THE GRUMBLER.

He sat at the dinner-table
With a discontented frown—
"The potatoes and steak were underdone,
And the bread was baked too brown.
The pie too sour, the pudding too sweet,
And the roast was much too fat;
The soup so greasy, too, and salt,
Sure 'twas hardly fit for the cat."

"I wish you could eat the bread and pies
I've seen my mother make:
They are something like, and 'twould do you good
Just to *look* at a loaf of her cake."
Said the smiling wife: "I'll improve with age,
Just now I'm but a beginner,
But your mother has come to visit us,
And to-day *she cooked the dinner*."
—*Lizzie M. Hadley, in Good Housekeeping.*

A CUP OF TEA.

The Beverage That Cheers but Not Inebriates.

Literature of the Plant That Has Made Its Way Through the Wide World—Old Ideas as to Its Harmlessness.

It is curious that while the Chinese claim a remote antiquity for nearly all the products of their long-arrested civilization, they give what to them is a comparatively modern date for the introduction of tea into the Celestial Empire. And even then they trace the origin of the article to a myth. They tell us that about the beginning of the sixth century in our present reckoning, one Darma, a prince of high principle and great piety, landed among them and gave up his life wholly to devotion. He entered no temple, but, living in the open air, gave day and night to prayer and the study of God's work in nature, his aim being to so purify his life that in the end he would become absorbed into the Divine Presence. He had an idea that if he could only conquer sleep so his mind might be forever alive to the impressions and scenes around him, and in constant meditation on the unseen, the sublime purpose he had before him would surely be attained. The weakness of the flesh, however was too much for this enthusiast. Worn out by his protracted vigil, he at length fell into a profound slumber; but instead of waking up with a sense of comfort and refreshment, it was in shame and humiliation that he opened his eyes, and in an agony of grief over his failure to keep awake he took a knife and cut off the offending eyelids. Returning after a time to the spot where this extraordinary penance was performed, he was amazed to find that the eyelids had taken root and developed into fragrant and beautiful shrubs. He plucked some of the leaves and eating them felt like a man transformed. A new joy possessed his mind, a new courage animated his body; he had found an elixir that conquered sleep and made persistent watchfulness a certainty. It was in this fashion, say the Chinese, that the tea plant came into existence. The story is not so meaningless as it appears on the surface. Apart from its spiritual significance, we see in the legend that from an early period tea was regarded as a preventive of drowsiness; and this, indeed, is the recommendation given to it by those Jesuit Fathers who are supposed to have been the first Europeans in China to make use of the plant.

We do not find mention of tea in literature earlier than the sixteenth century. Certain Italian writers who flourished then speak of it, and one of them, anticipating Cowper, describes it as "a delicate juice which takes the place of wine, and is good for health and sobriety." Tea must then have found its way into Europe, and the Portuguese were probably the first to import it. It was not, however, until about a century later that it was brought into England. It was so much of a rarity that a gift of a few pounds of it to the sovereign in 1664 was considered a magnificent present. In 1667 a considerable importation of the article was made into this country, the amount being nearly five thousand pounds, but it found by no means a ready sale. This was owing, perhaps, less to the price than to the prejudice with which English people in the first instance regarded the beverage. When it was first offered in our markets from £6 to £10 a pound was asked; a little later £2 10s. was accepted. Garraway, of coffee house fame, was retailing it in 1657 at from sixteen to fifty shillings a pound. In his advertisement he states that "in respect of its former scarceness and dearness it hath been only used as a regalia in high treatment and entertainment and presents made thereof to princes and grandees;" but a better era had now dawned and Garraway tells us he "first publicly sold the said tea in leaf and drink according to the directions of the most knowing merchants and travelers in those Eastern countries, and upon knowledge and experience of the said Garraway's continued care and industry in obtaining the best tea and making drink thereof, very many noblemen, physicians and merchants and gentlemen of quality have ever since sent to him for the said leaf and daily resort to this house to drink the drink thereof." Even Garraway's reduced scale of prices and accomplished brewing failed to create any great demand for the new beverage and most of the writers and wits of the time are found satirizing it. Shadwell talks of it as something "for women and men that live like women;" but Shadwell, on Dryden's showing, being "round as a tub and liquored every chink," could hardly be expected to be partial to any such mild form of dissipation. Steele was no doubt less prejudiced, but even he speaks bitterly of the new custom of tea drinking. "Don't you see," he makes one of his characters say of women, "how they swallow gallons of the juice of tea, while their own dock leaves are trodden underfoot?" This, however, was but echoing the views of economists of the times, who had said that if such a decoction were to become a necessity it was ridiculous to pay heavily for what could just as easily be made out of sage and bramble leaves. Another complaint of the period against this new fashion of tea drinking was that it gave rise to gossip and backbiting. There is a letter in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1735 finding fault with ladies "who make their tea-table the mart to dispense scandal and attack reputations," and later we have a writer in the *Connoisseur* bewailing the loss of time and the profanation of the Sabbath consequent upon Sunday evening tea drinking. The beverage had by this time become pretty much a favorite at social gatherings throughout the country and neither the economists nor the wits could counteract what was quickly becoming a popular demand. Beside, tea had its champions as well as its detractors. Dr. Johnson came to the rescue among others and boldly confessed himself "a hardened and shameless tea drinker, who has for many years diluted his meals with the infusion of this fascinating plant, whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnight and with tea welcomes the morning." When we get to Colley Cibber, we find the beverage apostrophized in this fashion—"Tea, thou soft, thou sober, safe and venerable liquid; thou female tongue-running, smile-smothing, heart-opening and wink-tipping cordial, to whose glorious insipidity I owe the happiest moments of my life." Waller has the lines:

