

COOLING DRINKS.



WHAT subject so suitable for early summer? Who has not at times experienced that strange and almost painful feeling that must exist in the throat, in order that the sensation may be worthy of the name of "thirst?" I recollect many years ago either hearing or reading a horrible story of the refinement of cruelty. A prisoner is supposed to have been lowered into a deep dungeon, and to have been left for a whole day without food. Ravenous with hunger, what are his feelings on seeing the dungeon-top unclosed, and slowly lowered a silver dish containing probably food! The dish is at length grasped and uncovered, and is found to contain some bread and nicely cooked salt fish, both of

which are eagerly devoured. The dish is slowly drawn up, and the prisoner left alone. What, however, were the pangs of hunger that he felt compared to the raging thirst he now experiences, a thirst greatly increased by the nature of the food he has eaten—viz., salt fish! Another twenty-four hours of agony, tenfold greater than he experienced before, pass heavily away, and again the dungeon opens, and a large and beautiful silver goblet is seen slowly to descend, and sends a quiver of hope through the frame of the poor agonised wretch, almost raving. The goblet is at length clutched somewhat like a drowning man would clutch a straw. Alas! it is found to be empty, and he is left to Death, more merciful than his gaolers.

Horrible stories, too, have been told of travellers in the desert who, in their death-agony, have ripped open and ladled out a spoonful or two of water from their camel's stomach.

However, we English live in a happier clime; certain is it that should any one experience thirst in this country, it could not be from want of opportunities to drink.

Before, however, we proceed to discuss the various methods and recipes for cooling drinks such as claret-cup, champagne-cup, as well as home-made lemonade, lemon-smash, &c., it will not be out of place to compare (as we have already done in cooking) France and England, in regard to drinking. If it is urged there is a good old saying that "comparisons are odious," we would add, so also is drunkenness. That this latter vice is the curse of the country, and has been for many years, no one will deny. That of late private tipping in families far above the lower orders is also on the increase, is a fact so patent that it deserves more notice than that it has hitherto met with in purely medical journals.

Perhaps one of the simplest and most effective cures for the dangerous habit we speak of is the substitution of some agreeable but, at the same time, harmless drink, for the usual stimulant.

We believe that this point has not met with the

attention it deserves. The public-houses of London are essentially drinking-houses. A poor man, to whom every penny is an object, is almost driven when thirsty to take beer—too often, unfortunately, the beer in question being so adulterated that it helps in the end to increase rather than alleviate thirst. On the other hand, a Paris café contains a choice of drinks almost unknown in London, many of which combine a delicious flavour with the advantage of being non-intoxicating. I have known several cases of English lads who, when in England, invariably took beer, who looked forward with pleasure to the equally cheap glass of groseille and water when abroad. These to whom I refer were in charge of some race-horses, had been educated at Newmarket, and were constantly in the habit of travelling between that place and Paris.

Young lads at the dangerous and susceptible age of seventeen too often take to drinking more beer than is good for them, just in the same way that they take to smoking—viz., because they think it will look manly, and not because they really like it. The habit once formed, in nine cases out of ten, probably lasts a lifetime; but the good old saying that prevention is better than cure, was never more applicable than in the case in point.

We could recommend some enterprising grocers during the present summer to offer for sale glasses of syrup and water—say groseille—with a small piece of ice in each glass, for a penny; the profit would be considerable. Were every grocer's shop in London to adopt this suggestion, I believe more would be done towards checking intemperance than all that the efforts of the teetotal societies have done for years.

There are several ways of making claret-cup, and many persons have their own private recipe. It will also invariably be found that each person thinks his own recipe the best. In this respect claret-cup may be said to have taken the place of punch, disputes about the best method of brewing a bowl of which are said in days of old to have even led to duels being fought between two rival brewers.

