. The horse then ran away up the street, the reins dragging on the ground. The dog was puzzled for ten seconds. He looked at the boy scrambling to his feet, half dazed. He looked at the runaway horse tearing down the street. He looked at the dangling lines and he decided something was to be done. Sprinting after the runaway he caught him in a block, seized the reins, which were luckily buckled, in his teeth, and settled back, an animated, scratching, bouncing anchor. The horse was not so very badly scared, after all, and the dog was a big dog to carry on the bit. The horse stopped presently, the Great Dane grunting with joy of the struggle, and the boy came up. All which shows the value of early education.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

NEW YORK FASHIONS.
THE LATEST DESIGNS IN GOWNS AND WRAPS FOR YOUNG GIRLS.

New York City (Special).—The gowns for young girls this season are made on very much the same lines as those that are worn by older women, but the materials used are not quite so



SKIRT AND WAIST FOR A YOUNG MISS.

heavy. An unusual and very useful little gown is made of a wine-colored cloth. The skirt, long and close-fitting, has no flounce or tunic, but is trimmed with bands of violet velvet that are put on down the front breadth.



COSTUME FOR A GIRL.

form a small circle, and thence round the entire skirt. The waist is tight-fitting, with the fulness drawn in at the belt, and is trimmed with bands of velvet put on as though to outline a bolero jacket; over the shoulders are ruffles of the cloth—double ruffles, one shorter than the other—and the sleeves are close-fitting. On the waist are also round gold buttons, and at the throat is a soft tie of wine-colored silk. This gown has much the princess effect, but is made with separate skirt and waist.

Gray cloth gowns are very fashionable, sometimes made only with the gray, and in other cases relieved by the trimming of some contrasting color. A very graceful gown, cut in princess style, is of the lightest shade of gray, trimmed with bands down the front of white cloth on which are smaller bands of a deep blue velvet. The way in which these bands are put on is quite different from anything that has as yet been worn. The front of the gown is perfectly plain, at the throat is a large bow of blue velvet, and the sleeves are finished at the wrist with two bands of the velvet, blue and white. The hat worn with this is a pale gray velvet trimmed with rosettes of velvet, two gray ostrich tips, and exaggeratedly large jet pins stuck through the velvet rosettes. The muff with this gown is of gray chinchilla.

Stylish Costume For a Girl. A very new and stylish combination, by May Mantos, is shown in the large engraving in stone gray and rich red. The gray novelty wool goods is strewn over with polka dots of red velvet or chenille. The yoke and collar are of machine tuck velvet that is bought ready tuck for this purpose. The bertha has a facing of plain red velvet, its lowest edges being trimmed with three evenly spaced rows of narrow red velvet ribbon to match the skirt and sleeves. A sash of satin backed velvet is tied around the waist. The waist is arranged over fitted linings that close invisibly in centre back. The full front and backs are gathered top and bottom and applied at round yoke depth, the yoke being faced with tuck velvet. The pretty bertha is shaped in square outline, the top being rounded to fit the lower

worn, and the silks must be soft and pliable, or they have no style. Fleur de velours make beautiful gowns, and the old-fashioned armure and ottoman silks are coming into favor again. The prettiest of all the fabrics for a dressy gown is the new crepe de chine, as glossy as satin. To be sure it costs three, four or five dollars a yard, but then this is an extravagant age.

Water Wrap For a Girl. It would seem as though every possible style had already been exhausted in the designs that have been shown in the winter wraps for girls, but every week new ones appear; some of

edge of yoke. A standing collar covered with tuck velvet finishes the neck. The sleeves fit the arm closely, being shaped with upper and under portions, stylish puffs being gathered and arranged at the top. The wrists are trimmed with cross lines of narrow velvet ribbon, which decoration is repeated just below the puffs of sleeves.

The skirt is shaped with four gores that fit at the top and flare prettily at the foot. Gathers adjust the fulness in back, and the top is sewed to lower edge of waist. The three evenly spaced rows of velvet ribbon are applied to form a pretty pointed outline in centre front.

Very many charming combinations of material and coloring may be suggested by the mode. The bertha could be all of velvet with guipure applique border, and the yoke and collar covered with all over guipure or the dress may be all of one fabric, the yoke and collar being covered and the bertha outlined, with rows of ribbon, plain or fringed.

Serge, chevot, cashmere, veiling, broadcloth or other woolen fabrics will trim durably with braid, while silk materials may have insertion or ribbon as decoration.

To make this costume for a girl of eight years will require two and one-half yards of material forty-four inches wide.

Expensive and Varied Dress Fabrics. Fashionable dress fabrics are varied indeed this season, but it is the soft clinging textures that have first place. A new cloth called drap de chine, soft faced cloths and drap d'ete are all

used, and the silks must be soft and pliable, or they have no style. Fleur de velours make beautiful gowns, and the old-fashioned armure and ottoman silks are coming into favor again. The prettiest of all the fabrics for a dressy gown is the new crepe de chine, as glossy as satin. To be sure it costs three, four or five dollars a yard, but then this is an extravagant age.

