

Gordon House, 8, Endsleigh-gardens, N.W. (This house is specially intended for German girls, who come over to England in large numbers to seek for employment).

Woodford House, 28, Duncan-terrace, Islington.

Garfield House, in the south of London, 361, Brixton-road, S.W.

Norfolk House, 50, Well-street, Hackney, E.

There is much cause for thankfulness that it has been possible to do so much in so short a period; but how few are provided for compared with the thousands that remain! Will you, then, help on this Christ-like work, and carry out the command: "Whatsoever ye would that men would do unto you, do ye also unto them," remembering the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."—I remain, yours faithfully,

ISHBEL ABERDEEN.

P.S.—Those who desire any further information can write to the Honorary Secretary, John Shrimpton, Esq., 38, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C., to whose zeal and energy the founding of the homes is mainly due, or else by visiting the homes between 3 and 5 p.m. Those who desire to join in forming a "GIRL'S OWN PAPER HOME" can send their subscriptions, however small, either to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address, or to the Countess of Aberdeen, Haddo House, Aberdeen.

## TEA IN HEALTH AND SICKNESS.

By MEDICUS.

"Home, home, sweet, sweet home,  
Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home."

"Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,  
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,  
And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn  
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups  
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,  
So let us welcome peaceful evening in."



THE launch of a new volume of a magazine is, not only to its editor, but to every member of his staff, one of the most joyful events of the whole year. It brings hope and happiness to the heart, just as the springtime brings sunshine to the flowers.

Well, here we all are again once more, back from our summer and autumn holidays—back with renewed strength in every limb, and the bronze of health on cheek and neck; back from roaming o'er moorland and fell, from wandering by the sad sea wave, or quiet meandering

streams; back from pleasure, back from play; back to duty, back to work.

The autumn wanes apace; days grow short and nights creep in, and winter will be with us ere ever we know—

"Dark, dreary winter, and wild, drifting snow."

Perhaps; but we do not shudder in the least to look forward to it, for every season has its pleasures just as it has its dangers; and it is really a fact that, beautiful and joyous as summer days are, we would tire of them and long for a change were they to last all the year round. There are many talented writers able and willing to cater for the pleasures of the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER in the volume just begun. Mine is the task—if task it can be called that is always executed so willingly—of giving month after month many a timely hint about health and its preservation, and many a friendly warning which may help you to keep sickness at bay, not only from yourself personally, but from the friends and relations you love so dearly.

All the year round, until October comes again, I hope to be your "Medicus," and sometimes even your mentor, and I promise you I shall do my teaching in the plainest, simplest, and most pleasant way I know how, so that you may be constrained to admit that I really have the interest of my readers at heart.

I promise, furthermore, to make use of no break-jaw, cranky old physicky words, to dress all my recipes in holiday attire, to make the medicines I prescribe—when I do prescribe any, which will be seldom—as pleasant to the palate as pineapple jelly; and if ever I have occasion to describe to you some fact in physiology, I will couch it in language that shall be as pretty to read as a passage in Lord Lytton's "Pilgrims of the Rhine."

All this I promise, and what I promise I shall try most faithfully to fulfil.

And now on this auspicious occasion I invite my readers to have, in imagination, a friendly cup of tea with me.

I do not think I shall be able to tell you in one short paper even half what I know about the herb called tea, but on the other hand I'm certain you will not read it without learning something.

It is somewhat over nine hundred years since the custom of tea-drinking was first introduced into China. We have been taught to believe that the tea-plant was indigenous to China, but it seems that this is hardly in accordance with fact, for historical records of both China and Japan speak of an Indian prince of the name of Djarma as having emigrated from his own country and taken up his abode in China north, where he soon taught the natives the virtues of this remarkable plant.

It is probable, however, that tea did grow in China even at this early date; but the fact that it is but a mere bush in that country, while it flourishes as a tall spreading forest tree in India, would lead us to infer that India is really the true and original home of the *Thea sinensis*, which, being translated, signifies the tea plant. I conclude that this inference is correct from another well-known fact. Most Indian teas are of better flavour, and more pungent withal; so much so that they are used to a very great extent to mix with those of China by way of improving the taste and aroma of the latter.