I will give two recipes for making claret-cup—one which may be called strong cup, suitable for dinner, and another weaker cup, more adapted to be drunk after cricket or rowing. There are, perhaps, few occasions when a deep draught of a cool fluid is more grateful than after a long pull on the river on a hot day.

Of course the basis of claret-cup is claret, but one word of warning somewhat similar to that we gave in connection with turtle soup. It is impossible to make a good cup out of really bad claret. I do not mean cheap claret, but sour. It is quite possible to get a good sound wine for twenty-four shillings a dozen, or even less; but at the same time it is quite possible to pay more, and get a sour compound that would be unfit for cup or any other purpose. On the other

hand, to use really good claret, such as Château Margaux or Château Latour, for making cup, would be as bad as using 1834 port to make negus.

Perhaps the most difficult point to determine in making claret-cup is its sweetness. Now, as this is

hot water on it, and afterwards adding a little claret, I have always found this plan best, as otherwise the sugar is apt to settle at the bottom of the cup or jug, thereby often making the compound not quite sweet



"AFTER A LONG PULL" (p. 442).

purely a matter of taste, I would recommend persons to err on the side of too little sugar rather

than too much, as it is always easy to add, but impossible to take away.

Take therefore about an ounce and a half of white sugar and dissolve it, by pouring a table-spoonful of

enough at starting, and a great deal too sweet at the finish.

We will suppose, therefore, that the sugar is completely dissolved, and added to a whole bottle of claret in the jug or cup selected for the purpose. Add two thin slices of lemon cut across the lemon, care being taken to avoid any pips, and one thin slice of cucumber-peeling, about as long and as broad as the first finger, and the thickness of the blade of a dinner-knife. Next add one sherry-glassful of sherry, one table-spoonful of *good* brandy—not some of that dreadful cheap brandy that smells like naphtha—and one table-spoonful of noyau or Maraschino. Rub a nutmeg about half-a-dozen times across the grater over the cup.

Let the cup stand for about a quarter of an hour, and then taste it. Should the flavour of cucumber be very decided, take out the piece of cucumber; and the same as regards the lemon. Should the flavour of the peel of the lemon be detected, take out the two slices of lemon, for lemons vary immensely in strength.

Now add a large lump of ice and a bottle of soda-water, taking care to pour the latter in carefully—*i.e.*, to put the soda-water bottle almost into the cup. I have seen persons pour the soda-water from a height, thereby losing half the carbonic acid gas, which ought to go into the cup to freshen it up, so to speak.

All that the cup now requires is drinking. It is by no means a very cheap affair, as the sherry, brandy, and noyau probably cost more than the claret.

A cheaper form of cup, and one more suitable for use, as we have said, after cricket or rowing, is a bottle of claret with the same quantity of lemon, cucumber-peel, and sugar, two or three drops of essence of almonds, a large lump of ice, and two bottles of soda-water.

The delight of a cup like this, on a hot June or July afternoon, after a long pull on the river, is a sensation not to be expressed, but to be dwelt on as a sweet thing in one's memory, especially if joined to a vision of a fair face, and fair hands proffering the cup of refreshment.

One word, however, in reference to the lemon proper not only for claret-cup, but for any other kind of cup. The lemon must be fresh—*i.e.*, when it is cut it must have a firm rim round it, yellow outside and white inside. An old lemon, that is soft and pulpy, with a hard, dry skin, and that smells sweet, is no good for claret-cup. In making champagne-cup it is still more important to have a good lemon.

The method of making champagne-cup that I think best is so simple that it barely deserves the name of a recipe. It is as follows:—A bottle of champagne, one or two thin slices of lemon, a large lump of ice, and a bottle of soda-water.

Francatelli is, however, so great an authority in cooking, and all his recipes, so far as cooking is concerned, so invariably correct, that I will give his recipe for making both champagne and claret-cup, merely remarking that I have not tried either. Francatelli recommends—"One bottle of champagne, one quart bottle of German seltzer-water, two oranges sliced, a bunch of balm, ditto of burrage, one ounce of bruised sugar-candy. Place the ingredients in a covered jug embedded in rough ice for an hour and a quarter previously to its being required for use, and then decanter it free from the herbs, &c." I should think the fault in this cup would be that it would taste too sweet.