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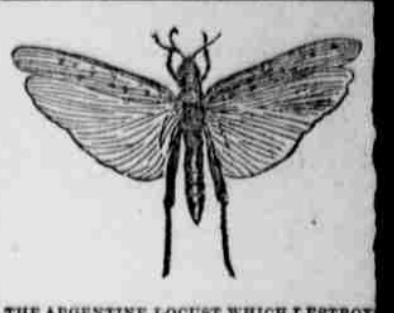


LONG COAT FOR A GIRL.

them made on the same lines as the older ones, but all with a novelty as to cut and trimming. One of the latest designs for a cloth long coat for a girl is the accompanying smart, but rather trying design.

ARGENTINE'S LOCUST PLAGUE
Many Believe That the Country Can Never Be Free From Them.

The Argentine Republic is subject to droughts, and the crop rises and falls according to the weather. The worst thing, however, that the farmers have to contend with is the locusts. The pest that infests the Ar



THE ARGENTINE LOCUST WHICH DESTROY THE WHEAT CROP.

gentine is fully as bad as the locust plague with which the Lord afflicted Pharaoh.

Many people believe that the situation is such that the number of locust will increase from year to year, and that the country can never be free from them. They argue this from the location of the Argentine. It is, you know, situated in the temperate zone with a delightful climate and a fairly good soil. Just about it lies Brazil which is covered with tropical vegetation and vast areas of which will never be different from what they are now. In this country it is claimed that the locusts have their breeding grounds. They are produced by the million there every year, and as a swarm thinks nothing of a flight of 500 miles you can see that an army starting out from there is a dangerous enemy. They say that the locusts breed in Brazil and annually start out for the south, eating up everything as they go.

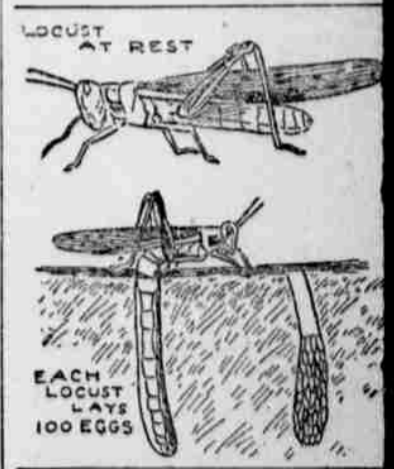
It is hard to realize what a terrible thing such an invasion is. The locust appear in great swarms, which often darken the sun if they fly between you and it. They light on every thing green and begin eating. The branches of the trees bend down with their weight and you can hear the snapping of their jaws as they crunch the leaves. They often eat the flesh from the fruit, leaving the stones of the peaches hanging to the bare branches. They will clean the crops from the fields, eating the grain down to the ground. Sometimes they will take the green wheat from one side of the road and pass by that on the other and they sometimes fly on and on for days over rich fields to feed on those beyond. The next swarm may eat that which is left.

This pest of the locust has been so great that the Argentine Government has been spending large sums of money to get rid of them. Among other things they have sent to the United States for Professor Lawrence Bruner, of the University of Nebraska, to investigate the subject and to give them advice.

The Argentine locusts look very much like grasshoppers. They are very prolific, and the greatest damage is caused not by those which come in swarms, but by the young locust which follow. As the locusts move over the country they lay their eggs in the ground. Each female locust makes a hole in the ground and lay about 100 eggs, and a month or so later these turn into 100 young locusts who crawl out and begin their march over the country. Their parents have pretty well cleaned up the crop. The babies start out to eat what has grown up in the meanwhile. They can eat up everything as they go, cover the ground, crawl over it, and sweep the country of every green.

In a few weeks they grow up and then fly onward to other grounds. No conception can be formed of the enormous numbers of locusts. In one year sixteen millions were destroyed in one day. Billions of eggs are now being laid out of the ground and crushed, and to-day the Argentine farmers are fighting for their life with the locusts.

The methods for exterminating them are many and costly. Thousands of dollars are spent every year to kill them. At the time of an invasion the farmers must turn out and destroy them. They are caught in traps of corrugated iron. They are scooped up with scrapers and killed; poison



LOCUST AT REST

are used, and the grass, plants and weeds are sometimes sprinkled with arsenic, kerosene and creosote. They are caught in bags, driven into ditches and are killed in all sorts of ways. Nevertheless, in 1891 it is estimated that \$80,000,000 worth of wheat was thus destroyed in two States of the Argentine. This impoverished the farmers of those States, and the National Government spent \$10,000,000 that year in giving them seed wheat.

Two hundred thousand families, has been calculated, are living in London on \$5 a week.