

MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NIECES,—

I am pleased to note that some of you take an active interest in the home department by discussing questions of vital importance to yourselves.

What has been said regarding the disadvantages against which farmers' wives and daughters have to contend is true in a majority of cases, for it is quite the exception to find a farmhouse properly equipped with modern conveniences. One of the nieces remarks that "the men have all the machinery necessary to facilitate their work, while the women have to plod through their monotonous round of duties handicapped at almost every step." Such a state of affairs should not exist. Surely it must be want of thought that makes the men oblivious to the constant annoyances endured by those they love dearly for the want of ordinary conveniences! I feel certain that it is a very exceptional man who will not understand the necessity of lightening his wife's or sister's labor as much as he does his own when approached in the right way. See to it, however, that you request, not demand, for the average man is almost certain to refuse if you have no more tact than to say "I must have this or that."

It is not as difficult as it might seem to have properly-equipped country homes. If you intend building a new house plan first how you want everything arranged; mentally picture how your home will look when completed. Get a number of house plans and choose the best, or visit the homes of others with your eyes open to see the best arrangements for doing work with the least labor. An abundance of sunlight in the home is indispensable to the health of the household. Whatever will save a few steps, spare an aching back, and lessen the labor of housework, is indispensable.

If your house is an old one, built when comfort was seldom considered, you can still add by degrees those appliances and helps which do so much towards making otherwise difficult tasks easy and home happy. Some women are veritable slaves to their households, working when quite unfit to do so, that they may thereby spare their daughters, who eventually will scarcely thank them. Then, again, some think that the house would go to ruin if they left it for a week or two, or even a few days; and so year after year they stay at their post, never taking any enjoyment nor recreation of any kind.

What wonder, then, that they are faded, wrinkled, and gray prematurely! Why marvel that the poor, tired frame at last gives out, or that the once bright intellect becomes forever clouded.

You think that nothing would go right without your presence; but what would be done should you become a helpless invalid? They would simply have to manage without you then, and they can do so now while you take a little needed rest.

Banish care for awhile; go somewhere for a change of scene; see new sights and faces. Your family, no doubt, will miss you, but they will know how to appreciate you better on your return.

After a little rest you will feel so refreshed that you will be able to resume your accustomed duties with an alacrity of which you formerly thought yourself incapable, and thus benefit your family as well as yourself.

Finally, dear nieces, never, even under adverse circumstances, permit yourselves to become moody or complaining. A woman who had had many heavy sorrows and burdens to bear was noted for her cheerful spirits. She once said in explanation: "You know I had no money. I had nothing to give but myself, and so I made the resolution never to sadden anyone else with my troubles. I have laughed and joked when I felt like weeping. I have always tried to smile in the face of misfortune and to let everyone go from my presence carrying a happy word or a bright thought with them. Happiness makes happiness, and I myself am happier than I would have been had I sat down and bemoaned my fate."

This gospel of happiness is one that every woman should lay to heart. When things don't suit you, if your path in life is not just what you would have chosen, try to keep sunshine in your heart, and some time you will be rewarded by your cloud showing its silver lining. MINNIE MAY.

The Scapegoat.

Holman Hunt was one of that famous trio who formed the renowned confraternity of the Pre-Raphaelite Brethren whose paintings created such a furor in the world of art when first viewed publicly at the exhibition of 1849. They were violently attacked by the critics, and so widespread and bitter were the discussions about these works, that to quell the excitement the third year they were removed.

Ruskin warmly espoused the cause of the Pre-Raphaelites, briefly defining their principles, "to paint nature as it is around them, with the help of modern science." According to his ideas, "Hunt was the only man who could paint the real leaf-green under sunlight."

Holman Hunt was innocent of an academical

training. He was a most ardent student of nature, which in some measure accounts for his great success as a painter. Most of his celebrated pictures were inspired by the Bible, and, in order to get correct backgrounds for his subjects, he spent several years in Syria and Egypt, studying the scenery and foliage of the country, and the manners and customs of the people. He lived for long periods in Jerusalem, where he painted his celebrated picture "The Scapegoat," in which his great technical ability and peculiarly prosaic imagination are plainly discernible. Much of the impressiveness of the painting is due to the background—the dreary border of the Dead Sea—so faithfully copied from nature. The subject of the "Scapegoat" is too well-known to need any explanation here, being a type of our Saviour. We are moved to tears as we think of the heavy burden we too have laid upon Him, while a spirit of thankfulness animates our being in recognition of His omnipotence.

Through the disciples of the P.-R. B. the art of England in general made a distinct advance. They had from the beginning a personal expression which no school could have given them, and which possibly school might have stifled. Two admirable results followed. The younger painters were influenced to return to nature, and sentiment superseded anecdote as subject for pictures.

Little Feet.

Two little feet, so small that both may nestle
In one caressing hand;
Two tender feet upon the untrodden border
Of life's mysterious land;

Dimpled and soft, and pink as peach tree blossoms
In April's fragrant days—
How can they walk among the briery tangles
Edging the world's rough ways?

Those rose-white feet along the doubtful future
Must bear a woman's load;



THE SCAPEGOAT.

Alas! since woman has the heaviest burden
And walks the hardest road.

Love, for awhile will make the path before them
All dainty, smooth and fair,
Will cut away the brambles, letting only
The roses blossom there;

But when the mother's watchful eyes are shrouded
Away from sight of men;
And these dear feet are left without her guiding,
Who shall direct them then?

