

## MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NIECES,—

Now that Spring will soon be upon us, we shall be turning our thoughts to that important subject to women, viz., dress. Let us glance backwards at some of the styles which were in vogue at one time. Of all subjects relating to the history of men, there is not one more interesting than that of dress. "Providence hath clothed all animals that are unable to clothe themselves. Man can clothe himself, and he is endowed beside with an appetite for dress, no less natural than an appetite for food." Originally dress was not necessary to health, but was invented later. One of the first customs among savages was painting their bodies or staining them with various colors, such as blue, which they squeezed from the leaves of the woad plant. Then they tattooed their skins with strange designs in many colors. For protection against cold, mankind began to clothe themselves with the skins of animals caught in the chase. The transition from these rude coats of skins to garments of wool, cotton and silk was very gradual. When the art of weaving was discovered, it opened the way for various designs in various fabrics. The Egyptians were skilled in manufacturing linen, as we see from the wrappings of mummies. They were also clever at coloring and preparing leather, of which they made sandals and shoes. The Orientals dressed very sumptuously, for we read of their long flowing robes, interwoven with gold and silver, their costly

must endure for the sake of fashion? But our own footwear will stand a great deal of improvement. Some of us still wear high heels and pointed toes, so we can scarcely afford to smile at others.

In old English times one's rank was shown by one's dress. Those who could spend £40 a year might wear saracen to line hose, doublets, and caps. A trimming of velvet was allowed to those who spent £20 a year. Nowadays one's dress is not to be taken as a mark of rank, except that a lady is always known by her plainness in outdoor attire. One never finds masses of jewelry and great display of grandeur in the dress of people of refinement. But our fashions of the present ought to be ruled by utility and health. We should not be controlled by persons who, regardless of the welfare of others, introduce absurd whims. How many ills are attributable to tight-lacing, that awful evil? All the organs are displaced and distorted, the circulatory and respiratory systems are crushed, indigestion begins, and life becomes misery. And for what? For fashion's sake. What a sin to abuse in such a way the beautiful bodies given to us by God!

It is amusing to trace the origin of certain fashions. The padded doublet was worn in the reign of Henry VIII. because that monarch became so corpulent. His subjects wished to appear as bulky as himself. Patches on the face and neck became the rage because a leading beauty had a mole which she wished to hide!

Can we do anything to keep down foolish fashions in dress? I think so. We can refuse to sacri-

fine, and we can readily imagine how he will stick to his post until the time arrives for all this "good bag" to be carried off. The fawn's covering and straps are already there. Yes, not only will this good dog stick to his post, but woe betide any unwary intruder who approaches his charge.

## Recipes.

## HOT CROSS BUNS.

Rub quarter pound butter into two pounds flour, and add a pinch of salt. Into a cup of fresh yeast stir a pint of warm milk and gradually stir this into the flour till it forms a light batter. Cover over and allow it to rise, then work into it with a wooden spoon half pound sugar, half nutmeg (grated), half pound currants, one egg, and half teaspoon allspice. Knead well, cover again, and allow it to stand until perfectly spongy; then knead into buns, cut a cross on top, let rise until light, cover with clarified sugar, and bake twenty minutes.

## ORANGE PUDDING.

One cup sugar, half cup rolled crackers, two eggs, teaspoonful butter, one orange; grate the rind and squeeze the juice; one quart milk. Bake like custard and serve when cold.

## TOMATO SOUP.

Take one can of tomatoes and strain through a soup strainer; add one teaspoon salt, one saltspoon pepper, half saltspoon of soda, and set it on the stove to heat slowly. Meanwhile make a white sauce, with one tablespoon butter, one of flour, and



"A GOOD BAG."

turbans, their bracelets and various jewels, and their artificial hair. The ladies, living very secluded lives, had little else to do than to adorn themselves. "They consumed the whole morning at the toilet, employing paint and every drug for cleaning and whitening the skin. They laid red even upon their lips, and took great care of their teeth; their hair, made up in buckles with a hot iron, was perfumed and spread upon the shoulders; their dress was elegant, and artfully contrived to set off a fine shape." Some of these devices are not unknown even to-day, are they, girls?

The head appears to have been first chosen for decoration, for everyone can recall to mind pictures of savages with feathers in their hair. The fashionable dame of to-day takes her model from these rude ancestors of hers, and appears with her hair adorned with feathers and flowers. Jewish ladies used to powder their raven locks with gold dust, and in 1593 the nuns of Paris wore their hair curled and sprinkled with white powder.

Now to descend to the feet. In England in the 15th century, shoes were worn with very long, pointed toes, which turned up. At one time the turned-up toes were so long that they were attached to the knee by gold chains. A year or two ago these pointed toes again became fashionable, though not nearly to the same extent. We laugh at these fashions, and at the Chinese, who bandage little girls' feet to prevent growth, for their idea of beauty is a foot so small as to measure about four inches in length and two in breadth. Can you imagine the torture which the poor little children

fice health and comfort for such whims. Our lives are far too valuable to be thrown away for this style or that one. We can join hands in trying to reform dress, to make it more hygienic and rational. By all means let it be as becoming as possible. It is the duty of every woman, young or old, to please, and one way of pleasing is to clothe one's self becomingly. But at the same time let our dress be reasonable and sensible and comfortable, and if we have the courage of our convictions and are brave enough to carry out our ideas, we shall soon see our influence making a wonderful difference in the dress of others.

Your loving old auntie— MINNIE MAY.

## "A Good Bag."

What a proud doggie! He surely feels that he has had a hand (!) in every separate capture of that forlorn group. One cannot help feeling sorry for those poor helpless victims: The rich-plumaged birds, so lately spreading their beautiful wings in joyous flight, now lying limp and spent; the young fawn with its gentle and pathetic face; and we forget the proverbial cunning of Mr. Fox (often made out worse than he is, I fancy) when we see him stretched out, prone and helpless, with his fine brush outspread on the ground. One generally thinks of fox-hunting as a separate sport in which the fox and his brush are rarely seen together, save when running. This German artist, however, has drawn a very graphic picture, if a trifle sad. The expression of the faithful hound on guard is very

one pint milk, thus: Set the milk on the fire in a saucepan to heat; put the butter and flour in another pan on the fire, and stir gently until the butter melts; let them bubble together two or three minutes, then pour in milk, a little at a time, till all is used; stir, so it will be smooth, until it bubbles; add this sauce to the tomato, strain all again, return to fire, and serve as soon as steaming hot.

The boy raised on a farm has a better chance in life than the city-bred boy. The farm-bred boy almost invariably has the better constitution—those elements of good health and ability to stand hard work that mean so much in this life. He is usually endowed with a stronger moral character. Absolute integrity was never in greater demand in young men. The city boy often has a pertness or "smart" air that country youth do not possess, but the latter more frequently develop the manly, substantial carriage that denotes real character. His mind is better trained than the average town boy's. He may not be quite as glib in his book-learning, but the farm-bred boy, taught in Nature's school to observe and understand, has a rare foundation upon which to build a knowledge of industry, art, science or any branch of farming. The boy on the farm doesn't appreciate all this, but he ought to be thankful for his country life. After he has had some years of experience in other vocations he will realize how true these words are.