

A TEA-CUP DIALOGUE

At Mrs. Washington Square's Musical, Friday, From Four to Seven.

Margaret—Why, Helen, how do you do?

Helen—Very well, dear. Tired, of course; it's so long a season every one's tired.

Thinks—I might as well talk to her till some one better turns up.

Margaret—Yes, of course. Who's here?

Helen—Her coupe is at the door, and she must be going to the Gramercy Park's.

Thinks—How hideous you look in that hat! Though I'd rather like it myself—in decent colors, of course.

Margaret—Is some one singing?

Helen—Yes, don't you see that man standing up in the room, opening and shutting his mouth? You dear girl, what a stunning costume! Paris?

Thinks—I don't believe she will ask me. She always goes about in her coupe alone.

Margaret—Who's that man with Florence Lennox?

Helen—She knows every man in town by name.

Thinks—With Florence Lennox? Really, you know, I can't see from here.

Margaret—Horrid thing! She knew I didn't know him!

Thinks—Oh! I saw that absurd bit of gossip about you in one of those wretched society papers, as they call them, last week. I felt so sorry, dear; you must have felt dreadfully.

Helen—Oh, I didn't mind! Any one could see it was prompted by personal spite, and the outcome is, *entre nous*, I've been obliged to acknowledge to a very few real friends, like yourself, dear, that I refused him.

Margaret—I should be surprised if Margaret wrote that paragraph in the paper herself; it's just like her.

Thinks—Don't believe she ever came anywhere near refusing him. It's ridiculous! Don't believe he gave her the chance—not with those eyes, with all her money!

Helen—It's so good of you, dear, to fight my battles for me. I've been so glad to see you here. It's quite paid me for coming to this stupid tea.

Margaret—Come and see me soon, do; it's so long since we've had a good, long chat together. Come in any time; I'm seldom home, but you may just happen to find me.

Thinks—Not if I'm awake, though; this will about do for one winter.

Helen—Thanks, Margaret, dear! but I'm going out of town for good Ash Wednesday, and I've really not a moment up till then. Drop in at our house some Sunday afternoon; mamma's always home, you know.

Margaret—Good-bye, Mrs. Square! Sorry not to have had a minute with you. One never sees people in their own houses, you know. The music was delightful.

Thinks—She's worn that dress at every one of her days. Wretched form!

Helen—Charming. Mrs. Square, I'm so sorry to have to go.

Thinks—No one here I care a fig for; shall cut her off my visiting list.—Wm. Clyde Fitch, in Life.

THE LATEST JOKE.

Now Mrs. Jason Retained It to Her Patient at Lesser Half.

Mrs. Jason came home the other evening with her face "wreathed in smiles," as the novelists have it.

"Well, what are you grinning at?" was the cordial greeting of her lord and master.

"I heard some thing funny down town," she answered.

"Well, what was it?"

"Oh, nothing much. I happened to meet little Johnny Figg, who used to keep the apple stand across the way, you know, and he's got a better one down town now. I asked him how he was getting along and he says to me: 'Oh, I'm still keeping a stand, you see. I thought it was the outest thing I had heard for a good while.'"

Oh, you did, did you, Maria? If I ever see where the laugh comes in I'll try and smile, even if I have to get up in the middle of the night to do so," was his crushing reply, to which she deigned no answer.

About two o'clock in the morning Mr. Jason was awakened from a dream of being stabbed by a masked assassin to find his wife energetically nudging him below the fifth rib.

"Oh, Jehiel, I had that wrong," she twittered, in a tone of one who has made a great discovery. "Johnny said his business was at a stand-still. You see the point now, don't you?"

"Yes, I reckon so," said the old man in no gracious tones, "and if I feel the point of your infernal elbow jabbing me in the ribs any more to-night I'll go to sleep in the barn. Do you hear?"

"And he didn't laugh either as he promised to," was her reflection, as she settled down to sleep again with the sweet consciousness of duty performed.—Detroit Commercial Advertiser.

WOMEN IN JAPAN.

They Have Always Occupied the Highest Plane of Any Asiatic Women.