The Muse's friend, tea does our fancy aid,
Repress those vapors which the head invade,
And keeps the palace of the soul serene,
Fit on her birthday to salute the Queen.

Nor should Cowper's delightful home picture be forgotten in this connection, if only to give the original form of the modified words chosen as the title of this sketch:

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,
To let us welcome peaceful evening in.

The question seems to have arisen very early in the use of tea as to the amount of the infusion which one might safely take. Several medical men had pronounced it not only safe itself, but as conducive to health; and a Leyden physician, writing in 1671, commends it as a panacea for almost every ailment and does not think that 200 cups daily would be too much even for a moderate drinker! This, however, was interested testimony, the physician in question having, it is said, been brought over for the purpose by the Dutch East India Company. At the same time, there have been tea drinkers whose appetite for the beverage was virtually insatiable. It was not unusual for Robert Hall, the divine, to swallow twenty cups at a sitting. To Johnson, as already indicated, the beverage never came amiss. There is a story in which Sir Joshua Reynolds is credited with reminding him that he had just drunk eleven cups. "Sir," said Johnson, "I did not count your glasses of wine, why should you number my cups of tea?" Then he playfully added, "If it had not been for your remark, I should have released the lady from any further trouble; but you have reminded me that I want one of the dozen and I must ask the lady to round up the number." The story does not end here, for we are assured that as Johnson was sipping his twelfth cup he told how, on one occasion, being invited to a party to be made a lion of, he had his revenge by swallowing twenty-five cups of tea and not treating his hostess to as many words. The right method of preparing tea for drinking was not at first easily understood. The Chinese say we have not mastered the secret yet; but we have undoubtedly improved upon the instructions left by an authority in the last century, whose advice was either to boil and drink the liquid when the leaves settle to the bottom, or steep the tea overnight in cold water and boil in the morning before drinking. Crude as this system was, it was preferable to boiling the leaves and then eating them with butter, pepper and salt, as was done in some country places in ignorance of the proper use of the plant. There is reference also to a custom last century of first serving the leaves between thin slices of bread and butter and eating them as a delicacy.

The distinguishing names for tea are not expressive, as is generally supposed, of particular varieties of the plant. They relate chiefly to the conditions under which the leaves are picked. The principal black teas are Bohea, Congou, Souchong and Pekoe; while green teas are known as Hyson, Twankay and Gunpowder. Of the black varieties Pekoe stands first, and of the green Gunpowder has the preference. The Pekoe consists of the buds and very young leaves and is gathered early in spring. The Souchong is the result of the second picking, which is made about the beginning of May. Congou is the name given to the third gathering, and Bohea is a late leaf. Of the green teas, Hyson is a gathering of tender leaflets and Gunpowder is a selection of Hyson. The Twankay is the last crop of the season. China continues the principal source of the English supply of tea, though we now import largely also from Assam and India. In the United States the Japanese variety is at least as extensively used as the Chinese. The fact that other places than the Celestial Empire now cultivate the tea plant is a benefit to the consumer, not only in a larger supply of the article, but as a protection against adulteration. The best quality of tea never leaves China; it is too precious a commodity there. Besides, to enjoy tea in its choicest flavor it must be used when perfectly fresh and this freshness is impaired by the drying processes to which the leaves must necessarily be subjected for export. The effect of competition, however, upon the Chinese merchant has had the effect of making him more careful in the "sorting" of the article and we have the satisfaction of knowing that, while tea is now cheaper than ever in England, it has not fallen off in quality.—*Leeds Mercury.*

VOUDOO WORSHIP.

