

MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NIECES.—This is an age of cheap literature, consequently an age in which it is in the power of every one, young and old, to provide themselves with mental food at little or no cost.

That the majority of people take advantage of our cheap publications is evident from the vast number of books written and the largely increasing multitude which the booksellers dispose of from year to year.

I always feel sorry for any of my nieces who, either from lack of time or inclination, do not indulge in the delightful recreation of reading. They miss so much that is not only pleasurable, but profitable. Take, for example, the convalescent, to whom exertion of any kind would be trying, perhaps dangerous, and who is so tired of himself and his surroundings that it is absolutely necessary for him to have his thoughts diverted to other channels. What a boon it is for him to have congenial books to read; or, if unequal to that, have them read to him. Conversation is very often most trying to invalids. A book saves them all the worry of talking or listening to the conversation of thoughtless friends, who not infrequently introduce topics that should never be mentioned in a sickroom.

Again, if one is in mental trouble, temporary relief can often be obtained by reading an absorbing story. Our thoughts may only be diverted from our miseries for a short time; but even a brief respite gives us strength, better to bear the burden again.

Now, some of you busy mothers have often felt so weary, when your day's labor is over, that you have felt fit for nothing but bed. Perhaps too tired even to sleep when you get there. Just try reading some light literature for half an hour first, and I am sure you will sleep better than if you retired not only feeling the day's fatigues, but dwelling on them.

I hope that to many of my older nieces the works of Dickens and Scott are familiar. I think they should always have the preference when one begins novel reading. Indeed, other authors refer to them so constantly that it adds to our pleasure in reading their works to remember that we, too, have met the people whose sayings and doings they quote. With these for the foundation, and some of the up-to-date novelists' works in addition, such as Thos. Hardy, Blackmore, Manville Fenn, Baring Gould, Hall Caine, Maxwell Grey, Mary Linskill, Jessie Fothergill, John Strange Winter, Edna Lyall, and Nouchette Carey, you will have a little library of fiction interesting to most women and innocuous to all.

The quality of what we read should always be a matter of consideration, for I think most of you will concede that we are more or less influenced by what we peruse. I mean, if we read such works as tend to elevate our thoughts, they must influence us for good. If, on the contrary, we read narratives of sin and crime, no matter how highly they are glossed over to make them attractive to the mental palate, they nevertheless tend to the deterioration of our minds. And if so with us, how much more so to the little ones, whose minds are naturally more susceptible to good and evil than our maturer ones. I wonder if any of you mothers make a rule of glancing through a book before it is read by the children? You should be just as particular about their mental food as you are about that which nourishes the body. After all, it does not mean much labor; very often the author's name alone is a sufficient guarantee for the fitness or unfitness of the volume for their perusal.

Nowadays so many of our eminent novelists write pretty stories for children that the extremely "goody goody" style, so unnatural and uninteresting, is a thing of the past. I refer to those which have such ultra good children for their heroes and heroines as we never meet with in real life. Even the writers themselves appear to think they are too good for this world, and generally condemn them to an early death. This style of literature for young people has gone out of fashion, and in its place we have most attractive little books, simply written, by some of our best novelists, especially for children. Those by Mrs. Molesworth, Katharine Macquoid, Mary Linskill, Rev. Baring Gould, Manville Fenn, etc., are generally so pretty and amusing that they are gladly read by children of a larger growth.

Many a child can be kept from the mischief which we are told "Satan always finds for idle hands to do" by providing them with suitable books, books which are not only amusing, but instructive. What can be more delightful than historical tales, adventures, descriptions of life in foreign countries! It is not waste of time to read them. Do not the little ones in this way acquire a great deal of useful knowledge, in the pleasantest and easiest way? If you have not done so before, try to foster a love of reading in your children; procure for them the best books in your power, and prove if their increased knowledge is not an ample reward for your trouble. MINNIE MAY.

"Do the duty which lies nearest thee, which thou knowest to be a duty. Thy second duty will already have become clear."

"A happy nature is sometimes a gift, but it is also a grace, and can therefore be cultivated and acquired."

