

of the barrister's fee means an increase in that of the clerk; but in the same way by steps, as for instance 5s. between £5 and £10. There is, then, a very natural wish on the part of clerks to get as many and as large fees for their masters as is possible.

A clerk to a Queen's Counsel in large standing practice will often make £200 or £300 a year; but it is often an evil day for the clerk when a learned junior, with no great powers of oratory, is moved by ambition to seek the dignity of a Queen's Counsel, and obtains in consequence fewer, and though larger, yet by no means enough, fees to make his present equal his past income. Of course, there are all sorts of varieties among these men. Some are desirous of acting the part of the grand gentleman, and appear in the most gorgeous rings, the most brilliant scarves, and the longest frock-coats. Others affect a more sporting character; whilst others again dress and look as solemn as undertakers. As far as regards critics of the bar, none are sharper or more to the point than the

clerks. From their teens they have employed not a little of their time in discussing the various merits or faults of the highest and lowest members of the legal profession; and among no class of men is an appointment to a judgeship received with more scorn or approbation, according to the merits of the new recruit to the bench, than among the clerks at the Temple or Lincoln's Inn.

Such are some of the chief traits noticeable in this class of the legal profession. Without efficient machinery, even in its smallest parts, the best piece of mechanism is useless; and without an efficient clerk the busy barrister would never get through the work which falls to the lot of the modern advocate in large practice. We would not detract from the humorous or the business characteristics of the attorney's clerk, but his legal brother is equally deserving of some slight passing notice by those who are not brought into daily contact with him in the various sides of his comparatively humble but not unimportant services.

A TALK OVER A TEA-POT.



YOUR talk might well go on while the tea was drawing, but we want the tea to be good and so we must begin at an earlier stage than the tea-pot—at the kettle. We English ought to

know all about tea-making. We drink more tea than any other nation, and yet (we are told) we know nothing about it. Let us fill the kettle with cold water, put it on the fire, and talk over the subject while we wait until it boils.

We will take the history first. But as to that we have not to go far back. Two centuries ago tea was unknown to our ancestors. It is difficult to think of the breakfast-tables of those days, with the nut-brown ale as the only beverage. People would breakfast at six or seven in the morning, dine at twelve, and sit down to a dissipated supper—say at half-past five. In China, India, Arabia, Tartary, Persia, and other barbarous countries, the inhabitants were sipping tea out of little blue and white cups that would fetch their weight in gold now, while our civilised progenitors drank beer out of pewter. It seems so strange, but yet it is true. The Dutch were the first to bring the little leaf to Europe. They were the great merchants of those days, and were always introducing from the East new sources of commerce. But tea was to

come to Europe as a drug before it became popular as a drink. In 1641 a Dutch doctor, by name Tulpius, wrote the praises of the new medicine, and twenty years afterwards tea had passed from the apothecary's drawers to the round tables of the restaurant. Then an English peer took it up. It is recorded of Lord Arlington that he was the first to bring tea into England. What a luxury it was may very easily be guessed; and then the price was almost prohibitory. The East India Company got the monopoly of the tea trade between China and England, and on that occasion it presented the King with a truly royal gift. The gift was two ounces of tea; but then the price was a guinea an ounce.

Even 100 years later tea was still a luxury, and a rare luxury. As late as 1785 we get a curious little anecdote to show how local was its use. The Duchess of Monmouth had sent to one of her relatives, in Scotland, a packet of the precious leaf, and had not accompanied her present with directions. The tea was handed over to the cook to make, and his system, if not successful, was at least original. He boiled it well, carefully throwing out the water, which he regarded as poisonous, and then served up the leaves like spinach. The Scotch can make curious dishes out of a cabbage-leaf, but tea as a vegetable was an expensive experiment. And yet it has been put to a still stranger use. In Cashmere and Thibet it used to be taken as a soup; it was prepared with milk and butter, and salt and soda. The ingredients seem contradictory, and the programme uninviting; and uninviting the French author who tasted it found it to be. Bitter, muddy, and indigestible were the adjectives he applied to this singular *bouillon*. And yet he fared worse when he went further. In Kanawer they boiled the leaves for a couple of hours, then steeped them in cold water, mixed them with flour

and rancid butter, and used this mess to give relish to a dish of minced goat's-flesh. "It was a detestable ragoût," says the same writer, "but they called it tea, and so I tasted it." But in China itself, from time immemorial, tea has been the national beverage. Kings and peasants alike take it. Some writers say that its use is absolutely necessary to qualify and give taste to the Chinese water. The springs there are so brackish that you could not take a glass of water *au naturel*. The same excuse is sometimes urged by the Irish peasantry as a reason for taking whisky—the water is so bad, it is positively unwholesome to drink it neat.