In Japan, women have always held a position superior to that of their Asiatic sisters. Their seclusion, even in the old days, was not so strict. They led a freer and more outdoor life, and they were educated to a certain extent. The family idea and rule prevailed, and with the exquisite politeness of those people exalted deference was paid the mother of the family. The Confucian laws were recognized there as well, and her duties and obligations were strictly defined by them. Her three great duties were obedience to her father, her husband and eldest son, as they in turn became the head of her family.

Japanese women of the middle and upper classes were taught to read and write the common language in the *hirakana*, or simple running characters, instead of the square characters of the classic language. All novels, plays and newspapers are written in the *hirakana*, and women are still the great novel-readers of Japan. No woman attended the theater before marriage, and the upper classes not at all, the realism and license of the stage being given as a reason. A Japanese woman's education formerly comprised endless lessons and practice in the mysteries of etiquette, learning to play the koto and samisen, and to arrange bouquets. Women of literary taste were not uncommon at court, and the screens in the Empress' suite in the old Kiota palace are covered with autograph poems dashed off by herself or her ladies in waiting. The present Empress of Japan is poetic in her tastes and has shown a great interest in Western literature. It is under her lead that such reforms in the condition of women have taken place, and in the court life she moves and acts as any sovereign lady of a European country.

Since 1870 new laws have been made regarding the legal status of women in Japan, and the people are still in transition between the old customs and the new condition of things. Under the present laws women can hold property, dispose of it and manage their affairs on much better terms than are possible to the women of some European nations. They can testify in court, although they seldom do it, old prejudices not being sufficiently overcome to allow a woman's testimony to have much weight with a Japanese judge.

The advancement of women has been the most wonderful feature in the progress of Japan during the last twenty years. The Empress Haru has led most of the movements, and founded institutions and schools destined to assist Japanese women to a higher and more nearly equal intellectual and social plane with men and with Western women. Besides these institutions, the Empress is at the head of the Fujii Kiofu Kwai, a society for the advancement of women, and aiming to secure them a higher social and legal estate. Many Japanese men are members of this society, and earnestly devoted to its ends, more especially those who, having occupied official positions abroad, have had the opportunity to see and feel how different the position of the women of their own families has been in foreign countries compared to what they enjoyed at home. The late Viscount Mori, the Minister of Education, who was assassinated in February, 1889, was an ardent worker in this cause. He organized a society of literary men, the Meirokusha, that through its publications urged the advancement of women, and their emancipation from the old customs and etiquette, and Viscount Mori's great point was the social and legal equality of men and women. He was the first noble to make the new marriage ceremony conspicuous, a civil contract being drawn up before the Governor of Tokio, and signed by Viscount Mori and Mlle. Hirose. In his death the women of Japan lost their ablest and most powerful champion.

Japanese women have been quick to accept foreign methods of instruction, and prove themselves intelligent and faithful students. In the hospitals and training schools for nurses they show much ability, and take satisfactory standing. No one among them has yet aspired to be a student of law, and while there have been women writers of novels, poems and dramas, history tells of but one Portia, a murderer who defended herself in court, and won her acquittal by the force and eloquence of her arguments. The exciting melodrama of her life and trial is an old favorite with all theatergoers.

The women of Japan have always occupied the highest plane of any Asiatic women, and the future promises them a position and consideration equal to that of their American sisters. Oriental and Occidental reformers can ask no more.—Harper's Bazar.

ABOUT LAMP CHIMNEYS.

Millions of Them Broken Every Year, Where They Come From.

Nearly 5,000,000 of lamp chimneys are smashed every year in this city and at least 50,000,000 bits of glass are thrown into ash barrels, streets, alleys, gutters, sewers, etc. Yet people venture out in this-soled shoes, children in bare feet and horses without any protection on their hoofs.

Stranger still, one seldom hears of an accident arising from the presence of these bits of glass.

The street sanitary regulations of the city fortunately do much toward obviating such accidents, and most of the broken and cracked chimneys are deposited in ash barrels and find their way to the dump, where they are gathered up by rag-pickers and sold to junk dealers, who, in turn, sell the scraps, which are known as "cullet," to the glass works at 40 cents per 150 pounds.

