



MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

Minnie May's Cook Book.

CRAM NECTAR.

Two oz. tartaric acid, two lbs. white sugar, juice of half a lemon, three pints of water. Boil them together five minutes, and when nearly cold, add the whites of three eggs, well beaten, with half a cup of flour and one-half ounce essence of winter-green. Bottle and keep in a cool place; take two tablespoons of the syrup for a tumbler of water, and a quarter teaspoon soda. Stir it and drink.

JULIA A., Charing Cross.

CUSTARD CAKES.

One cup sugar, one tablespoonful butter mixed with sugar, three eggs, one tablespoonful sweet cream, half a teaspoonful soda—very fine, one teaspoonful cream tartar, one large cup flour; butter four round tins, and put them in a quick oven; then take one teaspoonful sweet milk, one tablespoon and a half of starch, wet with a little milk, and boil it with milk; beat one egg, sweeten and flavor to taste; stir in the boiling milk. When the cakes are baked, put one on the other, with the custard between. To be eaten fresh. JULIA A.

FRUIT CAKE.

Two cups sugar, one of cream, one-half cup butter, one cup raisins; cook a little; one cup currants, four eggs, one cup molasses, half pound chopped almond kernels, preserved lemon peel, half a nutmeg, one teaspoon allspice, one of cream tartar or cook's friend. BELLA E. HESS.

MOLASSES GINGER-BREAD.

One cup molasses, two tablespoons melted butter mixed with molasses, one cup boiling water, one heaping teaspoon soda dissolved in the water. Let the water cool before adding to the molasses; three cups flour, one teaspoon ginger. B. E. H.

POTATO PUDDING—VERY NICE.

Six large potatoes boiled and mashed; add piece of butter the size of an egg, and a little salt; roll out with a little flour; make a layer of this crust, then a layer of apples. Steam one hour. To be served with sauce. B. E. H.

HICKORY NUT CAKE.

One and a half cups sugar, half cup butter, two cups flour, whites of four eggs, three-fourths cup sweet milk, one teaspoon cream tartar, half teaspoon soda, one cup of meats of the hickory nut. Bake in small tins. B. E. H.

FARMERS' FRUIT CAKE.

Two cups of dried apples, soaked over night; then chop or cut them, and simmer in two cups of molasses three hours; then cool and add one cup of brown sugar, one cup of butter, two eggs, one cup of sour milk, one large spoonful of cloves, four cups of flour, and one teaspoonful of soda.

MOLASSES CAKE.

Take two cups molasses and one-half cup of shortening, and add as much flour as you can stir in; then add two cups of boiling water, in which you have dissolved one large teaspoonful of saleratus.

QUAKING PUDDING.

Lay slices of light bread, cut thin and spread with butter, in a pudding dish, alternating the layers of bread with raisins till quite near the top. Beat five eggs up well, and add to them a quart of milk, salted and spiced according to taste. Pour this liquid over the contents of the dish. Bake half an hour, and eat with sauce. Boil the raisins in a very little water so as to make them tender, and add the water with the rest.

Minnie May's Scrap Bag.

UTTERLY MAD.

A very sad case is described by an American paper, which unfortunately, however, does not locate the facts. A young lady is stated to have become insane, and the disease was discovered by observation of some circumstances that produced much alarm in her family. Not long ago her mother found her in her room energetically darning stockings, and soon after she appeared in the kitchen and assisted that wondering dame in making and baking bread and pastry. Alarmed by these fearful signs of intellectual disorder, her fond parents immediately sent for a skillful physician, who watched her through a keyhole while she sewed buttons on her father's garments, and mended those of her little brother. Much affected, the venerable man remarked that never during a medical practice of twenty-five years had he known any young person to manifest such symptoms as these. The most heartrending phase of all, however, was shown the other day, when her kind father, with a faint hope of rousing her from her sad state, gave her \$200 and told her to buy a new dress. Alas! 'twas useless. She instantly observed that she didn't need a new dress, and if he would let her keep \$25 to pay a poor widow's rent, she'd much rather he would take the rest of the money for himself. For a few moments that grief-stricken old gentleman gazed upon his hapless child, then hiding his face, muttered between his sobs, "Her mind is gone! Her mind is gone!"

A very pretty chess or checker table can be made by arranging on any kind of white wood alternate squares of small oil prints or engravings, or the blocks may be alternated with squares of white paper. They must be cut and fitted exactly, and fixed at the corners with strong glue. A border should be placed around it. After it is all arranged, varnish it.