The Chinese have another legend connected with the initiation of the habit of tea-drinking. A recent writer gives the story in the following words:—"In the treatise called 'Kuen Fang Pu,' a legend is told of the discovery of the tea plant in the reign of Yuen Ty and Tsin dynasty. An old woman was accustomed to proceed every morning at daybreak to the market-place, carrying a small cup of tea on the palm of her hand. The people bought it eagerly, and yet, from the break of

day to the close of the evening, the cup was never exhausted. The money she received she distributed to the orphan and the needy beggar frequenting the highways. The people seized and confined her in prison, but at night she always flew through the prison walls with her cup in her hand." A very remarkable old woman indeed, and a very kind-hearted old woman as well; and yet we cannot believe in her. We must be content to leave the question of the origin of the use of tea in the dim obscurity of antiquarian research, and just be thankful we have so refreshing a beverage placed before us every morning and every afternoon.

A writer in the *Edinburgh Review* speaks about tea as follows:—

"By her fireside in her humble cottage sits the lonely widow; the kettle is simmering over the ruddy embers, and the blackened teapot on the hot bricks is preparing her evening drink. Her crust of bread is scanty; yet, as she sips her warm beverage, genial thoughts awaken in her mind. Her cottage grows less dark and lonely, and comfort seems to enliven the ill-furnished cabin. When our suffering and wounded soldiers were brought down frozen and bleeding from the trenches before Sebastopol to the port of Balaklava, the most welcome relief to their sufferings was a pint of warm tea, which was happily provided for them. Whence this great solace to the weary and worn? Why out of scanty earnings does the ill-fed and lone one cheerfully pay for the seemingly un nourishing weekly allowance of tea? From whatever open fountain does the daily comfort flow which the teacup gently brings to the care-worn and the weak?"

These questions are answered in the following words, which every girl would do well to read and remember:—

"The chief necessity for food arises from the gradual and constant wearing away of the tissues and solid parts of the body. To restore and repair the worn and wasted parts, food must be constantly eaten and digested. And the faster the waste the larger the quantity of food which must daily be consumed to make up for the loss which the waste occasions. Now, the introduction of a certain quantity of theine (one of the active principles of tea) into the stomach lessens the amount of waste which would otherwise take place. Tea makes the ordinary food consumed with it go farther therefore, or, in other words, lessens the quantity of food necessary to be eaten in a given time.

"It is no longer wonderful, then, that tea should be the favourite, on the one hand, with the poor, whose supplies of substantial food are scanty, and, on the other, with the aged and infirm—especially of the feeble sex—whose powers of digestion and whose bodily substance have both begun to fail."

But tea does more good than even this, for it is soothing and grateful to the mind as well as the body. "It tempers," says Lo-Yu, who wrote more than nine hundred years ago, "the spirits and harmonises the mind; dispels lassitude and relieves fatigue, awakens thought and prevents drowsiness, lightens or refreshes the body, and clears the perceptive faculties."

To millions and millions tea has become not only a daily luxury but positively a necessity of life; it behoves us therefore to buy it as good and pure as possible, and to know how to make it on correct principles when we have bought it.

I must tell my readers, young or old, and tell them plainly, that cheap teas are never good, and that they are actually dearer in the end. How are we to get a good wholesome tea? Why, buy it in a respectable shop and pay a fair price for it! The good teas are cheapest because they go farther and do more

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this juncture, arrayed in his many-hued toga. "It just gives the amount of physical exercise calculated to strengthen the muscles, or to shake off the depression arising from too sedentary habits. Any girl who can play daily for an hour or two without discomfort or fatigue may be sure that her lungs are in good order, and that she is cool in her head and sound on her feet. In short, lawn tennis is—"

"Jolly fun!" interposed Bertie. "Come along—here are the rackets—the evening will be gone in no time. Won't you come, Bessie? You would be first-rate at serving, if you would only practise."

But resisting all entreaties, I turned with my book to the shrubbery, mentally deciding that I should never care for the game.