The dealers in chimneys dispose of their broken stock, which is about 5 per cent. of that carried, in the same manner.

The breakage of lamp chimneys represents the consumption of that article. The lamp-chimney business, therefore, is of considerable importance to the public.

There are innumerable styles of lamp chimneys on the market—large, small and medium sized; long, short, round, flat and twisted; thin, thick, narrow, broad, square, globular, scalloped, colored, spotted, etc., from the baby chimney, 4 inches tall by 1 inch in diameter, to the great big fellow, 12 inches tall by 4 inches in diameter, used on the largest lamp in the market, which throws a 360-candle power light and costs from 15 cents to \$2 per dozen wholesale. They even manufacture combinations of chimney and globes, while every year brings into the market half a dozen or more of new styles of chimneys. Every new lamp requires a special chimney.

Nine-tenths of the chimneys made in this country are manufactured in Pittsburgh, while most of the balance are made at Steubenville, O., while a very few are made in the natural gas regions.

The majority of small ones are imported. Wherever the material in a lamp chimney is of greater cost than the labor the chimney is imported, and vice versa.

All the shapes used in this country are of American design, but are manufactured abroad and brought here and sold at much less than they could be produced here. It is labor that figures in the cost of manufacture more than material.

The odd shapes are all molded, while the ordinary shapes are blown and are made of lead glass and lime glass, both in this and the old country. There is a feature that the casual observer would not notice in selecting a lamp chimney with a square top. Two chimneys of almost identical appearance are placed side by side, one of which commands a higher price. A close observation shows that the top and bottom of the one is rough, while the other is polished and smooth. The smooth one possesses double the durability of the rough one. The rough one is cut off and cooled, while the other is polished. Only the best quality of glass can be polished this way.

People make a great mistake in imagining that a heavy chimney is more durable than a thin one. This is not the fact. The thin chimney is far more durable because of its expansion and contraction being more regular.

The non-breakable chimney, which is made chiefly in Illinois, is non-breakable in name more so than in reality, though it is much more durable than the ordinary chimney. The difference in the price however, does not warrant its purchase on the score of economy, hence very few are sold. The best grade of chimney is known as the pearl top, which is made like any other chimney, but while hot has a crimped ring welded to the top, while the ordinary crimped top is merely placed in a mold and stamped while hot.

These chimneys are much less liable to break than the others, and are considered well worth the one-third more in price. The great demand to-day is for fancy tops.

There are also a great many chimneys now used on gas burners. On the shelves of a first-class lamp store can be found fifty separate and distinct styles of lamp chimneys, while every grocery in the country handles them, mostly the common grades.

The life of a lamp chimney is as uncertain as that of a man. An expensive one is as liable to break as soon as a cheap one, as there are many causes calculated to crack or shatter them other than a fall or contact with another body. A draught of air, a damp chimney, a splash of water or a high blaze will any of them terminate a chimney's usefulness in short order.—Cincinnati Times-Star.

HE WAS EXCUSED.

"Excuse me," he said as he bit off the end of a cigar and held out his hand to secure a light from the other, who was smoking.

"Beg pardon."

"I said excuse me."

"Oh, certainly. Always willing to excuse."

And he took the fresh cigar, lighted it, threw his old stub away, and as he began on the new one he walked off with the remark:

"Very good cigar, sir—very good. Of course I'll excuse you."—Detroit Free Press.

THE SOUNDING ROCKS.

A Natural Phenomenon Which Has Given Rise to Many Legends.

Not far from Dinan, on the banks of the Argouenon, one of those small torrential rivers which, in emptying into the sea, carve the coast of Brittany into capricious festoons, there is shown to the tourist a heap of grayish rocks known in the country under the name of the "sounding stones of Guildo."

In the crystalline texture of these rocks and their slaty color we at once recognize that variety of stone known in mineralogy by the name of amphibole (complex silicate of iron, manganese and lime). These stones, which, aside from their musical properties, possess no novelty, are situated in the midst of wonderful scenery. They occupy a small cove, that at rising tide is entirely covered, and which is overlooked by a high bank, upon which stands the little village of Guildo, formerly the center of a celebrated pilgrimage.