As every one takes tea in China—as, in fact, there is nothing else to be taken there but tea—so the making of it is almost a matter of education. It approaches the dignity of a science. Everything is considered. We should laugh at their precautions, which extend from the tea to the tea-pot, and from the tea-pot to the kettle in which the water is boiled, and even to the wood which warms that water. In the wine district of Epernay you sometimes hear it said that a bottle of champagne has only one good glass in the whole bottle; and there is the well-known story of the epicure, who maintained that to eat the breast of a goose it was necessary to have two geese dressed—one to supply the necessary slices of breast, and the other to hold the stuffing—the latter, he said, should be over-roasted so that the goosey flavour might be properly imparted to the potatoes. Such refinements are intelligible in cookery, but in so simple a thing as a cup of tea they seem absurd. To the Easterns they are by no means absurd, and there is one peculiarity in the way tea is made in the country of its growth which distinguishes it at once from our method. The Easterns don't use a tea-pot at all. In China the leaves are simply put into a cup, and the infusion drunk out of the cup. In Japan the leaves are first powdered, and then as much of this powder as would go on the top of a knife is flung into each cup, and neither cream nor sugar added. The Chinese, indeed, eat the leaves as a kind of second course, apparently on the same principle that Frenchmen will take a *plat* of beef, which they know has already contributed to their bowl of *bouillon*. But neither of these peoples adopt the tea-pot, and they have both a contempt for the English fashion of letting tea "draw." The bouquet and most delicate flavour comes off with the first water, and what is called "strong tea" is, according to the Eastern notion, a fluid in which all the bitterness remains and all the delicate quality disappears.

And yet we ought to know something about it. We have the reputation of being the greatest importers of tea in the world. Our annual consumption far exceeds a hundred millions of pounds. It is an article of our national faith, like roast beef, or public schools, or trial by jury. Nor do we incline much to the Continental notion of its being an effeminate beverage. The French speak of it as a drink for old women. We can laugh at the French. We see a couple of Parisian politicians brewing a storm over a coffee-can, or getting

revolutionary over a glass of *eau sucrée*, and we stand by our tea—and it stands by us. The French are excellent on the *boulevards*, and can deliver neat little epigrams as they sip coffee under the trees at the round tables of their favourite restaurants. Tea may be the drink of old women, but if the Parisian dandy ever took off those delicate little boots of his, put on a very stout pair with spikes in the soles, changed his sun-umbrella for an ice-hatchet, and started some hours before cock-crow to ascend the Matter-horn, he would find his guide recommend tea as the best stimulus for such an exertion, and he would learn that the nation who are most famous for such ascents may be all tea-drinkers, but certainly are not all old women. And yet it is strange how English families even on the Continent are steadfast to tea. It is a necessity. They will take coffee if you wish, or in addition; but the urn with the spirit-lamp—what the French call *la machine*—is necessary to the notion of a proper breakfast-table. The Russians come next to us in the matter of consumption, but they are more fastidious. With them it is quality rather than quantity. They have a dainty palate for the Chinese infusion, and drink it delicately out of little egg-shell cups, flavoured with lemon-juice; for sugar and cream would be too gross for palates so fastidious. Their method of taking it is luxurious, and as a luxury they are content to pay for it. It comes to them overland, packed in little quarter and half-pound packages, made up in lead-paper, twined and sealed with the seal of the Chinese exporter, and wrapped in papers decorated with quaint Japanese figures, hand-painted, and in their way quite works of art. Such tea will be sixteen or twenty shillings a pound, often very much more. It would be desecration to let milk or sugar touch it. The flavour of it is quite peculiar. We should probably not like it. We are accustomed to the tea that has had the benefit—or, at all events, the experience—of a sea-voyage. For it is a curious thing that the voyage tells on it. We know how Madeira is prized that has been all round the world. It would seem that a similar circumnavigation has an effect similarly beneficial upon tea. A cargo that has been to England fetches an extraordinarily high price in China or Japan.