Ah, me! time works wonders. That was five—six years ago. Cheery-faced Bertie dates his letters from China. Percy is married, and a hard-working country doctor. And I have seen the error of too hasty judgment, and am an enthusiast in the pursuit I once despised—as these papers bear witness.

My next acquaintance with lawn tennis was made at a fashionable seaside town, where I proposed to spend some months as parlour boarder with the lady at whose school I had been educated. The prospect was additionally pleasant, owing to the fact that several of my old schoolfellows were staying there just then, and among them two of my cousins; our former governess and present hostess being a charming woman, who invariably retained the friendship of her pupils after they had ceased to have any claim to that title.

My arrival was hailed with delight, and Una, the youngest cousin, invited herself to tea with me in my own room; and while I rested luxuriously after my journey in the deep, chintz-covered chair she had drawn forward, and watched through the shaded window the many white sails dancing on the blue sea, and the crowd of promenaders on the parade, she volunteered an account of their daily doings.

Una was an engaging little chatterbox, and life, according to her animated description, would be decidedly pleasant at Blencowe House.

"Early in the morning," said she, "we go down to the swimming bath, all except Grace and Minnie, who prefer the sea. Then two or three of us generally ride—you did not forget your habit? We have our horses from Poole."

"Screws, of course!" I ejaculated, with the conscious superiority of a country-bred girl, who has always possessed a pony of her own.

"No, indeed!" indignantly. "They are as good as private horses—almost. Poole takes us for lovely canterers over the downs; and he has a black cob which can trot fourteen miles an hour. What do you say to that?"

I judiciously reserved my opinion of the black cob and his merits, and recalled my companion's wandering thoughts to the subject in hand.

"Well, and then you come home to lunch; and what do you do in the afternoon?"

"We rest, or read, or work. But often there is a morning concert, or some such entertainment, to which Mrs. Hare kindly takes us. Is she not sweet, Bessie?"

"Very. And after dinner?"

"After dinner? Oh! there is the pier for you, if you care for the band. But more generally we play lawn tennis. Will you be too tired to begin to-night?"

"Yes," said I, stifling a yawn; "indeed I shall."

"But you like tennis?" inquired Una, anxiously. "You are a good player, of course?"

"Not I! I think it *strangely* overrated."

This confession seemed quite too much for my cousin. She sat regarding me in silence

with a comical look of pity for some moments; then said abruptly, as if determined to go to the root of the matter, "What do you know about it?"

Taken off my guard by this authoritative question, I could only answer feebly that I was aware the object of each player is to return the ball to his adversary before it touches the ground a second time, and that I understood the mode of scoring.

"Not much to boast of," said the small inquisitor, with supreme disdain, which was hard, seeing that I had not boasted. "And I dare say," she went on, remorselessly, "you could not call the score properly, after all."

My doubtful face confirming her in this opinion, she proceeded glibly to explain.

"Suppose you and I are playing, and you win the first stroke, the game is called 'fifteen-love.' If I win the next stroke it is 'fifteen-all;' but if you win it, 'thirty-love,' and so on after each stroke won. If we both win three strokes, the score is called 'deuce;' then at the next stroke it is called 'advantage' for the side that wins it, and then either 'game' or 'deuce,' according to the following stroke. When the first game is finished the score is called 'one-game-love,' and the strokes of the second game are called as before. At the conclusion of the second game the score would be called 'two-games-love,' or 'one-game-all,' according to the result, and so on until the winning stroke of the set is played, when the score is called 'game and set.' There, I am quite exhausted," said Una, handing her tiny blue cup to be replenished. "Did you know all that?"

"I hadn't it quite so pat," I rejoined, laughing. "I have played so little."

"Ah! And you are just like the rest of the world—ready to pronounce an opinion on what you don't understand. Now, Bessie, dearest, do put yourself in my hands, and let me teach you to play tennis. You will thank me for it some day; and really such ignorance as you display is quite too shocking!"

Looking at it in this light I began to feel slightly uncomfortable, and very much inclined to accept my cousin's offer. If the other girls shared her sentiments, I should evidently be regarded as a Goth, a barbarian, not exactly the character in which one would choose to reappear among old friends. However, I merely said, with what indifference I could muster, "Where do you play? Not in this small garden?"