The stones of Guildo are not erratic blocks derived from the upper part of the valley. It is clearly seen that they have been detached from the bank itself, the strata of which are of rock of the same formation. They are huge boulders rolled and polished by the sea.

The sounding-stones are three in number. They are long prismatic blocks, lying side by side, at right angles with the shore, and because of their form, the inhabitants sometimes call them "the horses in the stable."

The central stone more particularly exhibits the phenomenon. It is about 20 feet in length, and 23 feet in circumference, thus giving it an approximate weight of 165,000 pounds. On the river side it ends in a sort of truncated cone. It is at this part that it is necessary to strike it with an iron instrument, or, better, with a stone of the same nature. Near this spur there are observed three or four points that are well marked by the wear produced by the repeated blows of visitors. These are the points at which the maximum of sonority is obtained.

Under a blow the stone emits a very clear, silvery sound, similar to that which would be obtained by striking a large bell with a mallet of soft wood. The more one approaches the other end, in continuing the blows, the deeper the sound becomes. Near the top the totality seems to increase a little. Finally, at certain points, which must be nodes of vibration, merely a dull sound is obtained. If, while striking, one presses his ear against the other extremity of the rock, the sound heard is extraordinarily intense, and, in measure as it dies out, the various harmonies are distinctly perceived. The two other stones emit nothing more than a muffled sound. It is asserted that this is due to the fact that they have been disturbed by the action of the sea. In fact, it is to be noted that the musical stone rests through a few points only upon the pebbles that support it, while the two others are now partially sunk in the subjacent earth.

We examined all the surrounding stones, and found several that gave very varied sounds, without there seeming to be any relation between their size and the height of the pitch. At the end of the cove we more particularly remarked a horizontal stratum partially buried in the shore and divided into fragments, forming, as it were, something like the gigantic keys of a prehistoric piano. These of these stones gave clearly the perfect major chord. While watching our researches with curiosity, a boy of the locality exclaimed now and then, previous to our experiments: "Will sound!" "Won't sound!" and, accustomed to make the singular tones speak, he soon showed us how, at the first glance, it was possible to recognize the musical notes. The rocks, in fact, exhibit two very different aspects.

Those of a silvery gray, with a very fine texture, all render, even when broken, a very pure sound. Those of a darker color and blotched with brown, through an excess of iron, are as if exfoliated, and emit no sound.

These sounding rocks have more than once furnished their contingent to the already rich legendary of the Breton country. We were struck by one of these legends. It is the story of a tailor (hump-backed, of course), who, one fine evening, obligingly assisted in completing the round of the fairies of Guildo, who were disconsolate over being in unequal numbers. As a reward, the fairies taught him to "sound the stone" in making a wish. At the call of the mysterious bell there came from the depths of the earth gnomes and elves, who satisfied the fortunate tailor's wishes, and begun in the first place by ridding him of his hump. Then comes the usual counterpart: The artful and scuffling miller of the valley of the Argouenon wished to imitate the tailor, and succeeded only in making the fairies hostile. They avenged themselves on him by ridding themselves, at his expense, of the tailor's hump, which took up its perch on the miller's shoulders.—N. Y. Ledger.

ALL ABOUT SHARKS.

Ravenous Character of the White and Hammer-Headed Varieties.

It was reported the other week that a sailor engaged in scraping the sides of a troop-ship in the harbor of Sierra Leone was drawn into the water and promptly devoured by a shark. This is not an uncommon experience and the Standard reminds us that a boatman has been bitten in the short time it took him to dip up a pitecher of water while his craft was under full sail. We are assured that it is nothing uncommon for the ravenous fish to spring a foot out of the sea in order to secure their prey. For miles they will follow a vessel, on the lookout for any stray unfortunate who may tumble or be thrown overboard, and so deep do they swim under the surface that it requires the practiced eyes of the natives to detect their presence. Many of the West India harbors are so haunted by the white and hammer-headed sharks—the best available of the one hundred and fifty different kinds known to zoologists—that it is dangerous to bathe even a few yards from the shore without an outlook being posted.

