

Minnie May's Department.

I thank all my correspondents for their numerous little articles relating to house-keeping. It is not an easy matter to decide which deserves the prize, but I think our little niece, Sarah Sharpe, must be awarded it. I hope to hear from you all soon, and will be happy to receive anything in aid of this important department.

MINNIE MAY.

TO WORK IN THE KITCHEN.

It is no disgrace to be able to wash in the kitchen. Dear nieces, consider you have a good mother if she instructs you thoroughly in general housekeeping. We should never have good bread, butter, puddings, pies, etc., if you were not taught to learn to cook and to work was a disgrace. What is a young lady fit for whose mother allows her to lie in bed till ten o'clock, and who, when she rises, sings a song or two and sits down to the last new novel. She may answer for the life of a miserable fop, and miserable indeed will she live. Far better for her, no matter what her condition in after life may be—whether she marries a fortune in gold or a fortune in real worth—if she is brought up to work. Her life, in comparison to one brought up in idleness and folly, would be a season of real enjoyment. What mother will be so unwise as to teach her daughter that to work is degrading, while lying in bed, dressing in fashion and reading the latest novel, is elevating, dignifying.

MINNIE MAY.

DEAR MINNIE MAY.—Among so many clever nephews and nieces as you have, no doubt you will get a great many better letters about housekeeping than mine, because I never kept house myself and so can't tell you very well how things are really done by practical housekeepers, but, at any rate, I can try to tell you the way I think housekeeping ought to be done, just as my aunty told me. Horace Greeley wrote "What I know about farming," and everybody laughed at his book, because, I guess, they thought they knew better themselves than he did. I think everybody, whether housekeeping or not, should have a place for everything and always put it back there when they get done using it, and these places should be as handy as possible, not out of the way places, so, by-and-bye, they would get into a habit of having their things in order without thinking any more about it; then if certain days of the week or month were set apart to do certain things in, they would be sure to have them done. Of course there is a lot of hard work to be done in any house, but folks should not try to do too much in one day, for I have read that it is not right to do more in one day than one night's sleep will rest a person from. And housekeepers should always try to have good, sweet bread and butter and set the table nicely with a clean cloth, for men folks are always cross when they don't get these things good; and then they ought to try to get their work done in time, so that there might be some spare time to read books in and to take a part in any amusement that may be going on, and not let it be always work, work, scrub, scrub, sew, sew, keeping up perpetual motion, putting things so as to be stiff, and awkward, and solemn, like some houses I go into, where, as soon as you get inside the door, something keeps saying "be quiet, don't laugh;" so I never stay there very long, for, after all, folks are not machines, and if they must not laugh and enjoy themselves the laugh should not have been put into them. And I think housekeepers should take time every day to dress up and make themselves look tidy. Why, even the trees dress up—indeed, last week they looked as gay with blossoms as if they had put on all the style in the fashion books, and it was only for a few days after all. But, Minnie May, likely this is half a column long, and some more too, so I won't write any more, for, most probably, this will go into the waste basket, and not into the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, for I never wrote you anything before but puzzles. So good-bye, Minnie May.

Your Niece,
SARAH SHARPE.

TO TAKE STAINS OF WINE OUT OF LINEN.

Hold the articles in the milk while it is boiling on the fire, and stains will soon disappear.

Sal.-volatile or hartshorn will restore colors taken out by acid. It may be dropped on any garment without doing any harm.

Feather beds should be opened every third year. The ticking well dusted, soaped and waxed, the feathers dressed and returned.

Green mint sauce is made by putting green mint chopped fine and parsley in vinegar. It is to be eaten with lamb.

DEAR MINNIE MAY.—It affords me much pleasure to offer a few recipes to add with your well selected ones which you always provide. I think when we succeed in doing anything well, it should be our duty as well as a pleasure to tell others just how we did it. I like to read good common sense letters from practical housekeepers; experience is the best teacher in the world. Enclosed are recipes for making pickled walnuts and a cement, which I hope will be of some use to your readers. From one of your first subscribers, BLANCHE P.

PICKLED WALNUTS.

Procure the walnuts while young and prick them well with a fork. Prepare a strong brine of salt and water (four pounds of salt to each gallon of water), into which put the walnuts, letting them remain nine days, and changing the brine every third day. Drain them off; put them on a dish and place it in the sun until they become perfectly black, which will be in two or three days. Have ready dry jars, into which place the walnuts, and do not quite fill the jars. Boil sufficient vinegar to cover them for ten minutes; to every quart of vinegar allow two ounces of whole pepper, one ounce of allspice and one ounce of bruised ginger; pour it hot over the walnuts, which must be covered with the vinegar. Tie down with a bladder and keep in a dry place. They will be fit for use in a month, and will keep for years.

CEMENT FOR BROKEN CHINA, GLASS, ETC.

Dissolve half an ounce of gum accacia in a wine glass of boiling water; add plaster of Paris sufficient to form a thick paste, and apply with a brush to the parts required to be cemented together. I have repaired several articles most effectively by this recipe.

LEMONADE.

Powdered sugar four pounds, citric or tartaric acid one ounce, essence of lemon two drachms; mix well. Two or three teaspoonfuls make a very sweet and agreeable glass of extemporaneous lemonade. This recipe is from our little niece, Eva.