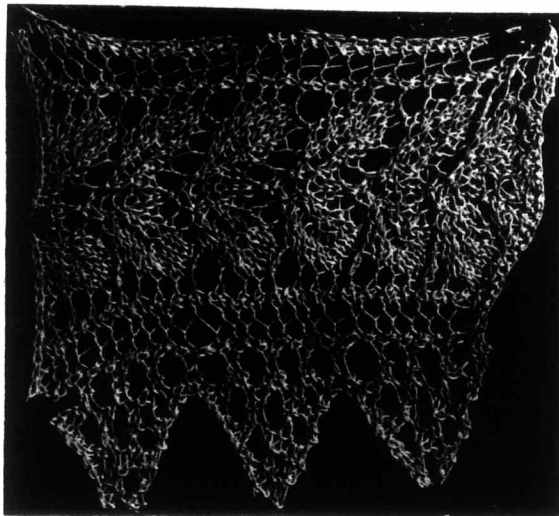
Double Rose-Leaf Lace.

Cast on twenty-eight stitches, then knit across plain.

1st row.—Three plain, over, narrow, over, 3 plain, over, narrow, purl 1, narrow, purl 1, narrow, purl 1, narrow, over, 3 plain, over, 2 plain, over, narrow, * over twice, 2 plain.

2nd row.—Slip 1, 2 plain, purl 1, * 2 plain, over, narrow, purl 6, 1 plain, purl 1, 1 plain, purl 1, 1 plain, purl 6, 2 plain, over, narrow, purl 1.

3rd row.—Three plain, over, narrow, over, 5 plain, over, slip 1, narrow and draw slipped stitch over narrowed 1, purl 1, slip 1, narrow, draw slipped stitch over narrowed one, over, 5 plain, over, 2 plain, over, narrow, * 4 plain.



4th row.—Slip 1, 5 plain, * over, narrow, purl 8, 1 plain, purl 8, 2 plain, over, narrow, purl 1.

5th row.—Three plain, over, narrow, over twice, 1 plain, narrow, purl 1, narrow, 1 plain, over, slip 1, narrow and draw slipped stitch over narrowed one, over, 1 plain, narrow, purl 1, narrow, 1 plain, over twice, 2 plain, over, * narrow, over twice, narrow, over twice, narrow.

6th row.—Slip 1, 1 plain, purl 1, 2 plain, purl 1, 2 plain, * over, narrow, 1 plain (the first of the over twice), purl 3, 1 plain, purl 7, 1 plain, purl 3, 3 plain, over, narrow, purl 1.

7th row.—Three plain, over, narrow, over, 1 plain, over, 1 plain, narrow, purl 1, narrow, 3 plain, narrow, purl 1, narrow, 1 plain, over, 1 plain, over, 2 plain, over, narrow, 6 plain.

8th row.—Slip 1, 7 plain, * over, narrow, purl 5, 1 plain, purl 5, 1 plain, purl 5, 2 plain, over, narrow, purl 1.

9th row.—Same as 1st row to *, then over twice, narrow, over twice, narrow, over twice, narrow.

10th row.—Slip 1, 1 plain, purl 1, 2 plain, purl 1, 2 plain, purl 1, then like 2nd row after *.

11th row.—Same as 3rd row to *, then 9 plain.

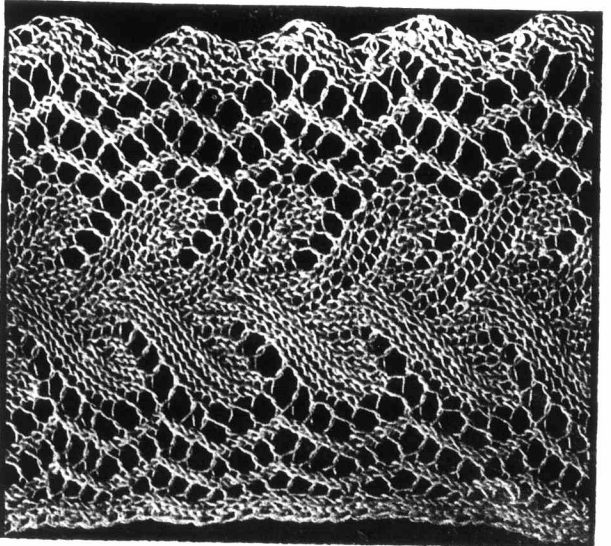
12th row.—Slip 1, 10 plain, then like 4th row after *.

13th row.—Same as 5th row to *, then over twice, narrow to end.

14th row.—Slip 1, 1 plain, purl 1, 2 plain, purl 1, 2 plain, purl 1, 2 plain, then like 6th row after *.

15th row.—Same as 7th row to *, then 12 plain.

16th row.—Bind off 10, 3 plain, then like 8th row after *.



KNITTED LACE.

Cast on twenty-eight stitches.

1. Slip 1, knit 2, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 1, over, knit 2, narrow, knit 1, narrow, knit 2, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, narrow, knit 2.

