

Minnie May's Department.

MY DEAR NIECES,—It is surprising on how small a thing persons will sometimes pride themselves! I have known some girls set themselves up as something superior to their neighbors' daughters because of the curiously-wrought needle-work on their garments. They quite despised their acquaintances who wore plain hems, whereas a person of fine taste would see at a glance that the neat hem was far more tasteful and elegant than their coarse embroidery or irregular braiding. Great skill is needed to make fancy work pay in beauty for the time and labor it costs. A dress over-loaded with trimming is always a mark of uncultivated taste. Very few young ladies can become proficient in fancy-work without woefully neglecting their minds, not to speak of every-day duties. You will usually find these skillful needle-women are narrow in their views and exceedingly ignorant of the leading events of the day. Aim rather to cultivate your minds and hearts, dear nieces, by careful study and reading, and by self-sacrificing efforts for the good of others, and you will be far more attractive in the eyes of all whose good opinion is worth having than if you were adorned in the gayest robes of fashion.

MINNIE MAY.

OFFICE RECEIPTS.—"Andrews' Bazar" for May will be welcomed by all ladies interested in the toilette. The styles published in it are new and popular.

Answers to Inquirers.

NELLY N.—The best way to prevent your bird from eating its eggs is to put its food in the cage over night, so that when the breakfast hour arrives there will be something to detract its attention. If it still persists in this troublesome habit, we fear there is no remedy for it.

J. D. S.—"When should verbena plants be set in the open ground? What kind of soil do they require?" Verbenas are not very particular about soil, provided it is not water-soaked. Too much moisture tends to produce mildew and rot the roots. Set out the plants in May as soon as the ground is warm and all danger from frosts is past. Verbenas set in May will have spread two and three feet by August, and the plants will be profusely covered with flowers and seed pods.

"Farmer's Wife," who asks about keeping the skin smooth, will find if she dissolves 5 cents worth of borax in a quart bottle of soft water and rinses her hands and face in a little of it whenever she washes them, that it will keep them smooth. I keep a bottle of borax water sitting on a washstand where I can use it often, and my hands are neither rough nor red, though I do my share of scrubbing, &c., with soft soap, which is liable to make the skin crack if some precaution is not used.

SUSIE.—When showing a gentleman into the parlor of your own house you may allow him to pass in first, but if he is very punctilious, he will wait and allow you to precede him. But should he not do so, you must not consider him rude.

LIZZIE.—Asks can a young lady of twenty-three, after having placed all the affections of her youth on a young man—yet through unavoidable circumstances that friendship was severed—love another? Now, if Lizzie had really placed all the affections of her youth on number one, she would be utterly inconsolable, and would not dream of the possibility of change. Therefore, the very fact of her asking this question is a good sign, and when we proceed to her next question, we feel still more hopeful. She asks—"Can a lady teach herself to love a gentleman (one worthy to be loved) whom she does not hate, but simply regards with indifference? Yes, Lizzie, we think she can. Life is still young at three and twenty, and if number one is out of the question there is no reason that you should wear the willow for him through all your remaining years. But don't be in a hurry; be sure you are "off with the old love before you are on with the new."

How shall I treat my Calla Lilly through the summer in order to have it bloom next winter? Mrs. L.—Plant it in the garden and leave it there

until September; then it should be potted for winter.

J. A. D.—Do not sow your flower seeds before the soil becomes warm and dry; a guide will be found in the forest trees; when they put forth their young leaves, all nature is ready for active work. Seeds planted then germinate at once and grow vigorously.

RECIPES.

CHOCOLATE JELLY CAKE.—One quarter pound butter, two cupfuls sugar, three eggs, three cupfuls flour, one cupful milk, one level teaspoonful soda, two teaspoonfuls cream tartar, one teaspoonful extract of lemon. Cream for between cakes: One cupful chocolate, one cupful sweet milk, yolks of two eggs, or, instead of eggs, substitute one-half tablespoonful corn-starch, one and a half cupfuls sugar; boil as stiff as jelly, stir all the time; this requires boiling over half an hour to be stiff enough; when cool add one teaspoonful extract of vanilla.—Mrs. J. B.

CREAM PIE.—To one pint of milk put two even tablespoonfuls of corn starch, two of sugar, one egg, a small pinch of salt, and flour to taste, with extract of lemon and orange mixed. Bake in a rich paste.—Aunt Addie.

Miss Corson, Superintendent of the New York Cooking School, furnishes the following directions for making the cake termed "Angels' Food." Beat the whites of eleven eggs to a stiff froth. Sift into them, a little at a time, ten ounces or one and a half tumblersful of powdered sugar, mixing carefully and lightly; then sift five ounces, or one tumblerful of flour four times; add a level teaspoonful of cream of tartar to the flour; sift it again, and then sift it into the eggs and sugar a little at a time, mixing carefully and lightly; when all the flour is used, add a teaspoonful of vanilla essence to the cake, and put it into a new cake pan or mould not buttered or lined. Bake in a moderate oven about three-quarters of an hour, testing it with a broom straw. Let the cake cool gradually in the mouth of the oven with the door open. When quite cold loosen around the edges and turn out. The success of this delicious cake depends upon preserving its lightness. If the eggs are beaten quite stiff and the flour and sugar very carefully and gently stirred in, it will be light. Do not open the oven for fifteen minutes after putting in the cake.