FRECKLES.

To disperse them, take one ounce of lemon juice, a quarter of a drachm of powdered borax, and half a drachm of sugar; mix and let stand in a bottle till the liquor is ready for use, then rub it on the hands and face occasionally. HOUSE GIRL.

APPLE FLOAT.

Take six large apples, pare, slice and stew them in as much water as will cover them; when well done press them through a sieve, and make very sweet with crushed or loaf sugar; while cooling beat the whites of four eggs to a stiff froth, and stir in the apples; flavor with vanilla or lemon. Serve with cream.

WINE CAKES.

Half a pound of flour, quarter of a pound of butter, half a pound of sugar, ten drops of essence of lemon; make into a paste with well beaten eggs, roll out thin, cut in rounds and bake on tins.

A FEW WORDS WITH OUR NIECES ABOUT COOKING GREEN PEAS AND POTATOES.

I know you will all have a taste for nice green peas and potatoes, though perhaps all do not understand cooking them.

The first point to be considered is—Why do some people always have peas looking a bright green, and others send them to the table a bad color? The secret is in cooking them. Have ready a saucepan of boiling water, into which put a tablespoonful of salt and a few leaves of mint. Strain the peas and throw them in gradually; do not cover the saucepan. Young peas do not require more than fifteen or twenty minutes' boiling; old peas will take half an hour. A good pinch of carbonate of soda may be put into the water to render the peas softer. New potatoes differ from old in this important respect: In cooking, the latter require cold water, the former boiling water. In both cases salt must be put into the water, about a tablespoonful to every two quarts. Like peas, new potatoes are best fresh from the garden. Great care should be taken not to allow them to boil too long, or they will get pappy. Let them dry in the saucepan, and when dry put them into a vegetable dish with either a lump of butter or a little good melted butter made with milk.

MINNIE MAY.

CHEAP AND GOOD VINEGAR.

To eight gallons of clear rain water add three quarts of molasses; turn the mixture into a clean, tight cask, shake well two or three times and add three spoonfuls of good yeast, or two or three yeast cakes. Let stand in a warm place, and in ten or fifteen days add a sheet of common wrapping paper, smeared with molasses and torn into narrow strips; the paper is necessary to form the "mother," or life of the vinegar. This recipe is from a subscriber who highly recommends it.

L. SIFTON.

POTTED HAM.

Chop the ham as fine as powder; put a layer of ham in a jar, sprinkle pepper, cloves and vinegar over it; then a layer of ham, continuing until the jar is nearly full; finish with spices, and cover with vinegar an inch in depth; let it stand two or three days. Cold meat may be prepared in the same way.

COLD BOILED HAM.

Chop the ham and add to it milk sufficient to soak the required quantity of toast. When boiling hot, dip nicely toasted slices of bread in the milk, and as each piece is laid upon the platter, spread with a little butter. When all the toast is moistened, add to the milk and ham that remains, two or more eggs; stir constantly, and as soon as it thickens, pour over the toast and serve.

Felons usually follow a bruise or other injury to the hand which does not cause bleeding. As soon as pain begins to be felt, take a small quantity of salt, apply it to the bruise, and pour on enough spirits of turpentine to make it moist. This will usually drive the felon away without pain. If the felon has progressed so far as to become inevitable, wrap it in sassafras root, pounded fine, and moistened with water. This draws the felon to a head, with but little pain. A third remedy is to make a salve by dissolving a piece of saltpetre the size of a bean in a cup of sweet cream. Then bruise the inner bark of sweet alder in the cream, and simmer slowly until it makes a thick salve. Apply to the felon, and it will give almost immediate relief.

If you want enemies, excel others; if you want friends, let others excel you.

The sweet light of friendship is like the light of phosphorous, seen plainly when all around is dark.

A dandy, getting measured for a pair of riding boots, observed, "Make them cover the calf." "Heavens!" exclaimed the shoemaker, astounded, surveying his customer; "I have not leather enough."

"How one thing brings up another!" said a lady, absorbed in pleasing retrospection. "Yes," replied the practical Dobbs, "an emetic, for instance."

"Mamma," said little Nell, "ought governess to flog me for what I've not done?" "No, my dear; why do you ask?" "Cause she flogged me to-day when I didn't do my sums."

A young man asked his bachelor uncle: "What advice would you give a young man who was contemplating matrimony?" "I should advise him to keep on contemplating it."

TRUE AND FALSE MODESTY.—Nothing is more amiable than true modesty, and nothing more contemptible than that which is false; the one guards virtue, the other betrays it. True modesty is ashamed to do anything that is repugnant to right reason; false modesty is ashamed to do anything that is opposite to the humor of those with whom the party converses. True modesty avoids everything that is animal; false modesty everything that is unfashionable. The latter is only a general, undetermined instinct; the former is that instinct limited and circumscribed by the rules of prudence.

A BIRD VILLAGE.—Isn't this cunning, a dozen nests hanging in a row from the midrib of one leaf? These trees are bananas, and the banana-leaf, you know, has a long mid-rib edged by coarse fibres. Well, the birds tear out the soft portion of the leaf, setting these fibres free; and then, selecting several, a bird braids and weaves and "felts" them together into a pretty little pouch. One leaf has fibres enough for a dozen nests, and so see birds build in village.