

Minnie May's Department.

MY DEAR NIECES.—We are well aware that plenty of exercise in the open air is necessary to good health, and riding on horse-back is rightly considered a most invigorating and graceful pursuit, but one which has been too much neglected by young ladies, especially in this country. A smart canter for a few miles or a swinging trot along some country road will bring a set of muscles into play that often otherwise remain unused, rouse the torpid liver and paint many a pale cheek with roses. The eyes, lips, and every feature even, possess the fresh and sparkling grace, imparted only by the purity of the blood, and its brisk and equal circulation, which are produced by temperature and exercise. Every man of sense and genuine taste will prefer the ruddy glow of health, the active, agile step and exuberant gaiety of her who is accustomed to spend some time of every day in active outdoor exercise, to the pale, languid countenance of the lady whose leisure hours are passed without occupation in listless lounging. Ride, by all means, if you have the chance; if not, go on foot, for human life, to thrive, must have open air exercise.

MINNIE MAY.

Work Basket.

TOILET COVERS.—Handsome and durable covers for dressing bureaus can be made of plaid or plain Turkish toweling. Cut the covers the size of the bureau, and hem; crochet an edge around and finish with a scallop. Use a sharp crochet hook and you can push the needle through the toweling. Toilet sets for wash-stand can be made the same way.

SACHETS.—Are easily made and are always acceptable to gentlemen or ladies. Purchase an ounce of violet or heliotrope powder at the druggist's, and scatter a teaspoonful of it over some cotton wool and cover it over with some coarse muslin. Make an outer cover of handsome ribbon, or a piece of satin or silk or velvet, and sew up three sides of it; then slip in the scented bag, and either sew up the edges or draw them up like a bag and fasten them with a bow of ribbon or a gold or silk cord and tassels, and put a tassel or a bow on the corners of the bag. If you can paint in water colors you can decorate a bag of satin or silk very handsomely.

When your cane-seat chairs begin to wear out, mend the break the best you can by weaving in cords, or if very bad, replace with a piece of canvas securely tacked on; put on a generous layer of cotton batting or curled hair, and cover with a piece of any kind of upholstery goods, an embroidered pattern, crazy patchwork, or a large "log-cabin" block. Finish the edge with furniture gimp, and fringe if desired. The back may be finished with a similar panel.

BABY'S CARRIAGE ROBE.—A pretty carriage robe for a baby is made of crocheted seine twine, with a lining which may be of flannel, cashmere, silesia, or satin; the thinner the better for summer use.

A DAINY BED COMFORTER.—Is made in this way: Cut a piece of double-width cheese cloth large enough to reach from the pillows to the foot of the bed. Put over this a layer or

two of nice batting. Cover it with a piece of cloth like that underneath and catch it through and through in spots with blue zephyr worsted, passed lightly without drawing tight, and cut these loops left by the thread on the right side. If preferred, a strand or two of yellow can be added to the blue worsted; the general appearance will be that of daisies scattered over it. Besides being cheap and very soft-looking, it makes a very useful addition to a bed, and can be easily ripped up at any time and made over. The edges can be caught together by overcasting with worsted or binding with narrow ribbon.—[Housekeeper.]

RUG MADE OF PIECES OF TAPESTRY CARPETS.—Cut them in any shape or form the same as for patchwork, bind all of the pieces, join together the same as for a bed quilt, the dark and light; finish the edge with fringe. It must be seen to be appreciated.

One of our readers, whose letter we have unfortunately mislaid, and therefore cannot give the name, asks for directions for working the "star stitch" in crochet, mentioned in the January number. It is as follows:—Crochet a chain the required length. Without putting the wool over first, put the hook into the second chain, thread over and draw through, leaving the two loops on the needle; do the same in the next three chains successively, drawing the loop up longer, and having five loops on the needle, put wool over hook and draw through all together and make one chain to hold it. (a) Put the hook into the stitch just formed by the one chain, draw thread through, put the hook into the back part of the last loop of the star before, draw thread through, put the hook into the next two chains just the same, then thread over hook and draw through the five loops on the hook at once and make one chain; repeat from (a) to the end of the row.

