

dressed as sailors. And here it is to be noted that the simpler and the more commonplace the costume, the more humorous seems the fundamental absurdity of the whole thing. *Captain Corcoran* should wear the uniform of a captain in the R. N., but white linen trousers and any dark blue military coat with brass buttons and gold lace may be made to serve. *Sir Joseph Porter* wears the court dress of a British minister,—pumps, silk stockings, white satin knee-breeches, dark dress-coat embroidered with gold on collar and sleeves; he has an eye-glass and either carries under his arm or puts on a flat-folding court hat, which may perhaps fairly be described as a three-cornered hat with only two corners. *Tom Tucker*, the midshipmite who has nothing at all to say, should be given to the youngest possible boy; he is dressed in dark blue navy suit with a peaked cap and carries a very long telescope under his arm; during the opening chorus, sung while the sailors are at work polishing the brass of the deck, the midshipmite superintends them with an air of authority. *Dick Deadeye*, it may be remarked, ought to be given to a gentleman of tragic aspirations.

The ladies' costumes are equally easily managed. *Josephine*, *Hebe*, and the relatives of *Sir Joseph* all wear the neat dresses a lady naturally would wear on board ship; in England they wore yachting suits of white and blue. In the second act, *Josephine* has a wedding-dress of white. *Little Buttercup* may be played either by a young or old woman, who is attired somewhat in the Mrs. Gamp style, and bears about with her a sort of peddler's basket. But a copy of the "Bab Ballads," illustrated by the author, will give an adequate notion of just what is wanted.

One word more. If "H. M. S. *Pinafore*" is played anywhere by American amateurs, let the authors benefit by it. No honest man will use the labor of others without reward. Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan have published their work, and it can be taken by any one without money and without price. They have no legal right to demand payment; and the moral right on our part therefore to pay them if we use the result of their toil is but the stronger.

A fee of £5 or \$25 would probably seem to Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan an adequate reward for any one performance by amateurs. The money might be sent to Mr. W. S. Gilbert, care of Chatto & Windus, Piccadilly, London, or to Mr. Arthur Sullivan, care of Metzler & Co., Great Marlborough street, W. London. Money sent this way will do much for international friendship. ARTHUR PENN.

#### "In Tea-cup Time."

TEA-LOVERS embrace a universal brotherhood and sisterhood of humanity from Elia and his cousin Bridget, who were "old-fashioned enough to drink their hyson unmixed, still, of an afternoon,"—down to Mrs. Gamp, and her familiar, Betsy Prig.

Never was there a period when the five o'clock tea-table and all of its appurtenances played so conspicuous a part in our homes, as now. Belinda and Evelina, exchanging gossip in their sacques and hoops at an eighteenth century kettle-drum, knew

not the numberless little contrivances and devices that to-day surround this enticing ante-prandial repast. It is the *fleur fine* of entertainments—a meal so purged of the grosser element that even Lord Byron could not have shuddered to view the fair participants. It is the hour for confidential revelations of the inner self, which break into shy existence as the light of lamp and candles glimmers out upon the fading day. Above all, is it not the supreme moment when woman meets woman for the discussion of their fellow-beings, an operation sometimes resembling the whipping with feathers which befell poor Graciosa at the hands of Grognon's Furies in the ancient fairy tale!

But this delicate and impalpable refection must not by any means be confounded with the tea-table of our aunts and cousins, grandmothers and other relatives, still happily to be enjoyed in rural neighborhoods. Who does not retain a vivid and cheerful recollection of that evening regalement in the country, around a groaning board, where the palate is required to run up the gamut of gustation, from chipped beef to strawberries and cream? The five o'clock tea-table of fashionable society claims but a far-away, fine-lady kinship with its rustic cousin. There is only one feature, indeed, bespeaking relationship between them—and that is the generous nectar whence they take their name.

No doubt the present passion for five o'clock tea is, in some sort, a symptom of the china mania which sits like *Atra Cura* behind so many saddles nowadays, driving us to rash and desperate lengths. We exhaust time and means in the eager acquisition of—to quote again from the gentle Elia—"those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that, under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china tea-cup." For them we explore every dingy den of a shop to be found anywhere; we coax them from the cupboards of patient spinster aunts; we palpitate for them at auction sales; we amass them by hook or by crook, and then—suffer righteous pangs until our treasures are properly displayed to the eyes of envious friends! There is no limit to the range of our tea-tray collections: they embrace Davenport and Longwy, Crown Derby and Mings, Tokio and Dresden, Minton, Spode and Copeland, Sèvres and Etruria. Cups and saucers of every age and family meet together in the symposia of to-day. And sweeter far than honey of Hymettus is the draught of "English breakfast," sipped by a collector, in the sight of her china-loving friends, from a fragile cup of which she knows no duplicate!

