

I Am Here.



ES, here I stand, an old china cup and saucer, the last of my set, with many an ugly seam in my side, the result of careless handling, and with only a gleam here and there of the gilding that formerly illuminated the dull blue-and-red design with which the Chinese artist decorated me in my far-away Eastern home.

I have been rather scornfully looked upon by the other occupants of the closet, where I have long had a home. They have flaunted their gaudy gilt and glaring colors before me, and called me dingy and odd. But what care I? None of them can boast the proud distinction of my age and history; and, as for my beauty and value, why I seem to be better appreciated every year. If I had always been handled as carefully and reverently as I am now, I should be as fresh and bright as when I crossed the seas over a hundred years ago. However, I have noticed that nearly all articles that live to my great age have a rather battered appearance; though there is a wine-glass that stands beside me who boasts that he is even older than I—nearly two hundred years old, in fact—and he hasn't a nick nor a crack about him. But then, he is only common pressed glass, and I have known this family years enough to learn that they are a sober, temperate family, and I do not believe he has ever been of much use to them.

He tells, however, of the time when many a minister and other honored dignitaries in Church and society found refreshment by his aid. Then he used to be borne out in state by the