Revolting Superstitions Prevailing Among the Negroes of Hayti.

Sir Spencer St. John gives a very spirited description of Voudoo worship in Hayti. "According to the true secretaries of the voudoos," he says, "who maintain its principles and obey its rules, 'voudoo' signifies an all-powerful and supernatural being, on whom depends all the events which take place in the world. This being is the non venomous serpent—one so common in Hayti—and it is under its auspices that all those assemble who profess this doctrine. Acquaintance with the past knowledge of the present, prescience of the future, all appertain to this serpent, that only consents, however, to communicate his power and prescribe his will through the organ of a grand priest, whom the secretaries elect, and still more by that of the negress, whom the love of the latter had raised to the rank of high priestess. These two delegates, who declare themselves inspired by their god, or in whom the gift of inspiration is really manifested in the opinion of their followers, bear the pompous names of 'King' and 'Queen,' or the despotic ones of 'Master' or 'Mistress,' or the touching titles of 'Papa' and 'Mamma.' They are during their whole lives the chiefs of the great family of the voudoos, and they have a right to the unlimited respect of those who compose it. It is they who decide if the serpent agrees to admit a candidate into the society, who prescribe the obligations and the duties he is to fulfill; it is they who receive the gifts and presents which the god expects as a just homage to him.

"To disobey them, to resist them, is to disobey God himself and to expose one's self to the greatest misfortunes.

"This system of domination on the one hand and of blind obedience on the other being well established, they at fixed dates meet together, and the king and queen of the voudoos preside, following the forms which were probably brought from Africa and to which Creole customs have added many variations and some traits which betray European ideas, as, for instance, the scarf or rich belt which the queen wears at these assemblies, and which she occasionally varies."

As for the practice of voudoo worship, it is well to say that of the votaries in Hayti there seems to be two classes—those who worship the serpent and offer animal sacrifices to appease his wrath or court his favor, and those who kill human beings and not only offer them as sacrifices, but eat their flesh. The temples of the voudoo are generally small, unpretentions wooden buildings—called by the natives Humforto—and are scattered generally throughout the interior of Hayti. Some of them are most incongruous in their interior decorations, and one situated a little distance back of Heaux du Cap, was profusely decorated with illustrations from colored weekly pamphlets, interspersed with gaudy chromoic pictures of various saints.—*N. Y. World.*

AN ALGERIAN WEDDING.

Its Celebration an Interesting Relic of Very Ancient Custom.

A marriage celebration in Algeria is an interesting relic of ancient custom. The bridegroom goes to bring the bride, and the guests assemble outside the house will wait for his return. Soon the sound of pipes is heard coming from the summit of some neighboring hill, and the marriage procession approaches the bridegroom's house. The pipers always come first in the procession, then the bride muffled up in a veil, riding a mule led by her lover. Then comes a bevy of gorgeously dressed damsels, sparkling with silver ornaments, after which the friends of the bride follow. The procession stops in in front of the bridegroom's house, and the girl's friends line both sides of the pathway. The pipers march off on one side, while the bridegroom lifts the girl from the mule and holds her in his arms. The girl's friends thereupon throw earth at the bridegroom when he hurries forward and carries her over the threshold of his house. Those about the door beat him with olive-branches amid much laughter.

In the evening, on such occasions, the pipers and drummers are called in, and the women dance, two at a time, facing each other; nor does a couple desist until, panting and exhausted, they step aside to make room for another. The dance has great energy of movement, though the steps are small and changes of position slight, the dancers only circling round occasionally. But they swing their bodies about with astonishing energy and suppleness. As leaves flutter before the gale, so do they vibrate to the music; they shake; they shiver and tremble; they extend quivering arms, wave veils, and their minds seem lost in the abandon and frenzy of the dance, while the other women, looking on, encouraged by their high, piercing, trilling cries, which add to the noise of the pipes and drums.—*Brooklyn Magazine.*

—The most prominently picturesque old building in Albany, N. Y., is to succumb to the march of modern improvements. The Staats House, southeast corner of State and Pearl, with its date, "1667," is to give way to a fine banking-house.—*Albany Express.*

—The cost of postage-stamps to the Government, covering every thing, including delivery, is $6.99 per thousand.

ABUSING WASHINGTON.

Some Scandalous Charges Made Against the Father of His Country.