The dainty equipage of porcelain, thus secured, is supplemented by one equally rare and valuable in silver. If you have inherited an old English service, glittering in its purity, and hammered into charming shapes of by-gone art, so much the better. Marshal in array, as only a woman's fingers can, the cheerful hissing urn, the tea-pot, with its queer, little, old-timey strainer hanging to the spout, the liberal dish of sugar lumps, the slender jug (bearing in mind, here, Dr. Holmes's two sprightly maxims: "Cream



is thicker than water," and "Large heart never loved little cream-pot"), the sugar-tongs,—thin, graceful and lustrous, with golden claws,—the spoons worn by years of honorable service, but still sporting half obliterated crests. Forget not the tea-caddy, either antique or modern, on which fashion now lavishes much extravagance. Nor omit the porcelain or silver plates and dishes, bearing wafer-like slices of bread and butter, tiny cakelets, and (if you wish to be truly and indubitably English) a shape of hot buttered muffin bread, not unlike our good old Sally Lunn!

And now for an appropriate support. Happy if you possess a Chippendale, with its immortal spindle shanks, you may yet rest content with the more ample expanse of a table of smooth and ruddy old Santo Domingo mahogany, claw-footed, and polished to a luster which reflects the flickering shapes of a flaming hickory fire in Walpurgis dance. Women have even been known to survive spreading their afternoon tea upon the ordinary dining-table, reduced in the matter of leaves! The shops are full of trefoil tables too, and the Decorative Art Society is ready with suggestions about their ornamentation and drapery. These latter suffice to hold a tray with two or three cups, but are more frequently used at the elbows of nervous people to whom are tremblingly consigned the egg-shell jewels of the hostess. A glass of violets or forced lilacs, pallid crocuses or heavy-headed, delicate-tinted rose-buds, mingling their fragrance with that of a *pétillant* wood fire upon the tiled hearth, makes a luxurious supplement to the furniture of the trefoil table, sometimes as gorgeous as a cardinal in its drapery of antique lace.

Your table-cloth is a subject for profound consideration, and is susceptible of endless variety. It may be white or *écru*—fringed or frilled with lace. It may be worked all over in sprays of forget-me-not, or bunches of cyclamen or honeysuckle, in crewels, with margin of the same. It may be bordered with Holbein work in scarlet tracery, and there is nothing prettier. Or you may have a square of virgin linen, with inserting and edge of real antique lace. The work in "Old Blue" colors and designs is always cool and crisp-looking.

The use of the tea-cosy, a sort of wadded night-cap for the tea-pot, is an English fashion now prevalent over seas, and deriving its origin from old Scotch and English customs. The tea-cosy, made in silk or satin, worked to match the table cover, is ugly beyond measure, under the most favorable conditions. Some of them bear the embroidered monogram of the hostess. We have seen them made entirely of swan's-down. One could pardon their homeliness, perhaps, in the pleasure of a cup of good tea kept hot by one of them.

More attractive are the tea-gowns, now much in vogue in England. These are graceful *négligé* garments, worn by dwellers in large country houses, and assumed just after removing the walking dress, and preparatory to putting on that intended for dinner. They are ascribed to poor ugly Queen Anne, who surely never affected anything half so

coquettish,—a combination of sacque and wrapper, often made of black satin, with blue or cherry bows and rivers of old lace. This toilette, worn with red stockings, high-heeled slippers with huge buckles of *cailloux du Rhin*, lit by wax-lights set in sconces of old English brass, and reflected in a convex mirror high upon a wall hung in Morris's *couleurs tées*, completes the enchantment wrought by the influence of that favored spot—the five o'clock tea-table.

SACHARISSA.

#### Hints to Young Housekeepers.—VI.

##### DUTIES OF A NURSE.

"THAT child is happiest who never had a nursery-maid, only a mother," says Miss Muloch. I think no one will deny this, yet the necessity for hired nurses is a part of the artificial life we all lead. A nurse is the most difficult of servants to find. Many servants are honest, well meaning, capable of being trained for any service except that of nurse. No rough or ignorant woman should be tolerated. I should consider good looks, good accent and manner of speaking desirable, and among the necessary requirements, good health and activity, a cheerful, good-tempered expression of face; for children are imitative, especially of expression. One wants also conscience, taste, gentleness, and supreme neatness. Where will you find all these qualities combined? There is but one resource: the mother must be head nurse herself. She must overlook no short-comings. Health, temper, habits—all are in question. If one is fortunate enough to meet with a sensible woman, she may be made to understand how much the future welfare of the children depends upon her obedience to directions and upon the careful performance of her duties, that the cares of the mother must be seconded by hers, and that the smallest omission may produce bad results—the exchange of a warm garment for a thin one, the leaving off any article of clothing usually worn, etc.

Little children should be made happy, left free from unnecessary checks and restraints, and supplied with occupation. Indeed, occupation is the secret of happiness, whether with children or adults. The law of love should govern the nursery, and not the law of irritation. Blocks, picture-books, threads and needles, round-ended scissors, paper and pencils, chalks, dolls and doll-clothes, are among the accessories of a good nursery. If the nurse has the will she may keep children amused, and if they get the nursery in great confusion it is easily put in order again by a willing and active nurse. No one should take a place as nurse, nor be allowed to keep such place, who has not a natural love of children. A watchful mother can soon judge how worthy the nurse is of her confidence.

It is desirable that the children should play in a different room from that in which they sleep, and that it should contain an open fire of wood or soft coal.

Children are rarely ill tempered, unless made so by others or by sickness and suffering, in which cases it cannot be considered as ill temper. They may be willful, but decision and gentleness will