How will they be allured, betrayed, deluded,
Poor little untaught feet!
Into what dreary mazes will they wander?
What dangers will they meet?

Will they go stumbling blindly in the darkness
Of sorrow's fearful shades?
Or find the upland slopes of peace and beauty,
Whose sunlight never fades?

Will they go toiling up ambition's summit,
The common world above?
Or in some nameless vale, securely sheltered,
Walk side by side with love?

Some feet there be which walk life's track unwounded,
Which find out pleasant ways;
Some hearts there be to which this world is only
A round of happy days.

But they are few. Many there are who wander
Without a hope or friend,
Who find their journey full of pain and losses,
And long to reach the end.

How shall it be with her, the tender stranger,
Fair-faced and gentle-eyed,
Before whose unstained feet the world's rude highway
Stretches so strange and wide?

Ah! who may read the future! For our darling
We crave all blessings sweet,
And pray that he who feeds the crying ravens
Will guide the baby's feet.

—Central Christian Advocate.

SHORT BREAD.—One pound flour, one half pound butter, one quarter pound brown sugar, mix well and bake in round tins.

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

The Golden Fleece.

(Continued from page 303.)

"After taming the fiery bulls," continued King Aetas, who was determined to scare Jason if possible, "you must yoke them to a plow, and must plow the sacred earth in the grove of Mars, and sow some of the dragon's teeth from which Cadmus raised a crop of armed men. These sons of the dragon's teeth will probably kill you and your Argonauts, my bold Jason."

"My master, Chiron," replied Jason, "taught me, long ago, the story of Cadmus. Perhaps I can manage the sons of the dragon's teeth as well as Cadmus did."

While the king talked with Jason, his beautiful daughter Medea stood behind the throne, listening to every word. She followed the young man out of the room and promised to teach him how to tame the fiery bulls and get the Golden Fleece. Jason, looking into her wonderful eyes, felt that if he had been capable of fearing anything, he would have been afraid of making this fair young princess his enemy. Beautiful as she now looked, she might, the very next instant, become as terrible as the dragon that kept watch over the Golden Fleece.

"Princess," he exclaimed, "you must be an enchantress."

"Yes, Prince Jason," answered Medea, smiling. "I could tell you, if I pleased, who was the old woman with the peacock whom you carried over the river; and, likewise, who it is that speaks through the lips of your oaken figurehead. It is well for you that I am favorably inclined, for, otherwise, you would hardly escape being snapped up by the dragon."

"I should not so much care for the dragon," replied Jason, "if I only knew how to manage the brazen-footed and fiery-lunged bulls."

"Your own bold heart," said Medea, "will teach you that there is but one way of dealing with a mad bull. What it is I leave you to find out in the moment of peril. As for the fiery breath of these animals, I have a charmed ointment here, which will prevent you from being burned up."

She put a golden box into his hand, with directions for use, and told him to meet her at midnight. At the appointed hour he met the beautiful Medea, and received from her hands a basket containing the dragon's teeth.

As they entered the royal pasture, the princess paused and looked around.

"There they are," said she, "chewing their fiery cud in that far corner of the field. It will be excellent sport, I assure you, when they catch sight of you. My father and all his court delight in nothing so much as to see a stranger trying to yoke them, in order to get the Golden Fleece. It makes a holiday in Colchis whenever such a thing happens. For my part, I enjoy it immensely. You cannot imagine in what a mere twinkling of an eye their hot breath shrivels a young man into a black cinder."

"Are you sure, beautiful Medea," asked Jason, "that the magic ointment will be proof against those terrible burns?"

"If you are in the least afraid," said the princess, "you had better never have been born than go a step nearer to the bulls."

For answer, Jason walked boldly forward. At some distance he perceived four streams of fiery vapor, caused by the breath of the brazen bulls, which was quietly stealing out of their four nostrils, as they lay chewing their cud. He went a little farther, and now could see vivid jets of flame, as the bulls lifted their hot noses to snuff the air. At the next step, each of the bulls gave a terrible roar, rushed on Jason with the speed of lightning, and lighted the whole field with sheets of white flame.

He saw the two horrible creatures galloping right down upon him, their brazen hoofs ringing over the ground, and their tails sticking up stiffly into the air, as has always been the fashion with angry bulls. Their breath scorched the herbage, and set a dry tree into a blaze. The white flames curled round Jason, without injuring him more than if he had been asbestos. Surely the ointment had done its work well. Greatly encouraged at finding himself not yet turned into a cinder, the young man awaited the attack. Just as the brazen brutes fancied themselves sure of tossing him into the air, he caught one of them by the horn, and the other by his screwed-up tail, and held them like a vice, one with his right hand, the other with his left. Well, he must have been wonderfully strong in his arms, to be sure. But the secret of the matter was, that they were enchanted creatures, and Jason had broken the spell of their fiery fierceness by his bold way of handling them. Ever since that time it has been the favorite method of brave men, when facing danger or difficulty, to "take the bull by the horns"; that is, to throw aside fear, and overcome the peril by despising it.

It was now easy to yoke the bulls, and to harness them to the plow, which had lain rusting on the ground for a great many years, so long was it before anybody could be found capable of plowing that piece of land. Jason, I suppose, had been taught how to draw a furrow by the good old