General Washington was probably as much abused as any President who has ever acted as the Chief Executive of the United States. At one time he said that he had been abused worse than a common pickpocket, and he was charged with all sorts of crimes during his administration. The Philadelphia *Aurora* was, perhaps, the most bitter. When Washington left the Presidency it had a jubilant article over the close of his term, in which it said:

"If ever there was a period of rejoicing this is the moment. Every heart in unison with the freedom and happiness of the people ought to beat high with exultation that the name of Washington this day ceased to give a currency to political iniquity and to legalized corruption. A new era is now opening upon us—an era which promises much to the people; for public measures must now stand upon their own merits, and nefarious projects can no longer be supported by a name. It is a subject of the greatest astonishment that a single individual should have carried his designs against the public liberty so far as to have put in jeopardy its very existence. Such, however, are the facts, and with these staring us in the face this day ought to be a jubilee in the United States."

During a part of his Presidency Washington was called the step-father of his country, and among the paragraphs written about him was one which said: "That to talk of the wisdom of the great commander (Washington) and the great philosopher (Franklin) was to talk nonsense, for Washington was a fool from nature and Franklin was a fool from age."

In 1795 "A Calm Observer" in the New York *Journal* accused Washington of being a thief. He stated that he had overdrawn his accounts and that he owed the treasury $1,037. Another writer accused Washington of hypocrisy and declared that he wanted to be a King. A third criticised his carriage and his aristocracy, and, in fact, all the opposition newspapers denounced him in unmeasured terms. Congress went against him during his second term and refused to celebrate his birthday, though they had been accustomed to do so, and when he refused to run for a third term they charged that he did so because he feared that he could not be elected.

It will be surprising to the people to-day to know that Washington was once charged with murder. It was during one of his Presidential campaigns. The Philadelphia *Aurora* made the charge. It stated that Washington had, during one of the battles of his early life, shot an officer who was bearing a flag of truce, and that in the papers relating to the affair he had acknowledged the act of assassination. Peter Porcupine takes up the charge in his letters and proves it to be false. The fact, however, stands that the charge was made.

Speaking of Washington, I see that some of the goody-good newspapers of the country are very indignant at the statement in Quackenbos' history that Washington at one time ate peas with a knife. I do not doubt but the statement is true. The whole literary United States at the time of Washington, however, seemed to be a mutual admiration society, and there is little unfavorable gossip about the White House dinners. I found the other day, however, Maclay's diary, giving his experiences during his term as a Senator of the United States when Washington was first President. Maclay dined with Washington a number of times, and scattered through his diary are little bits of gossip about these dinners. At two of them he describes Washington as amusing himself during all the dinner by playing the devil's tattoo upon the table with his fork. He says, speaking of one of these dinners: "The President kept a fork in his hand when the cloth was taken away, I thought for the purpose of picking nuts. He ate no nuts, but played with the fork, striking on the edge of the table with it."—*Cor. Cleveland Leader.*

SUPERSTITIOUS SIGNS.

Popular Fallacies Which Probably Originated Hundreds of Years Ago.

If, on going out of the house, you forget something, you must under no circumstances turn back if you can possibly avoid it; if you do, you must, at any rate, sit down a moment before going out again.

If the first person you meet is an old woman, it is a sign of coming misfortune; while, on the contrary, a funeral procession denotes good fortune.

Pigs to your left bring good luck, to your right the opposite; to avert which, grasp something made of steel and the spell will be broken.

If, on setting out on a journey, you meet a sow with pigs your enterprise will be sure to be successful.

To meet two magpies portends marriage; three, a successful journey; four, unexpected good news.

To see one magpie and then more is unlucky; to kill one of these birds is irretrievable misfortune. It is also unlucky to kill a swallow.

If your left hand itches you will take in money; if the right, you will pay it out.

A ringing in the right ear means that some one is speaking well of you; in the left, you may be sure that evil tongues are busy with you.

If your right eye itches, you will see some beautiful sight; if the left, you will have cause to shed tears.

If your nose itches, you will hear some news or—will fall into the mire.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

A Monkey's Mathematics.

"I tell you, Bradley, that's the smartest dog in the world."

"No smarter than a monkey I saw on Walnut street yesterday. He belonged to an Italian organ-grinder. He could count."

"The Italian?"

"No, the monkey."

"Oh, nonsense, Bradley!"

"Anyhow, I saw him run up a column."—*Philadelphia Call.*

SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

—The Christian (Campellite) Church in Kentucky is to establish a theological seminary for the education of colored students.

—Porter Sherman, who entered Yale College in 1861 and remained three years, recently returned, after an absence of twenty years, to complete his course.