Answers to Inquiries.

F. A.—The first generation are cousins, the second generation are second cousins, and so on. So the children of "A" and "B" are second cousins.

LEILA.—1. There is no set form of reply to such a question. If you are acquainted with the gentleman, and feel satisfied that he is a suitable escort, you may simply say: "I shall be very happy," or "Thank you, I will go with pleasure." 2. We can see no impropriety in a young lady sending a birthday card to a gentleman friend, providing the sentiment is a suitable one. 3. It is not customary or wise for a girl of fifteen years to attend "evening parties." The present generation grow old too fast at best, without beginning so young to keep late hours. Girls are only school girls at that age, and cannot study properly when the hours of rest are encroached upon. "One evening's dissipation spoils three day's study," which does not pay for school-girls and boys. 4. Mildew can be removed from white cloth by wetting and rubbing with salt and lemon juice on both sides of the article, and exposing to the air.

LOTTIE C.—The poem you refer to as "The Heathen Chinee," we suppose to be the one entitled "Plain Language From Truthful James," written by Bret Hart, whose poems can be obtained through any bookseller.

A SUBSCRIBER.—1. We recommend a solution of carbolic acid to destroy the green insects on your rose plants. About a tablespoonful to a pail of soft water, wetting the entire plant. 2. We know of no better way to clean white bead fringe, as it is largely owing to the dust having settled in the thread on which the beads are strung, than to unstring them and place in a cotton bag, allowing plenty of room to shake about; then rub and shake well in plenty of water, spread the beads out to dry, and string again.

LOVEY AND NELL.—1. The average height of woman varies in different parts of the world, but in this country it is about 5 ft. 4 or 4½ inches, so 5ft 5½ is a little above the average, but not what we should call "exceedingly tall," and 140 lbs. is a fair weight for a person of that height. 2. We do not know the name of A. L. O. E. 3. "Hudibras" is the title of a poem written, as a burlesque on the Puritans at the time of the Commonwealth, by Samuel Butler, about the year 1660. It is considered the best satirical poem in the English language. 4. Bridal veils are made of white tulle, reaching nearly to the feet, finished all round with a plain hem about an inch and a half wide. The veil is not usually removed until after the supper or breakfast. The bride sits in front of the wedding cake, which is placed in the centre of the table, the bride groom at the left hand and the groomsmen and bridesmaids at her right; at the left of the groom is the mother of the bride and the clergyman; the rest of the guests as you choose. The dress of a bride admits of great variation. When a veil is worn the dress should be either white, cream or some very light shade, but a rather dark dress, such as maroon or green silk or satin, or any color desired, with the exception of black, is perfectly suitable for a bridal dress, and much more serviceable to a person in ordinary circumstances, as few, except society ladies, have occasion to use very light silks. A cream cashmere could be worn and be useful afterwards for summer wear. Besides the wedding dress, you should have a good suit, which would answer for travelling and street wear; a neat house dress, and perhaps a pretty wrapper. Of course, if you choose a light bridal dress, you might need another dress, such as dark satin, or some very nice material, for best. A great deal depends upon the position you are taking. The daughters and wives of some farmers live much more retiring lives than others, consequently do not require so many changes of dress. It is very foolish for a bride to expend more than is necessary, either on dress, which soon becomes old-fashioned in style, or on a wedding breakfast, as she may need all that her friends can afford to begin house-keeping.

If you have not sunny windows do not attempt to keep flowering plants. The west windows may always be a delight if the plant stand be filled with aspidistra, ivy, begonias, and varieties of fern which only require light.

The German method of getting rid of rats: A mixture of two parts of well bruised common squills and three parts of finely chopped bacon is made into a stiff mass, with as much meal as may be required, and then baked into small cakes, which are put down for rats to eat. It proves an exterminator.