SUN-BURN.

Milk of almonds, to be obtained at any druggist's, is as good a remedy as any in use. JULIA A.

RED HANDS.

Wash frequently in warm, not hot water, using honey soap and a soft towel. Dry with violet powder, and again with a soft, dry handkerchief. Take exercise to promote circulation, and do not wear your gloves too tight. JULIA A.

Minnie May's Flower Garden.

There are many seeds which require the utmost skill of even the professional florist to assist in germinating properly, yet we regret to say there are a few people who buy seeds and bury them in the ground, oftentimes so deeply that they will never come up, however much they may struggle to reach the surface, even through a hard, baked soil or stiff clod; and when they fail to grow, pronounce the seedsman a humbug, and by a careless or thoughtless remark, injure his business more than their trade ever benefitted it. Instead of this, follow the directions which we give below. If you give your seed sufficient care you will in all probability reap your reward; but if they do fail, see first if it is not your own fault or the fault of your soil, or perhaps of the weather, before you blame any one else. It has often been remarked of some lady who has been particularly successful in securing beautiful flowers and successions of bloom, even in the winter, that "the flowers seem to favor her." This is a great mistake. The lady learns the wants of her plants, and encourages them to grow and make home beautiful. Floriculture is an exhaustless science, and who is there that knows all there is to be learned?

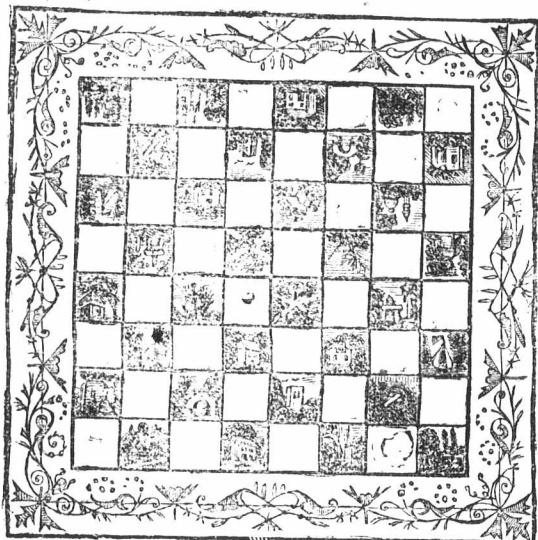
MAKING SELECTIONS.

If a tall, showy group of flowers is desired, plant Zinnias, Calliopsis, Marigolds, Balsams, and the gay Poppies, &c. If it is

desirable to have showy masses or beds, select Phlox Drummondii, Candytuft, Petunias, Verbenas, &c. If dwarf edgings are wanted, use Sanvitalia, Sweet Alyssum, &c. If fragrance be the particular quality sought for, Mignonette, Sweet Peas, Sweet Alyssum, Stocks, &c., will be the most desirable. For expression, take the Pansy. If leaf color is wanted, select Amaranthus, Perilla, Coleus, Celosia, &c. For tropical foliage, you may take Ricinus, Cannas, Caladium, &c. It should be borne in mind that when mixed beds are wanted, the tallest flowers should always be sown or planted in the center, and the low growing varieties toward the outside.

THE SOIL.

Flowers succeed best in sandy loam, made rich by the addition of well-rotted manure, which should be thoroughly mixed with the soil. Such a soil, thus prepared, will not become hard or baked, but will remain loose and porous. It will not only afford the small and tender plants chance for existence, but will also enable them to perfect themselves with vigor and beauty. If your garden is composed of a stiff, heavy soil, a good dressing of sand and manure will improve it. A heavy soil is greatly benefitted by being thoroughly spaded up in the fall, and left in that condition through the winter. In all cases, before sowing the seed, it is of the utmost importance that the soil should be thoroughly pulverized. This important particular should never be overlooked. When the soil will spade up mellow, crumbling to pieces when struck with the spade, it is in proper condition to be worked.



SOWING.

Seed should not be sown in spring until sufficient warmth and dryness has been imparted to the soil. When these requisites are overlooked, and the seed is sown too early, it is apt to perish. If fine seed is to be used, sow it on the surface, and press it evenly with a smooth piece of board. If sown too deeply the seed will perish; indeed, this is the common mistake. The seed of half-hardy plants should not be sown so early in the season as those of the hardy plants, as the latter will endure more inclement weather. The best and most certain success with seeds in this climate is obtained when they are sown in a hot-bed, or planted in boxes or pots and raised in the house and transplanted when strong enough. When you sow the seed out of doors a board or cloth on top of them for four or five days is a great aid.