What Every House Needs.

No house is properly constructed that has not in it a room or rooms expressly designed for the accommodation of the sick and the infirm. This room should have a warm, sunny exposure. The window light should be ample, and command the widest possible view. The next essential is a good, liberal fireplace. By the warmth which it generates, and facilities for ventilation, the whole room is kept wholesome and pure. Not only so, but a slowly burning fire with its lights and shades, its rising sparks and glowing brands, its curling and many-colored smoke, and its changeable embers, furnish careless diversion to the sick one who lies watching it. Nothing is more soothing and quieting than the influence which subtly steals over the senses of one who gazes dreamily into the general flame. It is companionship itself. The walls, too, should have their proper adornments. Pictures that suggest quiet and peace, and the free, fresh life of nature outside, should be on them. A bracket with its vases of flowers, a green clambering vine, clinging ambitiously to the ceiling; a library case filled with familiar books; curtains that soften the light while admitting it—all these are helpful to one that lies in weakness, and can take no more of life than the little room reveals. Better still, if just outside of the window stands a tree with the branches so placed that the leaves of some almost sweep the pane. How much the sight of twigs, buds, and leaves stirred by the wind and flecked by bright gleams of the sun, can cheer the mind of one who lies upon the pillow idly looking at them. The central thought expressed in a well-constructed sick room is—diversion. The object of its construction and location should be to give accommodation and protection to the invalid, while at the same time it suggests the beauty and the freedom of being unconfined—the life and animation of the great out-door world beyond.

Attractive Luncheons.

A writer in Scribner's Magazine utters a protest against making the school luncheon so unattractive as to destroy the child's appetite. She says:—"There is something very dampening to the appetite in the aspect of thick bread and butter rolled in a piece of coarse brown paper with a cookie or two sticking to the parcel, and an apple covered with crumbs at bottom of pail. Such a luncheon will often prevent a delicate child from eating at all. A little care spent in preparation—in cutting the bread trimly and neatly, packing the cake in white paper, and the whole in a fresh napkin, in choosing a pretty basket to take the place of the tin pail—is not pains thrown away. Some children are born fastidious and with a distaste for food. They require to be tempted to eat at all—tempted, not by unwholesome goodies, but by making simple things dainty and attractive to them. We have heard a grown woman, whose fastidiousness had survived her childhood, describe with a shudder the effect which her dinner basket at school had upon her. The very sight of it took away all appetite, and she went through the afternoon faint and fasting rather than meddle with its contents. By all means bake the custard in a pretty 'cup,' and do what is possible to give the luncheon an appetizing appearance to the little people who depend upon it for the working force of their long school day."

Coffee in Typhoid Fever.

Dr. Guillaume, of the French navy, in a recent paper on typhoid fever, says: "Coffee has given us unhopd-for satisfaction; after having dispensed it, we find, to our great surprise, that its action is prompt as it is decisive. No sooner have our patients taken a few tablespoonfuls of it than their features became relaxed and they came to their senses. The next day the improvement is such that we are tempted to look upon coffee as a specific against typhoid fever. Under its influence the stupor is dispelled, and the patient rouses from the state of somnolency in which he has been since the invasion of the disease. Soon all the functions take their natural course, and he enters upon convalescence." Dr. Guillaume gives to an adult two or three tablespoonfuls of strong black coffee every two hours, alternated with one or two teaspoonfuls of claret or Burgundy wine. A little lemonade or citrate of Magnesia should be taken daily, and after awhile quinine. From the fact that malaise cerebral symptoms appear first, the doctor regards typhoid fever as a nervous disease, and the coffee acting on the nerves is peculiarly indicated in the early stages before local complications arise.

TO PRESERVE BOUQUETS.—To preserve a bouquet, a correspondent of the Western Rural says: "Sprinkle it lightly with fresh water, and put it in a vase containing soap-suds. Each morning take the bouquet out of the suds, and lay it sideways in clean water; keep it there a minute or two, then take it out, and sprinkle the flowers lightly by the hand with water. Replace it in the suds, and it will bloom as freshly as when first gathered. Change the suds every three or four days. This method will keep a bouquet bright and beautiful for at least a month."

A tongue should be cut across, nearly through the middle, and thin slices be taken from each side; the fat is situated at the root of the tongue, and a portion of it should be helped with each slice.

Practice in the art is essential to dexterity, and when once the lady of the house is mistress of the carving knife and fork, she will value the accomplishment quite as highly as others that may be considered more brilliant and ornamental.

It is not desirable to be a chatter-box. An excessive and stupid talker may be even more tiresome than the most reticent person. But the habit of talking fluently with cheerfulness, humor, wit, is one of the pleasantest and most enviable of accomplishments.

It is not what we earn but what we save that makes us rich. It is not what we eat but what we digest that makes us strong. It is not what we read but what we remember that makes us wise. It is not what we intend but what we do that makes us useful. It is not a few faint wishes but a life-long struggle that makes us valiant.