

TEA SHOPS IN CHINA.

BY THE REV. JAMES GILMOOR, M. A.

In England we naturally think of China as a great tea-producing country. So it is; but the Chinese are not only great producers, but great consumers of tea. In North China, at least, the first thing a Chinaman does in the morning and the last thing he does at night is to drink tea, and at any time of the day he is never far from a teapot. Make a call, tea is produced at once. Go into a shop to make purchases, you are offered tea. When thirsty—before meals, after meals, in short, almost everywhere and always—a Chinaman is drinking tea or has it within reach.

The tea which Chinamen drink is not the same as we are accustomed to. What they use is a green tea, and, as a rule, natives drink it very weak, in many cases the decoction being little more than water boiled and slightly colored by the addition of a few leaves.

Tea grows in the centre and south of China, and the importation and retailing of it is an important branch of the trade of the northern provinces. It comes in great chests, and is sold out for household use not in pounds, half pounds, quarter pounds, ounces, &c., but done up in parcels, each parcel containing sufficient for one pot of tea. This makes it easy to carry and handy to use; and those who like to drink extra strong tea can suit their taste by putting two parcels into the pot at once. It is very cheap, ranging in price according to quality from one-twelfth of a penny to a halfpenny.

In addition to this, the common tea of ordinary consumption, there are high-priced varieties which are very expensive, and are used only by the rich. Specimens of these varieties have sometimes found their way into my hands as presents, but have never proved very satisfactory, being pronounced, when brewed and tasted by ladies, to resemble in flavor such a decoction as might be produced from chopped hay. Probably the taste for these fancy varieties is an acquired one.

A prominent feature of Peking is the "tea-shop" where tea is drunk. The tea-shop is a hall filled with tables, whither Chinamen resort to quench their thirst while they bargain about business, hear the news, retail gossip, or pass away an idle hour of recreation. Tables, too, are usually placed out-of-doors, which are much resorted to in summer, and are convenient even in winter for carters and porters, who can lay down their burdens and watch their mules while refreshing themselves with a potful of tea. The waiters run about with great metal kettles filled with boiling water, and make a point of keeping every guest's pot full to the top. If he wishes it, the tea-drinker can be supplied with food, for the tea-shop is usually a restaurant too; but many people drink tea only, and, as they have their own "leaves" with them, are supplied with a pot, a cup, and boiling water only, for which laboring men and the poorer classes are expected to pay one-twelfth or one-sixth of a penny, while those who are richer usually give a little more.

A Chinese waiter makes it a point of keeping the drinker's pot full, and a Chinese host makes a point of keeping his guest's cup full. A new comer, unused to the ways of China, is sometimes distressed at the amount of tea he is pressed to drink while paying a call, but soon learns simply to sip at any tea he does not want to drink, and, the cup being left full, he is not troubled by seeing his cup filled up over and over again. To invite a man to drink tea is an easy way of getting into conversation with him on friendly terms, and the teapot and cups form part of the equipments of our street chapés, and many a conversation about Christianity and Christ takes place between the missionary or native preacher and a heathen Chinaman as they sit on the op-

posite sides of a table, each cup of tea in hand. There are not wanting missionaries who think that in China tea and not wine is the proper element with which to celebrate the Lord's Supper. If it be true that our Lord drank at the tables of the Jews, these missionaries have great reason on their side when they say that tea should be used at the Lord's Supper in China, for this is the common and universal drink at the tables of the Chinese. And if wine was used, so that its constant presence might bring Christ to their continual remembrance, nothing could, in China, carry out the spirit of this intention better than tea, which, continually coming before the Chinese, would be a constant reminder of what Christ has done for them.

Most western families have a tea-caddy.

out to gather stones, throw them on to the heap, and, as they throw them, repeat prayers over every stone.

For the conversion of China we want not money alone, but prayers also, and as every copper is added to the missionary box and every gift is offered at the treasury of the Lord, let there be breathed a fervent prayer to God for the conversion of the heathen.

China is a long way off, but tea from China is upon our tables daily. Is it too much to ask that, when thus reminded, we once a-day lift our hearts to God in prayer for that great country?—*Chronicle of the London Missionary Society.*

WHO WROTE IT!