THE SEED BED AND TRANSPLANTING.

A seed bed may be made later in the season in the open garden, by taking a little extra pains in preparing the soil, making it rich and suitably light for fine seeds. Select a warm, sheltered spot, lay out the bed three or four feet wide, and of any length desired. Sow in drills, keep moist by frequent waterings, and give the advantage of a little shade with thin cloths or newspapers, until the plants are up; after which they will merely require watering until transplanting time. The advantages of a seed bed are that more care can be given to a greater variety of flowers in a small space than if sown in various parts of the garden. When the young plants have attained a growth of two or three inches, they are fit to be removed to the place where they are

wanted to bloom. The seed bed should be thoroughly watered before taking up the plants for transplanting. The transplanting should be done, if possible, in showery weather, or in the evening. The soil where they are to be set should be spaded up at the time of planting, to bring the moist earth to the surface, and, as before advised, should be thoroughly pulverized and made fine. Lift the young plants with all the dirt possible attached to the roots; make a hole with the garden trowel, hand, or whatever is convenient, set the plants in a little deeper than they stood before, and press the earth firmly about the roots; cover with a little loose soil, and the job is done; and if properly done, no after watering will be necessary, except in very dry spots or during continued drouths.

ANNUALS, BIENNIALS AND PERENNIALS.

Flowering plants are divided into Annuals, Biennials and Perennials. Annuals are plants that are raised from the seed, which perfect their flowers and mature their seed the same season, and then perish. Biennials are plants which do not, as a rule, survive the second winter. The Hollyhocks, Canterbury Bells, &c., are among this class. Hardy Herbaceous Perennials comprise a great number of varieties of useful and beautiful hardy border plants.

ABOUT WIDOWS.

"Samvial, beware of widows!"—Mr. Weller.

There was some sound common sense, and not a little reason, in the philosophy of the elder Mr. Weller. His advice to his inexperienced son was not based upon any fallacious theory. It was the result of a lesson he had learned in the sober school of experience. Mr. Weller was widow-wed. He had married a widow. He had learned what was what. And it was not without a grain of parental anxiety that he regarded the future career of his promising son.

Widows. They understand a man better than he knows himself. They read his character by intuition, and make him willingly perform just what he solemnly resolves not to do. They pet him, they flatter his vanity, they coax him they make him promise, they marry him, and they govern him, before he wakes up to a comprehensive sense of his situation.

These weeds fit them so becomingly, and there is something so touching in the sad, melancholy look that they wear, and in the tender way in which they allude to "my dear Will, when he was alive," that it at once enlists a man's sympathies. And when a widow makes a man feel sorry for her he is half in love with her already.

Widows are never excessively bold, nor are they particularly bashful. They are never too young and seldom too old. It is sometimes remarkable how young they grow, how innocent they appear, how sweet and pretty they look, and how becomingly their dress fits them, after a short season of mourning for their late lamented husbands.

A widow, will marry half a dozen times while a maid is getting an offer. She knows a man's weak points and she directs the arrows of her affection directly at them, as Paris sent his slender, yet deadly shaft into the vulnerable heel of the Styx-immersed Achilles, and he is down in a twinkling. She storms his citadel, he hauls down his colors and makes an unconditional surrender.

I know an old bachelor who is a most estimable man. He has a kind heart, a comfortable fortune, a taste for art, a disinclination to attend church, and the rheumatism. He is a great admirer of Scott and Macaulay. He will read Locke and Lecky by lamplight far into the midnight hours, and he can discourse most charmingly upon the beauties of Bacon, the grandeur of Guizot, the magnificence of Milton, and the sublimity of Shakespeare. But I have seen a black-eyed, bewitching widow who would lead him limping off to church, looking as meek as Moses, and make him talk of Tennyson and Tom Moore, all the way there. Why, a virgin could not have got within speaking distance of him, with all her proverbial philosophy!

I do not mean to speak unkindly of those whose lives are hopelessly saddened by some great loss. Their griefs are too sacred to be made the subject of rude or unmanly public comment. I want to make the sorrowing smile if I can. I am a true friend of the widows. I admire their tact, their good judgment and proverbial common sense, and I like to take their children upon my knee and talk to them, and make them happy, because I feel that they are fatherless.—*Eugene.*