

P. S.—A prize of \$2.00 will be given for the best article on "Picnics." Communications on this interesting subject must be in our office by the 10th June.  
MINNIE MAY.

#### Fashion Notes.

Young girls wear the skirts of dresses much longer than usual. The favorite length reaches just to the shoe-top.

Round hats for girls in their teens have projecting brims, with wide ribbon trimming for every-day wear, but flower laden for best wear; sometimes with rose wreaths lying flat outside the brim, at others with bunches of maiden hair fern, or again, with buttercups and daisies, branched flatly together on the brim. Toques and turbans, in round and oval shapes, are also being prepared for girls, and are becoming with their low catogan loops of hair in the back, and thick bangs on the forehead.

Turn-down pleated frills of embroidered muslin, for the neck and sleeves of girls' dresses, are favorites. Larger girls baste narrow feather-edge ribbon, white or colored, in the neck or sleeves, and tie it in pretty bows.

Black stockings are retained for children, and buttoned shoes without heels are worn by girls up to the age of ten years.

The Scotch flannels, partly wool and partly cotton, wash so well that they are made up for girls of all sizes, the favorite style being a blouse waist dropping over in sailor fashion, full sleeves and a full-pleated skirt. For smaller girls a sash of the same material is sewed in the under-arm seam and tied in a bow behind.

Green is the color, par excellence, this spring, and can be seen in all shades and in all materials, from satin to nun's veiling. Some of the shades are exquisitely soft; and, strange to say, all are becoming.

Bonnets of black lace, straw, tulle, or any other material, have green introduced, and it has a wonderfully soft, fresh look; the eye seems rested and refreshed. The styles for bonnets are as usual. Any shape or style that becomes the face is the fashion, from the stylish, high-crowned, flower-tipped tulle to the demure little Quaker shape of unpretentious straw, of any color to match the costume. Strings are worn or not, as suits the taste of the wearer.

The dress materials never were more lovely in tints, or more artistic in fabric and style. Silk warp Henrietta cloths, cashmere, surahs, satins and silks, are equally lovely. And the trimmings are simply exquisite. Braid in many designs; gold and silver gimps, jet, steel and silver look equally well, and can be had in prices to suit any purse.

Parasols with handles four feet long seem to be the favorites. These come in all styles, from plain checked, striped and brocaded.

The flowers are simply exquisite in form and color. Soft bunches of white lilacs, large sprays of poppies, and wreaths of willow blossoms; mignonette, natural as life; rosebuds that look as if they were emitting a perfume; even a spray of field flowers, a daisy, a buttercup or two and a spray of meadow grass would challenge admiration. Surely the cultivation of art has not been in vain. It shows itself in all our fabrics and decorations.

Wedding presents should always be sent to the bride, although the acquaintance may only be with the bridegroom.

#### PRIZE ESSAY.

#### How Every Girl Can Finish Her Own Bedroom.

BY MISS J. H. FERGUSON, KINGSTON, ONT.

Nothing gives a woman more pleasure than to choose a new carpet, order a set of furniture from a reliable upholsterer, with directions to send it home and see it placed; but when we cannot afford this it is equally as pleasing to be able to produce the effect of prettiness and cosiness through one's own ingenuity and taste. Each girl's bedroom should have an individuality of its own; for we spend much of our time in it, and it is our own taste that should surround us.