But though we should not be ashamed of our consumption, there is one result of it which it is very disagreeable to record. The adulteration is incalculable, and the extent of it increases every year. As long ago as 1818 a Commission reported to the House of Commons that "millions of pounds weight of sloe, liquorice, and ash-tree leaves are every year mixed with Chinese teas in England." In that year the amount of tea imported was eighteen millions of pounds. Now in 1877 it is more than ten times that amount, and we may be sure that adulteration has increased in what is called geometric proportion. One of the most favourite methods is happily one of the least dangerous. It is effected by collecting the leaves that have already been used, and after subjecting them to a very simple process, selling them again as "tea." The process is merely to fling them damp upon a hot metal plate, when the action of the heat curls them up, and as they

have been moistened with gum and water they retain the form readily. This method is the most attractive form of adulteration to think over; for though the poor buyer gets a very feeble and exhausted tea, the flavour of the gum somewhat puzzling him, at least he is secure from the introduction of noxious and nauseous herbs. It is very easy also to test when this trick has been played. All the consumer has to do is to burn the tea-leaves, and he will find that, on applying the proper chemical test, the ashes left are wholly destitute of potash. The falsification by means of introducing as tea what is not tea at all is even more common, but there again detection is not difficult. If you take a leaf that has been infused and press it between two thin sheets of glass, you will soon see the difference

between tea-leaves and the leaves of other plants. Indeed it is fortunate that detection is, on the whole, so easy; and now that the reduction of tea duty has made the beverage more popular with the poor, it is to be hoped that the authorities will apply the ample powers granted them by Parliament to detect adulteration, and visit offenders with heavy penalties.

But by this time our kettle must have almost boiled over. Let us hope it has not; for if it has, and it should have been inadvertently taken off the fire, we must fill it again with cold water and wait till it boils. This is the last lesson we learn from Japan. It is impossible to make good tea from water that has been allowed to cease boiling. Hot water re-boiled is not boiling water!

JOHN MAYNARD, PILOT.

A FACT.

BENEATH the starless midnight, o'er the waste
Of broad Ontario sped the steamer on,
A mighty, tireless messenger of haste,
Flinging from steadfast signal-lamps, that shone
On stern and mast-head, streaming lights that glide
Along the heaving waters at her side.

On deck, no sound the midnight silence broke;
Voices of day's confusion, hurrying feet,
Had passed away; only the ponderous stroke
Of engines, and the paddles' ceaseless beat,
Went on; but o'er the crowd securely sleeping,
Through the long hours, his vigilant watch is keeping

The pilot, old John Maynard, rough and grim,
Fronting the night, and slowly, steadily
The helm controlling; storm and gloom to him
Are naught, who had lived his life upon that sea;
And, as he toils, upon his lips there stray
Words of a song his child had sung that day.

At midnight is a cry heard! From below,
Like brigand springing forth from ambushade,
Along the deck are darting flames, that grow
Each moment mightier in their maddened raid,
Flinging aloft vast smoke-clouds, and beneath
Creeping with shrivelling touch and blasting breath.

"Fire! Fire!" the cry has pierced through many a
dream

Of calm, sweet fancies, joined in many a rout
Of horrible imaginings that stream
Through troubled spirits; quickly the dread shout
Has spread, and all—the weak beneath the strong
Crushed pitilessly—in fierce wild tumult throng

The bows, where yet the flame has come not—there,
Huddling with shrieks and curses, women fall,

Hiding their faces from the awful glare
Of pillared fire behind them; others call
For help—"The boats!"—but these are useless, none
Can aid, and inch by inch their doom creeps on.

But, hark! above men's voices and the roar
Of conflagration, shouts the captain—"Men!
Listen—the land is there; ten minutes more,
All—saved or lost—will have been settled then!
There's but one chance: 'tis if the pilot's hand
Keep strong, to steer a straight course for the land!"

And then he shouted, "Are you there, my lad?"
Quick answer came, "Ay, ay, sir!" Dashing on
The ship drove through the night, and watchers glad
Thought they could see afar dim lights that shone
Upon the land; but what of these, while close
Behind, around, the flames devouring rose?

"All in the pilot's hands and God's!" Alone
Beneath the pelting hail of fire he stands,
The scathing blast and stifling smoke-clouds blown
About his form, while from his quivering hands,
Shrivelled and torn, the blood drips—round his head
The circling flames are like an aureole spread.

"Two minutes more! Two minutes to the end!"
Wrung from death's agony the answering cry,
"Ay, ay, sir!" comes. Nearer the flames they bend
To catch the last gasped words, "Sir—I—I'll—try!"
Broad looms the land, and now the keel is grating
Upon the shore, where life and hope are waiting.

Straight, swift, and sure, the steamer dashes on,
With staggering plunge upon the bank she leaps,
Then parts amidships—the wild race is won!
Man, woman, child, in safety each one creeps
To the firm earth; but, as they touch the strand,
John Maynard's soul has gained the better land!

C. E. BOURNE.