2. Slip first stitch, and seam this, and every alternate row.

3. Slip 1, knit 2, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 3, over, knit 2, narrow, knit 2, narrow, knit 2, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, narrow, knit 2.

4. Slip 1, knit 2, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 5, over, knit 2, narrow twice, knit 2, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, narrow, knit 2.

5. Slip 1, narrow, knit 1, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 2, narrow, knit 1, narrow, knit 2.

over, knit 1, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 3. 9.—Slip 1, narrow, knit 1, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 2, narrow, knit 2, over, knit 3, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 3.

11.—Slip 1, narrow, knit 1, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 2, narrow twice, knit 2, over, knit 5, over, narrow, over, narrow, over, knit 3.

12.—Seam across, and commence with first row. T. B.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

All communications to be accompanied by the name, age and address of the writer.

A prize will be given in July for the best short story or letter. The writer must be under age. All communications should be accompanied by the name, age and address of the writer, and addressed to "Cousin Dorothy," FARMER'S ADVOCATE, London, Ont.

A Specimen Letter.

(Supposed to have been written by a child of four years old.)

Cousin Dorothy, dear,
The thoughts are so queer,
That tumble about in my mind.
So tangled they get,
Like the basket upset,
And the spools Kitty tried to unwind.
For I always keep thinking—
Things bob up like winking—
I can't keep them down if I will;
And, when I am sleeping,
In dreams they come peeping—
My mind it won't ever sit still.
Then it sets my tongue going,
And the words they come flowing:—
Where they come from I never can find.
To be sure, I asked Dolly,
But she says "it's all folly"—
I think they come out of my mind.
But both Dolly and me
In this fully agree:
We must hurry and write you a letter:
For we've read your words through,
And we hope they're all true,
For we're sure they couldn't be better.
On my birthday I wondered
If my mind was a hundred
Years older than poor little me:
I think it was grown up
Before it was sown up
In my body,—but where I can't see.
But we won't talk about ages,
For my doll it enrages—
She's too old any husband to please;
Though maybe he'd love her,
If he didn't discover
That her legs stop short at her knees.
It would be the hardest thing
To put on her marriage-ring.
For truly of arms she has none:
He will surely make a miss,
If he tries his bride to kiss.
For her head from her shoulders is gone.
I don't mind about her looks,
For she's very fond of books,
And I read to her nearly all day:
So my dearest doll and I
Will be happy till we die.
That's all. —From your loving little May. [J.]

The Jewel Princess.

(Continued from page 55.)

Then the angry fairy vanished with a clap of thunder that shook the palace to its very foundations, and left Princess Brilliantine more dead than alive, from actual terror. Next morning, after her perfumed bath, she seated herself languidly before her vast mirror, and commanded her women to attire her as usual.

"Surely!" she said, merrily, "the sunbeams have settled among my curls and forgotten to go home, for each tress shines more than ever."

"Gold itself could not be brighter than the hair of your Highness!" replied her women, and they were nearer the truth than they imagined. As the ivory comb passed through the long tresses a shower of glittering gold-dust fell on the marble floor, and the hands and clothes of the tire-women were powdered with the same golden drops. The attendants supposed that the godmother of Princess Brilliantine had given her this wonderful power, and all the highest nobles bribed, coaxed and flattered all in office, to get their daughters and nieces appointed maids of honor, in order that they might share in the golden shower. As for the Princess, she was too indolent to notice that one of the fairy's prophesied punishments had visited her. A few days later, a vigilant maid-in-waiting noticed, when the Princess laughed, that her teeth had become pearls; but this change, too, passed unnoticed by the vain and careless beauty. But the fairy's day of reckoning was at hand. One morning, on arising, the Princess fretfully exclaimed to her attendants that they were arousing her before daylight.

"It is nearly noon, your Highness!" replied the lady-in-waiting.

"Nonsense," angrily replied the Princess. "Why, it is quite dark."

After various consultations, they decided that she had caught cold in her eyes, and had lost her sight for a time. The Princess was first very angry, and then grew terribly alarmed. The chief physician was sent for in such haste that he put on his court wig awry, and forgot to bring his gold-headed cane. He never left the Princess for two days and nights; but all his remedies proving useless, the most skillful oculists in the kingdom were consulted, but in vain. The eyes of the Princess were wide open, and more brilliant than ever; in fact, they almost dazzled the doctors with their brilliancy, but no one could find the cause of the disease, till an old, snuffy doctor, who had come from a little village in the island, and had crept unobserved into the consultation, boldly stated that