A room twelve feet square fell to my lot. It had two small windows, looking south over a lovely stretch of meadow land, with a glimpse of railroad in the distance. The floor was pine; this I had washed clean, and I then brushed it with warm boiled oil, and as soon as one coat dried, gave it another. I then brushed it with melted beeswax and turpentine, made warm. This was well rubbed on, and a broom, with a cloth pinned over it, passed around it every morning, keeps it clean and shiny. I painted the windows and door white, finishing with a coat of varnish. A very ordinary iron bedstead, a bureau and washstand and feather bed fell to my share. The bedstead I painted white; procured a small quantity of liquid gilding and tipped the scroll work and tops of the posts, which gave it a very pretty effect. I procured a wire-wove mattress, which I placed under the feathers. From one yard and two-thirds of white scrim I made a spread for summer, trimming it on two sides with a pretty little red and gold fringe. These fringed sides hang over the sides of the bed, scarf fashion. For winter wear I have almost finished a silk Japanese quilt, to be lined with red silesia, and which will feel quite as warm and soft as a genuine eider-down. My pillow-shams I made of twilled red Turkey cotton, edged with a full frill of coarse, white lace. Between the windows is just the place for my dressing table. This I contrived out of a large packing-case, knocking out all the projecting nails. I placed it with the open side towards the room, papering the inside all around with gay-colored, cheap wall paper. This recess is useful for a basket or bag for soiled linen, or muddy boots, overshoes, &c. Over the top and sides I tacked an old white sheet. A pair of very-much-worn Nottingham lace curtains I pleated full around it. After cutting off the best of the borders to make sash blinds for my windows, I looped up the centre with a big bow made of an old sash ribbon, and my dressing table looked very pretty indeed. A soap box I converted into a seat, and box for shoes by having the lid hinged and covering the inside with wall paper, neatly pasted on. I covered it smoothly on the outside with bright chintz, covered the inside of the lid also, and, bringing it over the top, tacking it neatly down. A small cushion, just to fit, I made of the same chintz and tacked it at each corner, with a large brass-headed nail through a bow of ribbon. My bureau holds all my shawls, laces, gloves, bonnets and underclothing, so a place must be made for hanging my dresses. I had a frame made of smooth boards six feet high, just like a cupboard minus the doors, and near the top inside of it I had a board securely fastened with six large wardrobe hooks screwed securely in. Curtains

of chintz hang before it to protect the contents from dust and light. This accommodates all my dresses for the season, as well as my two mantles. I gave all the wood-work of this wardrobe two coats of cherry staining and finished all with a coat of varnish. It looks very pretentious, and is quite convenient; for a room never looks tidy with dresses hanging on nails on the wall or back of the door. My mirror hangs over my dressing table, and is draped with white tartane tied at the top with another bow made from the old sash. The top of the washstand I covered with white marbled oilcloth. It can more readily be kept dry than cloth covers. Some pictures adorn the walls, and photographs of my friends. I intend making some sets of covers for my dressing table and bureau by hem-stitching a fringe around three sides, and drawing threads one inch deep to run a bright ribbon through. It can be removed when the covers require to be washed. My room looks very home-like. And the rest which a small basket rocking chair affords is very grateful to me at times. I still require a whisk-holder. This I can readily make from numerous hints and directions which I shall get out of the Christmas number of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

#### Gentlemen.

BY SNOWDROP.

I was very much interested this evening in a letter in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE. The subject was the utter lack of refinement, courtesy and thoughtfulness among the farmers. Several girls have at different times spoken to me about this, and they wonder why it is. Why should farmers be so boorish instead of gentlemanly? The letter in the ADVOCATE dealt almost altogether with their want of thought for other's comfort—in short, with their selfishness. Now, men, as a rule, consider that women should give up a great deal of time to them; that they should consider them in many ways; that it is a woman's mission to think of others and not of herself. This is particularly the case among a certain class of farmers. No doubt it is right for women to unselfishly consider their fathers' and brothers' or husbands' comfort; but ought not the men to do the same for them? These men undoubtedly work very hard; perhaps they say they are working for the women's comfort; would they not work equally hard if there were no women in the question? Perhaps these brothers do not know how much a sister values a little thing done out of regard for her; a little extra care taken to save her some annoyance; some little labor performed for her when she is over-tired; how these little acts are treasured up in a loving heart; and though no outward demonstration of feeling may be shown, it gives these sisters a different motive for the performance of their duties, and fills their hearts with a song of gladness.

Let us draw two pictures: First—It is early morning. Big Tom is the first to get up. On passing Mary's door he gives a tremendous thump and calls out: "Wake up there, Mary! It is half-past four! Time you were up! And mind, I want my breakfast early, so that I can be off; don't forget!" Mary does hurry; goes into the kitchen, lights the fire, goes out for the water, and gets the breakfast in a surprisingly short time; because Tom would be so surly and cross if she did not.

Second—Fred also rises early. Half an hour or less after his coming down he goes up again to Bessie's door, knocks and calls out: "I say, Bessie, five o'clock! Fire enough in that kitchen