

Minute May's Department.

MY DEAR NIECES:

I left a story half told last month, so will now proceed with it. We had reached as far as Lake Champlain, this being the most direct route between Saratoga, the White Mountains, the Adirondacks, Montreal and Quebec, and we wanted to see as much as possible in a short space of time. The waters of the lake, whether reposing in a calm or surging under the power of a tempest, are indescribably beautiful, and made more attractive by the islands and by the bold rocky precipices which hang over the lake; but to continue for space will not allow me to dwell long on one point; from Lake Champlain we take the train for a short distance to reach Lake George. This lake, 36 miles long, has an elevation 320 feet above the sea. It is one of the finest sheets of water in the world, beautiful and romantic, dotted over with verdant isles, and on its shores at the foot of the mountains are built many pretty cottages and elegant villas. We leave the boat at Fort William Henry Hotel, a spacious and beautiful house, containing accommodation for nearly 1,000 guests, and where we were told were kept 500 negro servants.

A broad piazza surrounds the whole house, from which a magnificent view can be obtained of the lake and surrounding mountains. All steamers touch at this hotel landing, and four and six horse stages leave the hotel tri-daily for Glen's Falls, connecting with trains going southward. The coach we rode in was drawn by six horses and had 32 passengers, upper and lower deck. We rode in this manner for a distance of nine miles, then took the train in waiting for Saratoga. This celebrated watering place is a grand focus, to which the fashionable world of the United States, and indeed of Europe, is annually drawn. Here are intellectual men, stylish men, the beaux of society and men of the world, ladies of social rank, the marriageable daughter, the fluttering bee of fashion and the gentler bird of beauty are found amidst the throng. In fact to all classes Saratoga offers some pleasure; the most fastidious taste could not but be gratified in this respect, and among the elegant hotels situated in the place it would be hard to discriminate, some of which are not excelled in any city in the world.

Having made our choice of an hotel, we sallied forth to see the sights, and at once decide that Saratoga is a very pleasant and pretty village. But our steps are directed towards the "springs," and as we visit in turn those wonderful outflows from the bosom of mother earth, we are informed that hundreds of thousands of dollars have been expended for their improvement, and that at the present moment Saratoga contributes of its healing waters to almost every part of the globe. Life in Saratoga is two-fold, home and hotel; the former is enjoyed by the residents of the village, and the latter arrivals frequently number 1,000 daily. Hotel or fashionable life is but for a short season. In those few brief months wealth, beauty and fashion intermingle, and amid the gay whirl and excitement of the ballroom at night, visits to the springs in the morning, and promenades and drives in the afternoon, is formed the daily programme of the pleasure seekers. Willing though we may be to linger amidst these pleasant scenes we are compelled to continue our journey.

We now proceed to Albany. It contains many buildings well worthy of notice and the new State Capitol is a magnificent structure. The view from the Capitol is very fine, as the whole of the city and a large tract of the country can be seen from this eminence; but I must not dwell long on this point. We next went to Rochester, and was very much struck with the cleanness of this city and the grand cemetery; from there we proceeded to the Niagara Falls; but enough has been said of these well known and much admired Falls. We then returned home after having spent a truly enjoyable trip.

MINNIE MAY.

Recipes.

CHOCOLATE PUDDING.

One quart milk, fourteen even tablespoonfulls of grated breadcrumbs, twelve teaspoonfulls grated chocolate, six eggs, one tablespoonful of vanilla, sugar to make very sweet; separate the yolks and whites of four eggs, beat up the four yolks and two whole eggs together very light, with the sugar; put the milk on the range, and when it comes to a perfect boil pour it over the bread and chocolate; add

the beaten eggs and sugar and vanilla, taste it to be sure it is sweet enough, pour into a buttered dish, bake one hour in a moderate oven; when cold, and just before it is served, have the four whites beaten with a little powdered sugar and flavored with vanilla, and use as a meringue.

TO SPONGE A BLACK SILK DRESS.

Sponge the black silk lightly, on both sides, with a perfectly clean sponge dipped in spirits of wine; then, with a moderately warm iron, smooth the silk over on one side, not the side that will form the outside when re-made. If the selvages are too tight to allow the silk to become smooth, they will require snipping at intervals.

VEGETABLE CURRY.

Cut some onions in thin slices, and dry them a good brown in butter, add a breakfast-cupful of milk, in which a tablespoonful of curry powder has been mixed; let all boil together for twenty minutes, stirring the whole time; then add the vegetables previously parboiled, and let the whole simmer by the side of the fire for about an hour. Potatoes, peas, beans, carrots and turnips can be used, and broad beans alone make a delicious curry.

ROUGH TOWELS.

May I suggest to the housekeepers that there ought always to be a rough towel in the spare-room? There are so many of us who are accustomed to take a morning bath and want a good rub down after it is over—and the number is happily increasing, that to leave a guest with nothing but a towel as smooth as a pocket-handkerchief is to deprive him of a luxury which is almost a necessity.

MUTTON BROTH.

Trim off the fat, cut up the meat and break the bones. Allow a scant quart of cold water for every pound of meat; put these together in the soup kettle and set it on the back of the stove to heat slowly. When it boils, remove the scum carefully, and repeat the operation until no more scum rises. Keep it simmering steadily for four hours; then strain the stock and set it away to cool, after which remove the fat from the surface. Allow an ounce of rice or pear barley for each quart of broth. Wash, and soak it for two hours in enough warm water to cover it; then stir water and all into the boiling stock and cook for twenty-five minutes.