For claret-cup Francatelli recommends—"One bottle of claret, one pint bottle of German seltzer-water, a small bunch of balm and burrage, one orange cut in slices, half a cucumber sliced thick, a liqueur-glass of cognac, and one ounce of bruised sugar-candy. Place these ingredients in a covered jug well immersed in rough ice. Stir all together with

a silver spoon, and when the cup has been iced for about an hour, strain or decanter it off free from the herbs, &c." In this recipe I should think there would be far too strong a flavour of cucumber.

One of the most refreshing drinks in very hot weather is lemonade, but how rare is it that we meet with lemonade that is really nice! Of course tastes differ, but I cannot understand how some people can drink the ordinary bottled lemonade. It is, as a rule, so very sweet that it is absolutely sickly, and at the same time in such a state of effervescence that only peculiarly constituted throats can drink it at a draught. Plain home-made lemonade can be made very cheaply, when lemons are not too dear. The great secret is to use boiling water, and pour it on the pulp of, say, three lemons, with a small piece of peel, but not too much, as it will render the lemonade bitter. Add white sugar to taste—of course children like it sweeter than others. Let it get cold, and then strain it. Care should be taken that all the pips are removed from the pulp before the boiling water is added. A great improvement to this kind of lemonade is the addition of a little *dilute sulphuric acid*, about thirty drops to a quart. Thirty drops of dilute sulphuric acid when freely diluted can be taken at one dose without any fear, though of course such a quantity must not be taken without a doctor's order; but the addition of it to a whole quart of lemonade has the effect of rendering it much more palatable; and were a person to drink the whole quart, which is improbable, it would not do them the slightest possible harm. Dilute sulphuric acid is a simple but valuable medicine, particularly useful in summer.

Those who prefer sparkling lemonade had better try the following method, and then let them judge for themselves whether it is not infinitely superior to the ordinary bottled lemonade.—Squeeze a lemon through a little piece of muslin into a tumbler, and have the patience to wait while a couple of lumps of sugar dissolve in it. Then add some iced soda-water and stir it up, taking care it is not half lost by frothing over the tumbler.

Soda-water can be bought now very good at one shilling and ninepence a dozen. Mixed with a little fruit essence or French syrup, or raspberry vinegar, it makes most delicious drinks, especially if iced. Let me, therefore, entreat ladies who, during this hot weather, when they feel at times exhausted, have been in the habit of taking either weak brandy and water or sherry and water, to try one of these kinds of syrup instead. The effect of a stimulant is but short, and too often is followed by a reaction far worse than the original feeling of lassitude.

There is one subject in connection with cooling drinks that I wish to mention, and which will not perhaps be deemed out of place in an article like the present; and indeed its importance is so great that I feel constrained to introduce it. When you use water for drinking, or for mixing cooling drinks, take care that it is pure.

No house ought to be without a filter. Were the custom of first boiling and then filtering water

universal, thousands of lives would be annually saved throughout the country. Children are peculiarly susceptible to the influence of impure water, and during hot weather especially drink a great deal. The cost of a filter is small, and the trouble of boiling the water also small.

Let me strongly advise mothers in small households,

where no trustworthy housekeeper is kept, to superintend the management of the filter themselves. If my advice be the means of saving the life of even one little one, it will not have been given in vain. Should any person say or think this is all rubbish, let that person ask any respectable medical man for his opinion, and then act on it.

A. G. PAYNE.

YOUR DIGESTION.



