

TEA AS A BEVERAGE.
It Originated Through the Gift of an Infatuated Lover.

The antiquity of tea as a beverage is a favorite subject of discussion by confirmed tea drinkers. China claims the origin of the use of tea as a drink, says the New York Mercury.

Of course there are various stories connected with it, among which, perhaps, the following is quite as interesting and believable as any. As the tale runs, one of the daughters of a reigning sovereign was hopelessly enamored of a young nobleman whose estate did not permit him to aspire to her hand; but they exchanged glances and occasionally he gathered a few blossoms and took means to have them conveyed to her.

One day the princess met her admirer in the grounds of the palace, and as the attention of her attendants was attracted in another direction the young man tried to put a few flowers into her hand, but all that she could grasp was a little twig with green leaves.

This she treasured and when she reached her apartments she placed the twig in a goblet of water, here to remain for some hours, the object of her tenderest care. Toward evening she was seized with a sentimental attack, during which she drank the water in which the twig had been kept. It had a most agreeable taste, and then she ate the leaves and stock.

The flavor pleased her greatly, and every day, in memory of her admirer, she had bunches of the tea tree brought to her, and ate them or put them in water and drank the infusion.

The ladies of the court observed her, and were moved to try it themselves, and did so with much pleasing results that the practice spread throughout the kingdom, and one of the great industries of China was thus established.

It is claimed that the date of the sentimental origin of tea drinking was nearly 3000 years before Christ.

The Earth Pyramids of Tyrol.

One of the most curious effects of the erosive power of water is witnessed in the so-called earth pyramids near Bazen and Meran, in Tyrol. The scientific explanation of this phenomenon is very interesting. During the glacial period the enormous glaciers of the Adige River filled with immense quantities of ice the canons and valleys of that part of Southern Tyrol. After the glacial period the ice melted gradually away, the rivers and rivulets burrowing new bed much lower down than the old ones, but the deposits from the glaciers remained on the sides and slopes of the valleys in varying thicknesses. Upon slopes not protected by vegetation the falling rain and the waters flowing into the valley formed numerous furrows and gullies branching out in different directions and uniting again. Wherever in this deposit large stones were contained the underlying soft conglomerate was protected from the falling rain above, and in the course of time pyramids and columns were formed, which in their irregularity cause that picturesque view now seen in these valleys. The further down the slope these pyramids are situated, the higher they are, and pyramids measuring 100 feet and over are quite frequent.

The Barber's Excuse.

Barber—Hair's getting a little thin, sir, shall I—
Tasty Customer—I prefer it that way.
"Yes, sir. Shampoo?"
"No, I prefer to have my hair just as it is."
"Yes, sir. Like to have your whiskers trimmed a little?"
"No. My whiskers are exactly as I want to wear them."
"Yes, sir."
"Inspecting himself in the glass after the operation." "You didn't take that smudge of coal soot off my cheek?"
"No, sir. I didn't know but you preferred to let it stay there."—Chicago Tribune.

Johnny—"You're the meanest hateful-est, spiteful-est thing I know!" Tommy—"An' you're the crabbed-est, ugliest—" Father—"Boys, boys! You forget that your mother is in the room."—New York Press.

"Hello, Sarpy, where have you been?" "I've been in the gymnasium, exercising old chap." "You exercise?" "Yes; watching the rest. Exercising my eye, don't you know?"—Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

Capacious.

Jenks—If America had the Mayflower, now, we could sweep England off the seas. Hanks—What makes you think so?
Jenks—Because, according to the millions of people claiming their ancestors came over on the Mayflower, the ship must have been as big as Illinois.

The Boyish Way.

Little Lilly—Pa, Clarence Callipers is going over to the dentist's this morning to get his teeth pulled. May I go along with him?
Pa—what do you want to go for?
Little Lilly—To hear him holler.

A Skin Game.

Donahoo—Whin yez informed yer wote about yer determination to resist the encroachments av ther new woman, Casey, did she come to the scratch?
Casey—Did she? Jist yez take wan look at me cuntenience!

Not Giving Herself Away.

"Is it true that the New Woman will not shake hands with a man?"
"The New Woman will not give her hand to any man until he asks for it."