Season to taste with pepper, salt and celery salt. Be sure to keep the flavor simple and delicate, still avoiding insipidity. Stir frequently to prevent the rice from burning. If the broth is to be used immediately, the surface can be skimmed as carefully as possible and the balance of the grease removed with blotting paper.

Answers to Enquirers.

CHRISTINE.—Six months would be considered long enough to wear mourning for a brother-in-law; crape is not worn after six months, except in widows' mourning, or for a parent. Many ladies who are delicate wear high dresses in the evening.

ROSA MARR.—(1) Do you mean warts? because touching them with caustic will remove them; it must be used carefully on the face, as it blackens for a time the spot to which it is applied. (2) It is better in all cases to go to a dentist, as there are many causes for toothache. (3) As soon as the consent of the lady's parents has been asked and obtained and the engagement ring is given.

MARGARITA ST. CLAIR.—(1) The duties of a lady's companion are varied in most instances; she is required to sing and play the piano, to read aloud, to act as amanuensis, and where no housekeeper is kept this duty frequently devolves upon her. If the lady who engages her is an invalid, probably she will be required to act as nurse. In travelling, she has to take tickets, see to the luggage, and make arrangements at hotels, etc., that is if the lady is unaccompanied by a gentleman. (2) It depends entirely upon the position of the person by whom you are engaged, and whether you are likely to mix much in society.

BESTIE BAKER.—(1) In presenting a wedding present, should it be sent to the lady previous to the wedding with the sender's compliments, or should you present the bride with it personally after the ceremony is over? ANS.—(1) It should be sent the day before or several days before, with no compliments but kind wishes expressed, according to the degree of friendship between sender and bride. Wishing a great deal of happiness, or with best wishes for future happiness and prosperity; anything cordial and kind will befit an occasion which calls forth the warmest feelings from every friendly heart.

TOPSY.—(1) To frost leaves, twigs, flowers, etc.: dip them in white of egg, afterwards in powdered loaf sugar or saltpetre and dry before the fire; another way is to dip them in a solution of gum and water, and dust with glass powder. (2) To clean brass: rub it over slightly with a piece of flannel dipped in sweet oil; next rub it with another piece dipped in finely powdered rotten-stone; then clean it with a soft linen cloth and polish off with leather.

T. T. T.—The great wall around China was built by the first emperor of the Tsin dynasty about 220 B.C., as a protection against the Tartar tribes. It is 1,250 miles long, it is 20 feet high; thickness at the base, 25 feet; at the top, 15 feet. Earth enclosed in brick-work forms the mass of the wall.

SUBSCRIBER.—Please give a receipt for making a pumpkin pie with one egg, when eggs are scarce. ANS.—This is easily done if you use a very little milk, when one egg will be plenty for a pie. With much milk several eggs are needed for the custard, and the pie is no better for it and not so much of a pumpkin pie.

October.

A few more songs and soon these tuneful voices
O'er the blue splendor of the Southern Sea
Will sound, where the red tanager rejoices
Beneath the acacia and the orange tree.

Soon, one by one, the rods now bright and golden
Will turn to dusty brambles by the way,
And starry asters fall, as from the olden
Rich tapestries the glories fade away.

Slowly the rushes, and the flags of iris,
Drooping, no more their purple banners raise,
And deep, as in the land of dark Oairis,
Streams the red light, through bars of chryso-
prase.

A few more days and all this world of flowers,
The light and glory on the land and main,
Will fade, as once on great Aladdin's towers
The enchantment passed, and all was dark again.

No kingly power, or wand of necromancer,
Can gild with gold the withered fields again.
Nor clarion voice can fill, with jocund answer—
A veil of silence falls on hill and plain.

Yet in the west an orange light is burning,
Where bright Heaven's steadfast lamp is lit on high;
And bold Orion comes, each night returning,
With countless worlds on worlds beyond the sky.

And love shall live, though all the rocks should crumble,
And with the ever-blooming cypress last,
And warm hands clasp tho' loud the storm-winds rumble,
And joys burn brighter in the wintry blast.

SARAH D. CLARK.

A CLEVER CROW.—I have had my Australian piping crow for about two years. At first he was quite uneducated, and rather a disreputable-looking party; but, with good food and exercise, his musical talent soon developed itself. He began with the first part of "The Bells," then he got off perfectly the trumpet call of "Cease Firing," "Charlie is my Darling," "Nix my Dolly," and he is diligently at work at "God bless the Prince," and has the first part fairly well off. He fetches and carries like a dog, and seems never tired of running after a ball of crumpled paper, and bringing it back and putting it into one's hand and waiting for another throw. He will tumble about on the floor, and play more like a monkey than a bird. He will get into a slipper with a string tied to it, and allow himself to be coached round and round the room, holding on all the time to the string. Some time ago we were troubled with mice, but "Peter" soon brought them to a sense of their situation. He ferreted them out, chased them, killed them, and having duly washed them in his water tin, hung them up to dry, picked them, and swallowed them. It requires great perseverance training these birds. They will eat almost anything. Some days ago our bird swallowed a piece of glass, and for two days and nights was very ill, moaning pitifully; but he at last brought it up in the usual way hawks and owls do. He is now quite recovered and in full song.—[The London Field.]