UNDERLYING a hundred aspects of a man's every-day life is his digestion. The mumps and the grumps, in a human sense—that is, ugly, awkward dispositions—spring from indigestion. The miasma that rises from the Pontine marshes around Rome affects the traveller all unconsciously to himself, and the miasma that rises over the whole temperament, from indigestion, unconsciously affects a man's letters, and speeches, and looks. We have now to do with "your digestion." And it is not an ostrich's digestion, remember that! A mill that will grind corn well, would make sorry work with marbles. Perhaps you have done your very best to ruin your digestion with lobster suppers and counter-luncheons. Only look at men in cities, rushing in for their brief morning "feed," and see how they pack it in: it is just like a man cramming his carpet-bag, in a hurry, for a journey. What a squeeze-all pressure he puts on the poor little patent lock! linen and literature, slippers and shaving tackle, all diving into each other's ribs in the most uncongenial companionship possible. So a counter-lunch is often a shooting in of provisions straight into the physical carpet-bag, without any of the preparatory tooth-exercise so necessary to digestion. Any way, you and not your digestion must be considered responsible for the beginnings of the evil. Any way, you've got a digestion of some sort left; but it's rather a bad one, and it seems scarcely fair that the other members of the limited liability company of your constitution should get blamed for the faults of one member. Your temper out! No—it's your digestion. Your spirits low! No—it's your digestion. Be pleased also to remember that a great multitude of people in England eat as well as drink too much. If some people, for instance, could see all weighed out in lots that they "take in" at an ordinary dinner-party, they would stand aghast. And, of course, people drink too much. I do not mean that they imbibe too much of what is called intoxicating drinks—that is as clear to every one's vision as ruins by moonlight. But people take too much liquid—and they forget that liquids are more difficult of digestion than solids. Soups, for instance, are very hard of digestion.

People go to doctors, and get put a little straight,

and then load the poor digestive machine as before. When two Frenchmen hired a trap for Brighton, the proprietor of the mews said, "Brighton! "Why, it's fifty miles—you can't do it!" "Vy not?" said one of them—"we've both got vips." Exactly, and when the poor digestion tires, then the Englishman touches it up with bitters or sherries, or some other stimulant, and says, "We've got whips." Your digestion is simply saying to you, "I've done the work of two digestions ever since I've been in your service. I ought to have had only one dinner to attend to, and I have had luncheon and dinner also, which are but two names for the same thing. I ought to go to rest after tea-time, but I often have to sit up till twelve or one to attend to a heavy supper, and I scarcely get one good night's rest in the week. I'm not a bad digestion, but I'm really tired, knocked-up, worn-out for the time, and weary." And yet you will not believe all this testimony from within. Now then, poor digestion, prepare for temporary ruin. If you have suffered with whips before, you shall try scorpions now. You prescribe for yourself. Down go the bitter bitter-aloes. My word! How wonderful. You are killing the goose that lays the golden eggs now. You are saying to the digestive juices, "Good-bye, good-bye. We are going to make some juices for ourselves. We are going to swallow solvents—instead of letting Nature prepare them. What do we care though hers are harmless to the bodily tissues, and ours are hurtful? Hurrah for speedy results! We feel better. We are cheerful—we are wonderful!"

But how about the digestion now? Why, you know your own properly-educated doctor, when called in to consider your case, had no end of trouble to restore your digestion to any measure of healthy activity! We have said that digestion affects temper—we ought also to have said there is reflex action, and temper affects digestion. Most manifestly so. The monarchs of old had jesters at their dinner-tables to make them merry whilst eating—certainly a very expensive precedent, to be followed only by few; and not only expensive, but foolish: jesters cannot give merry, thankful hearts. But there is a lesson in this. We should be thankful and cheerful at meals; if we sit down in sulks or sombreness, then the mill-wheels don't move merrily. Your digestion is an improvable affair, remark that; there is bodily wear-and-tear, and there is bodily repair. Yes, there is a *vis medicatrix*. You and I are not Scotchmen, but, *inter nos*, oatmeal is excellent, and brown bread is nutritious!