"No, I wish we could, because it would be on grass. But, as the next best thing, we hire a court at the rink close by."

"You prefer grass, then?"

"It does not wear out one's shoes so much," said Una, with a disconsolate glance at her pretty little house slippers. It is a marvel to me that in the interest of poverty-stricken individuals like myself no one invents some foot gear with a special view to durability on asphalt, but I suppose that is a luxury reserved for future generations. Lottie Harding—the Hardings are the people next door, and great friends of Mrs. Hare—declares that she found herself coming through her last pair before she had worn them a week. But to be sure she and her brother are for ever at tennis. They play splendidly—indeed, nearly every one plays well whom we know at the court."

"Una," said I, now quite resolved to master this universal accomplishment as soon as might be, "don't you think you could give me a lesson when no one else is playing?"

"I think it may be managed," replied Una, graciously. "We will see to-morrow."

It was managed. I provided myself with a pair of shoes; and remembering my cousin's grievance, mentioned to the shopman that they were required for use upon asphalt. He recommended those with red rubber soles, which, he said, were intended for asphalt courts. Una advised me to invest in a pretty

apron with a pocket for the balls. "While far from wishing to encourage indolence," remarked that young philosopher, "I certainly hold with economy of labour; and you have no idea how many steps and how much needless fatigue will be saved by that good sized, handy pocket. There, my dear, you look quite the thing. Here is a racket. You see we keep the rackets in a press that they may not warp. Now we will go round to the court; there is most likely not a creature there at present, and I shall be able to tyrannise over you to my heart's content."

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good to the system. They are free from danger, too, because they are free from adulteration. Beware of broken teas, "bonus" teas, and tea-dust. A good tea looks clear, is crisp, and has a pleasant odour, but not scent. Scented teas should be avoided, and unless for medicinal purposes so should green tea.

Good tea when made should have a pleasant taste and aroma, with sufficient colour, and should not come all off in the first water.

Now I will suppose you have bought some good tea; where is it best to keep it? The answer is—in a tin canister with an air-tight lid. Why? Because one of the principles of tea, in which a deal of its virtue lies, is a volatile oil which gets dispelled by contact with the air.

And now about making tea. This is what nine people out of every ten fail in doing well. To make a good cup of tea, then, you want to begin with four things, viz., fire, water, a kettle, and a teapot. Just a word or two about each of these.

The fire should be a bright one, as free from smoke as possible. This stands to reason: we do not want to drink tea with the flavour either of burning wood, coal, or peat. By boiling the kettle over a hot range you avoid any chance of smoky tea. But everyone is not possessed of a range; therefore, I say, boil the kettle over a clear fire.

The water should be soft rather than hard; but no attempt should be made to counteract its hardness by adding soda to the tea in the teapot; soda in tea renders it sloppy, soapy, and unwholesome. The water should be very clean and good, and if possible it ought to be filtered. Filters nowadays are very cheap to buy, and they can be made at home more cheaply still.

The kettle should be always kept scrupulously clean both inside and out. It ought not to be furred inside, nor sooty nor smoky outside. I prefer a kettle that does not take long to boil, for the water with which good tea is to be made ought not to be stewed—it should come straight to the boiling point without delay.

The teapot may be china or silver, but perhaps the best tea can be made in the common old-fashioned brown earthenware glazed teapot. It is scarcely necessary to say that the teapot should be kept very clean, and never a particle of the old tea-leaves left in it when concocting a new cup. Well, then, we have a bright fire, a clean kettle filled with good pure fresh water hung over it, we place our dry teapot near the fire to get thoroughly hot by the time the water boils, and when the kettle sings cheerily, giving evidence it will soon be at the boiling point, we put the allowance of tea in, and warm that too.

Now the kettle boils, do not lose a moment—add the water at once to the tea. Yes, all you want for first cups; it is nonsensical putting in but a little, then *letting it stew* and adding more. Set the teapot in a warm place to draw for about seven minutes, no longer; then pour it out.