Yet the West African negro has been known to face the brute, not only with impunity, but even to come off as victor in the end. All but amphibious, the swimmer cautiously approaches his enemy, and then, just at the moment when the great fish turns over to seize him—his mouth being so placed that it is necessary—the daring black plunges his knife into its white belly. The pearl-divers are also sometimes successful in their attacks on sharks which try to seize them, though, it is needless to add, such a mode of combat is possible only when the monsters do not come in numbers, and under the most favorable circumstances requires a coolness, a dexterity and a courage which are not to be acquired except by long experience in such perilous encounters. As a rule, however, it is seldom that a man who is so luckless as to drop among sharks ever appears again. There is a shriek, a white outlook is seen under the surface and a fin above it, a reddened crest tops the next swell which breaks against the ship's side, and the horror-stricken seamen know that their messmate will be seen no more.

It is a well ascertained fact that the skeletons of sheep, pigs, dogs and cattle which had fallen or been thrown overboard have been recovered many days subsequent to their being swallowed; and it is on record that in the stomach of a shark killed in the Indian ocean a lady's work-box was found, while in another the incriminatory papers which had been thrown away by a hotly-chased slaver were recovered from the maw of an involuntary witness thus curiously brought into court on the barb of a pork-baited hook. Ruyshel, one of the most trustworthy of the old naturalists, affirms that a man in mail—homo loricated, he calls him—was found in the stomach of a white shark; and it is recorded by Blumenbach that in one case a whole horse was found. It is undeniable that many have been killed with ample capacity for such undesirable contents; and Basil Hall tells of one out of which was taken the whole skin of a buffalo, besides a host of other trifles which had been dropped astern in the course of the previous week.

Sailors are full of superstitions which touch the superhuman sagacity and incarnate fiendishness of this fish—how, its senses being acute far beyond what we can have any idea of, it will follow ships for days when a death is likely to occur, and desert the wake of the vessel when no such good fortune for it is in the wind. Vatea, the shark god, is the lord of the ocean in the Hervey island mythology, and it is whispered that even the Christianized Hawaiians will still, when in the direst extremity, invoke Moanaru, the shark demon, to whom their pagan forefathers erected temples and offered sacrifices. The pearl divers of Ceylon employ shark charms to protect them while engaged in their dangerous work. Marco Polo speaks of these officials under the name of the *abremani*, who received as wages a twentieth of the divers' gains. At the present day they are called *haibandi* or shark-binders, and as the divers would not enter the waters without being certain of their services the chief operator receives a government subsidy of ten oysters per diem. The Tahitians deified the blue shark under the name of "Aukua moo," dedicating it to shrines and priests, and in West Africa rabbits are sacrificed to "John," while, if not sharply watched, it has been affirmed that some of the tribes about the Niger delta will, at fixed times, bind a child decorated with flowers to a post on the beach at low tide and leave it to be devoured by the sharks which come in with the flow, drowning its cries with the noise of drums.—Newcastle (Eng.) Chronicle.

Lack of Courtesy to Wives.

A Western woman, talking of the lack of courtesy on the part of husbands to their wives, says: "When I think I have a hard time, I just think of the women who have no servants, but who themselves care for the children, wash, iron, cook, mend, churn, milk, carry wood and water, all for less than an Irish servant girl's wages. Of course men appreciate their wives, of course they do, but they keep their polite manners and courteous ways for other men's wives. One time James thanked me for saving him room beside me at the concert, and then sort of apologized for being polite, by saying he thought it was my sister Mary."

A Typographical Blacksmith's Blunder and Its Consequences.

I inserted the following advertisement in our village paper the other day:

WANTED—A small house for the season. Apply, etc.

and have had a great deal of soul-twisting sport out of it. The compositor, who works in a bait-factory five days in the week, performed a notable feat in re-creation, by making a "horse" out of a "house," and I've been holding a Tattersall's reception ever since.