—Was John B. Gough right or wrong when he said recently that "a church has no right to discipline a man for getting drunk, when it does not discipline him for drinking?"—*N. Y. Observer.*

—Many women school teachers in Massachusetts receive only four or five dollars a week. The explanation may be that Massachusetts has obtained all the knowledge that is to be had, and that, therefore, the occupation of the school teacher is departing.—*Current.*

—Lorenzo Dow preached once from the text of St. Paul: "I can do all things." "No, Paul," he said, "you're wrong for once. "I'll bet you five dollars you can't," and he took a five dollar bill from his pocket and laid it on his desk. He continued to read, "through our Lord Jesus Christ." "O, Paul," said he, "that's an entirely different thing; the bet is off."

—During 1886 the Methodists of South Australia will celebrate the jubilee of the introduction of Methodism into that part of the continent. They have in South Australia 336 churches and preaching places, seventy-five ministers and 393 local preachers, 7,829 members and 48,000 attendants. A jubilee fund of $300,000 is to be raised to pay off church debts and start a woman's college.

—Our own recollections of school days recall none of more profit than those spent under the guidance of sensible, motherly, Christian women, who set their pupils tasks in good textbooks, and then took pains to see that the meaning, not the mere language, was well mastered without too much aid from more developed minds. This any teacher fit to teach at all will see to, and we doubt whether the experience of Normal School graduates so far will not go far to show that artificial and technical equipments and methods are quite as often a hindrance as a help to successful teaching—*Boston Traveller.*

—There is no end to the funny things that are seen and heard by the teachers in our public schools. Once a teacher observed a huge blot of ink on a boy's copybook. "What is that?" he demanded. "Sure, I think it's a tear, sir." "A tear! How could a tear be black?" "Sure, I think wan o' the colored boys dropped it, sir." For the comfort of children who know what it is to be "flustered," this is the laughable reply of a very bright and accomplished lady teacher who was passing a purely formal examination in physiology: "Where is the alimentary canal?" was demanded. "Really," was the pleasant reply, "I forget whether it is in Indianapolis or Illinois."—*San Francisco Argonaut.*

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

—There is a place in Scotland where a certain class of people who bother office holders and the public should be sent. It is called Killiecrankie.—*Pittsburgh Chronicle.*

—Jones (at the circus)—"Hello, Smith, you here?" Smith—"Yes, I had to take care of my little boy." Jones—"Where's the boy?" Smith—"He was taken sick at the last moment and couldn't come."—*N. Y. Herald.*

—Never judge men by appearances. A man may look as bold as a lion and be a Major General of militia, and yet make his wife go down stairs first when he imagines he hears burglars in the house.—*Philadelphia Herald.*

—"A Reader" asks the editor of the New York *Journal*: "How many people have lived on this earth since the creation of Adam?" It is such conundrums as these that make the editorial head turn prematurely gray.—*Boston Transcript.*

—An eminent statistician has calculated that a man spends nine dollars per annum more than a woman. This may be accounted for on the ground that a man generally has to buy his wife's clothes as well as his own.—*Philadelphia Call.*

—"Can you tell me whose picture is on ten-dollar bills?" asked a caller of a country editor. "I don't know; I couldn't even tell you whose portrait is on one-dollar bills," replied the penpusher, with an eight-line pica sigh

—General Toombs' "last words" will hardly do to put in the list of the last words of great men. Said the dying Georgian to his grandson-in-law, "Lend me $100," and that was the final utterance of the old man.—*Philadelphia Press.*

—Brown—"I don't see how you can find time to go to church every Sunday. I'm sure I can't, I've so much to do." Fogg—"Yes, I suppose you do turn off a good deal of work Sundays. I wish I could do it; but the fact is I can't go without my sleep as well as you can." Wonder what he meant?—*Boston Transcript.*

—It was a case of breach of promise. The defendant was allowed to say a word in his own behalf. "Yes," he said, "I kissed her almost continually every evening I called at her house." Lawyer for defendant—Then you confess it? Defendant—Yes, I do confess it; but I had to do it. Lawyer—You had to do it? What do you mean? Defendant—That was the only way I could keep her from singing. The jury gave a verdict for the defendant without leaving their seats.—*Chicago Tribune.*

The Cascade tunnel when completed will be the second longest in this country. The longest in the world is Mount Si. Go hard, 16,390 yards.

In New York there are 7,064 saloon keepers. Of these 2,684 have been inmates of the county prison, 1,564 have been confined in police stations, and 1,[illegible] have been tried for crimes and acquitted.

It takes a crew of sixty men to sail W. K. Vanderbilt's million dollar pleasure yacht.

According to recent estimates nearly 50,000 suicides occur in Europe every year.