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The International is rapidly becoming recognized as the most reliable standard dictionary published in addition to fulfilling the primary function of a dictionary, the International contains a vast amount of general information of great value.—Jan. 11, 1896.
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A Four Legged Bird.
The crested hoazin of British Guiana, the only survivor of a race of birds which are known as fossils, is described in The Popular Science News. The hoazin inhabits the most secluded forests of South America, and its survival beyond its congeners is doubtless owing to its retiring habits and the fact that it feeds on wild arum leaves, which gives its flesh a most offensive flavor, rendering it unfit for food.

The chief peculiarity of the hoazin consists in the fact that when it is hatched it possesses four well developed legs. The young birds leave the nest and climb about like monkeys over the adjoining limbs and look more like tree toads than birds.

The modification of the forelimbs begins at once after hatching; the claws of the digits fall off; the whole clawlike hand begins to flatten and becomes wing shape. Feathers soon appear, and before full growth is reached not a vestige remains of its original character.

Professor F. A. Lucas says of the hoazin "The adult birds not only have no claws upon their wings, but their thumbs even are so poorly developed that one would hardly suspect that in the nestlings we have the nearest approach to a quadruped found among existing birds."

LIKE MISTRESS, LIKE MAID.

One Instance Where Imitation Is Not Considered Complimentary.

"Like mistress, like maid," is an old saying, and certainly some of the modern abigails are absurd caricatures of their employers. "Do you think Mrs. A. pretty?" said one of her friends to another. "Rather," was the answer, "but she is not the style I admire; she is the kind of woman her servants always copy. Do you know what I mean?" And her companion said she understood perfectly. Just what this undesirable quality is that excites Biddy's admiration is hard to say, but although imitation may be considered the sincerest flattery, certainly no lady likes to be caricatured by her domestics.

"I saw the funniest sight last Sunday afternoon," said a woman of society the other day. "Mrs. A., who lives just opposite, came out of her house gayly attired for church in the very latest fashion and proceeded up the avenue. A few minutes later, from the rear door, appeared what at first seemed to be another Mrs. A., but I soon saw that it was a cheap edition and was presumably the cook. She also departed, and as I was about to leave the window I was positively startled by seeing a third Mrs. A. issue from the front door—and this time it was the lady's maid. I dare say if I remained long enough I would have seen the rest of the household similarly attired, and I wondered if Mrs. A. knew of her humble admirers and imitators. In any case she could not have realized the absurd effect they produced." Philadelphia Times.

Wit and Humor.

L'ent. Peri—"I am afraid you couldn't stand the rigor of an Arctic expedition. You never have been on one before, have you?" Travole—"No, but I have spent a winter in an English hotel."—Life.

Miss Pacemaker—"Are you looking for an early spring, Mr. Newbike?" Mr. Newbike—"On the contrary, as I begin lessons on the bicycle tomorrow my mind is dwelling on an early fall."—Town Topics.

"That idiot of an Englishman visiting here took me for waiter at the Higley's reception." "I don't see how that ever happened. I never noticed the least bit of dignity about you."—Indianapolis Journal.

He—"Oh, dear! I wish I could get hold of some good biscuits like mother used to make for me!" She—"And I wish I could get some good clothes like father used to buy for me."—Indianapolis Journal.

"Bobbie, you are perfectly awful today; and just when grandma is visiting us, too!" "Well, ma, its only to please you. You told me the other day that you thought I kept my good manners for visitors only."—Harper's Bazar.

"I suppose when you were in the White Mountains last summer you enjoyed the echoes very much?" "No, I didn't. I went to hear them with Charlie Hiliard, and when they repeated what he said they really bored me very much."—Harper's Bazar.

Zibley—"Why are you always borrowing cigarettes from Jizley? Why don't you have some of your own?" Zibley—"Why, man, I'm doing it for the fellow's good! If Jizley were to be allowed to smoke all the cigarettes he buys, he'd be a wreck in a week."—Lexbury Gazette.

Judge—What's the charge, officer?
Officer—Manslaughter, your honor.
Judge—Whom did he kill?
Officer—He didn't kill nobody, begorrah; he laughed at me; sure if that's not manslaughter, O'd like to know what is.

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A FORTY-NINER'S STORY.
Early Days of Gold Mining in the California Streams.