A beautiful woman lay on a bed of sickness in an elegant residence in one of the

disciples came unto Him, and He opened His mouth and taught them, saying,

The sick woman listened attentively, until the nurse paused with the words, "And the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

"That is beautiful!" she said, "that will create a sensation! Who wrote it? Where did you get it?"

"Why," said the nurse, in astonishment, looking with surprise at her patient, and thinking at first she was wandering in her mind, "it is the Bible; Christ's sermon on the mount, you know."

"That in the Bible! Anything so beautiful and so good as that in the Bible?"

"What did you suppose was in the Bible if not something good?" asked the nurse, seriously, yet smiling in spite of herself at her patient's tone of surprise and incredulity.

"Oh, I don't know. I never thought much about it. I never opened a Bible in my life. It was a matter of pride with my father to never have a Bible in the house. How did this one come here? Oh, it is yours—your pocket Bible. It is strange you should have surprised me into listening to a chapter, and that I should have been so charmed and not know to what I was listening."

"You have certainly heard the Bible read in church?" asked the nurse in surprise.

"Not I; I never have been to church. We have always made Sunday a holiday. Papa got into that way in Paris. We have been to all popular places of amusement, of course, but never to church. I have never thought about the Bible. I did not suppose it had literary merit. I had no idea it was written in the simple, beautiful style of the portion you have just read. I wish I had known it before."

A few hours later her disease took a fatal turn. The physician came and told her that her time on earth was very short. She would never see another sun rise.

"It cannot be possible," she said; "I never supposed it possible for death to come to me. What was the prayer you read, nurse? 'Our Father which art in heaven.' Say it with me, husband, and he did so."

"I wish I had known it before," he said, over and over, until she fell into a sleep from which she never awoke and that wail of dying was the last upon her dying lips.

The nurse said it was the saddest experience of her career to see the beautiful, gifted young woman, with kind friends, a loving husband and a beautiful home, who had all her life taken pride in ignoring the Bible and the Christian Sabbath, turn, when death came, from everything she had prized to the little despised book, and die with the cry upon her lips, "I wish I had known it before."—*Home and Fireside.*

THE SALOON-KEEPER'S GAINS.

"I have made a thousand dollars during the last three months," said a saloon-keeper, boastfully, to a crowd of his townsmen.

"You have made more than that," quietly remarked a listener.

"What is that?" was the quick response. "You have made wretched homes—women and children poor and sick and weary of life. You have made my two sons drunkards," continued the speaker, with trembling earnestness: "you made the younger of the two so drunk that he fell and injured himself for life. You have made their mother a broken-hearted woman. Oh, yes; you have made much—more than I can reckon up, but you'll get the full accounts some day—you'll get it some day."—*The Signal.*

A WELL BEATEN egg is a great addition to a dried-apple pie, giving lightness and a good flavor also.



PUTS." (After a Painting by J. G. Brown)

It is ornamental as well as useful. There is another ornamental and useful article which I would like to see beside every tea-caddy, and that is a missionary box.

China gives us tea; let us give China the Gospel, and all the more so as, in return for the tea, England has given opium, which is a terrible curse to the nation. The fact that China has suffered so much through the opium sent by England is an additional reason why we should make a greater effort to send her the Gospel, which is the one thing needful for China. Put, then, a missionary box beside your tea-caddy and, as you can, drop little contributions into it. If we cannot go ourselves and preach the gospel we must help to send others.

The Mongols raise cairns on the tops of the hills. Men, women, and children turn

finest and most fashionable of Boston's broad avenues. She was surrounded with every luxury and attended by kind friends, anxious to anticipate every wish and to relieve the monotony of her weary, painful days in every possible manner. One afternoon she opened her eyes and said, in a low, weak voice, "Read to me, please. Oh, dear, how I wish there was something new in matter and manner in the literary world! I am so tired of everything."

Her sister went into the next room for a book of poems, and while she was gone the professional nurse, who sat beside her bed, took from the pocket of her plain drab wrapper a small Bible, opened it and began reading in a subdued voice;

"And seeing the multitude He went up into a mountain, and when He was set, His