Before the paper was printed, the top of a torn livery stable bill-head was handed in to me one evening, and following this informal card came the proprietor himself. Ere I could explain that it was a chalet and not a palfrey that I wanted, he had preached this enticing sermon:

"One 'r th' Mirror's proof-sheets blowed out th' winder, an' I seen into it that you wanted a small hoss. I've got one that's smaller than Uncle Tobe Benham, an' he's small 'nough t' feed seed cat'logues to a shoat. Small? Why, I let her out t' other day in a village cart to old Miss Welkin an' she didn't know more'n t' set right plum over th' axle. When that fat tarrier of hern jumped in behind, what does th' hull outfit do out turn a back han' spring, an' th' hoss, she came down flat on her saddle jist th' opposite of where she was, an' Miss Welkin shut up like a deer-knife tween th' seat an' th' gutter."

I ventured to hint that I had no idea of buying a horse, but the dealer evidently thought this a mere subterfuge to knock him down on price, and he kept right on:

"You needn't be 'fraid that she's too small, though," he said. "She's th' knowin'est thing you ever seee."

"I've got three sets of harness fer her, each on 'em one size bigger than t' other. When I let her out to Mr. Freeson, the parson, he knows he's kinder dignified, an' she draws herself up, an' stan's on tip-toes, an' swells out, so's I have t' put on number one."

"Then when they's a funeral, an' things is kinder av'rage all 'round, she's what yer call nommal, an' number two goes; but when Silo Dyer hires her t' let his rickety boy go up t' Ken-sico for elder, you'd order see der! She sort o' shrinks all up, an' draws her legs in, an' coughs jist as nat'ral as consumption."

"Jest think how handy she'd be for you 'round th' place. She'll eat any th' in. Brigand, th' butcher, tells me that you always run a bit short toward th' last of the week. That's th' time she'll haul in, an' be contented with p'ater-skins an' old curl-papers. Then when things gits better, an' you have a fair dinner, she'll put on her nex' size, an' 'dapt herself t' what lobster-salad an' fixins you have left over; an' Mondays after th' Sunday dinner she'll expand, an' you won't have t' have no refuse carts a-comin' inter th' yard. She's sound an' kind, Mister Gotman, an' afraid of nothin'."

Here was a loop-hole of escape, and I crawled through.

"If I bought a horse," I whispered, "I should like one just like yours; but that last clause rather decides me not to make a trade. As my wife and children would probably drive it more than I should (here I edged him toward the door), I should have to insist on an animal that is not afraid of any thing."

"That's what I mean," he wailed; but I pushed him out on the front porch and locked the door.—Puck.

Queen Margherita of Italy.

Queen Margherita of Italy possesses many graces and accomplishments, and while she is well versed in classic and modern literature, she is also one of the best violoncello players of the day. Wishing to pay special tribute to Italian genius, she not long ago had published at her own expense, for the education of her son, an elaborate edition of Dante's works, containing much that has been written about the poet, with the reproduction of every picture inspired by him. She is also an ardent patron of the arts and industries of her country, and under her fostering care the manufacture of Burano lace, once apparently lost, was saved from extinction. Her aims-giving is munificent but practical, and in her religion she is neither a bigot nor a freethinker. Her attitude toward public questions has been so wise and politic that she is generally loved by the people, and the greatest criticism made of her by her enemies is that she does not dress in good taste.—Harper's Weekly.

Superstition's Curse Was on Him.

Swipsey—Yes, mum, I'm lookin' for work. I'm poor an' most starved. Can't ye get me some grub an' a job?"

Farmer's wife (handing out a generous meal)—Poor fellow! Eat this, and then my husband will give you work at thirteen dollars a month. He needs a man.

Swipsey (at a safe distance)—Xcuse me, mum. I'm ashamed to own it, but I'm a bit superstitious, an' I couldn't take the job 'cause thirteen is an unlucky number.—Judge.

—Some people speak as if hypocrites were confined to religion, but they are everywhere; people pretending to wealth when they have not a sixpence, assuming knowledge of which they are ignorant, shamming a culture they are far removed from, adopting opinions they do not hold.—Rev. Albert Goodrich.

—Vermont claims to produce more butter annually than any other State in the Union.