The most interesting characters around the great Cripple Creek mining camp are the old-time gold miners—the men who crossed the plains in the early days and have lived for nearly half a century in the shadows of the big hills. The frontier writer on this journal met one of these old barntoes the other day and drew him out.

"I was out in California in the old days," he replied to a question, and then added with a pleasant smile, "I was thar from 1849 to 1889, and took all the courses, from pan to little giant, and from hand-made black powder cartridges to dynamite. When gold was discovered by Marshall in that tail race and Sutter was digging for his saw mill at Colona, not a man in that country knew a thing about mining. Never heard how they knew it was gold, hey? Well, there has been a great many stories told about it, but here is the right one:—

"It was a little nugget Marshall picked up, worth \$3 or \$4. Each one of the gang looked at it, bit it, tasted it, rubbed it, smelled it, but none of them had a clear idea what it was. Several thought it might be gold, but none of them was sure of it. A happy thought struck Marshall. Mrs. Weber boarded the hands. She was making soft soap from pine ashes lye. Marshall proposed the lady should boil the nugget in lye a day or two, and it didn't change color or lose its substance in the test it was sure enough gold. Well, it stood the test. The world knows this rest. Among the first on the grounds was a lot of Mexicans. Each brought his willow made pan and knife as his mining tools. He cut and scraped among crevices of rocks at the water's edge for chips, or, as we call them, nuggets. An enterprising white man made a rocker. That was a great improvement over the willow pan and knife.

"In the fall of 1849, picks, shovels, iron pans, and sheet iron for rocker screens had been shipped in from the outside. Rockers sold for three ounces, shovels for half an ounce apiece, picks the same; pans for a quarter of an ounce; gum boots an ounce a pair, and whisky a pinch a drink. That was the price in mining camps. A pinch was what a barkeeper could take between his forefinger and thumb. They had big fingers and thumbs in those days, and the barkeeper's salary was measured by their size. Wages was an ounce a day. The Georgia bumper displaced the rocker, but it was something like a rocker, but much larger, and had several riffles to catch the gold. The ends of the rockers bump against blocks of wood to jar the gravel in the screen and between riffles.

"A bumper cost \$200, a wheelbarrow two ounces, and a China pump, \$25. That made a bumper mining outfit. The bumper didn't last long, for the Long Tom soon took its place. That was a stationary affair, with a long screen in which the pay dirt was thrown. Water was conducted on the screen, the wash falling through the perforations while one of the hands forked out the rocks or small stones. A sluice or two were added to the Tom. These as well as the Tom, were supplied with rifles, which generally caught about all the dust. Long Toms were first used in Nevada City in 1850. Improvements in modes of placer mining rapidly followed. Sets of sluice without the Tom were used; then ground sluicing came next and hydraulic mining, where water and fall could be obtained, displaced the rocker, bumper and Tom. Hydraulic mining is an old thing now."—Denver Field and Farm.

BIRDS OF KEEN SIGHT.

Vultures, Eagles and Hawks have Marvellous Vision.
It is impossible to say with absolute certainty, but all the evidence points strongly to the conclusion that birds, and especially birds of prey, have sight much superior to that of any other animal. This superiority is not confined to range of vision only, but is seen also in the quickness with which small objects are detected, and the extraordinary rapidity with which, during the flight of some birds, the eye accommodates itself to varying distances. It has been repeatedly noticed by people traveling in the deserts of Africa that if, when not a bird is in sight, a camel or other beast of burden in a caravan should fall and be left behind, "within half an hour there are seen in the air a number of the smallest specks, moving slowly round in circles, and gradually growing larger and larger as they descend in spiral windings towards the earth." These are vultures, and it seems that sight can be the only means by which they become aware of the prospective prey. Again, "an eagle soaring at such a height that he seems a mere speck, sees the grouse walking in the heather, which it so much resembles as readily to escape the sportsman's eye." It has also been remarked that a small bird will become alarmed at the approach of a hawk long before the latter can be detected by the human eye. The extreme rapidity of the flight of some birds also makes it necessary that the focus of their eyes should change with corresponding speed, but how this is provided for is still a matter of dispute.

Force of Habit.
"Why does Bates insist on calling that white horse of his cream-colored?"
"Because he used to be a milkman and still clings to the tricks of his trade."

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