

EFFECTS OF A TRAVELLER'S DISCOVERY.—Saltpetre being indispensable in making sulphuric acid, the commercial value of that salt had formerly an important influence upon its price. It is true that one hundred pounds of saltpetre only are required to one thousand pounds of sulphur; but its cost was four times greater than an equal weight of the latter. Travellers had observed, near the small seaport of Yiqui, in the district of Atacama, in Peru, an efflorescence covering the ground over the extensive districts. This was found to consist principally of nitrate of soda. Advantage was quickly taken of this discovery. The quantity of this valuable salt proved to be inexhaustible, as it exists in beds extending over more than two hundred square miles. It was brought to England at less than half the freight of the East India saltpetre (nitrate of potassa); and as, in the chemical manufacture, neither the potash nor the soda were required, but only the nitric acid in combination with the alkali, the soda-saltpetre of South America soon supplanted the potash-nitre of the East. The manufacture of sulphuric acid received a new impulse; its price was much diminished, without injury to the manufacturer; and, with the exception of fluctuations caused by the impediments thrown in the way of the export of sulphur from Sicily, it soon became reduced to a minimum, and remained stationary. Potash-saltpetre is now only employed in the manufacture of gunpowder; it is no longer in demand for other purposes; and thus, if government effect a saving of many hundred thousand pounds annually in gunpowder, this economy must be attributed to the increased manufacture of sulphuric acid.—*Liebig's Letters on Chemistry.*

CEREMONIOUS TEA-DRINKING IN JAPAN.—Tea, made in the ordinary way or boiled in the tea kettle, is drunk at all meals, and indeed, all day long, by all classes. But there is another mode of preparing tea, which, on account of its expense through the various utensils and implements employed in its concoction, all of which Japanese etiquette requires to be ornamental and costly, is wholly confined to the higher ranks, and by them given only upon grand occasions, and in great ceremony. It may be called the form of *un Thé* in Japan. The expense must consist wholly in the splendour of the lacquered bowls, silken napkins, &c., without which this tea cannot be offered, since the materials and process, as described, convey no idea of extravagance. The finest kinds of tea are ground to powder; a teaspoonful of this powder is put into a bowl, boiling water is poured upon it, and the whole is whipped with split bamboo till it creams. The Tea thus made is said to be a very agreeable, but very heating beverage. When company are invited to such a tea-drinking, the room in which they are received must be adorned with a picture of the philosopher, and bonze Darma, its inventor, probably, as he appears to be esteemed its patron *kami*, or saint. The adaptation of the decorations of a reception room to this and to other occasions is, in Japan, a science not to be easily acquired. In a handsome Japanese drawing room, there must be a *toko*, that is to say, a sort of recess, with shelves, expensively wrought of the very finest woods. In this *toko* must be exhibited a single picture,—no more,—beneath which must stand a vase with flowers. Now, not only must the picture be suited to the particular occasion, and therefore constantly changed, but a similar congruity in the flowers is indispensable; the kinds, the intermixture, the number, and even the proportion between the green leaves and the gay blossoms, must all be regulated according to the special occasion. The laws that govern these variations are formed into a system, and a book treating of this complicated affair is one of those studied by young ladies at school.—*Manners and Customs of the Japanese.*

THE HARTZ MINERS.—Quiet and monotonous as the life of these people appears, it is, nevertheless, a true living life. The aged palsied woman, who sat by the stove over against the large cupboard, may have sat there a quarter of a century, and her thoughts and feelings have doubtless grown into every corner of this stove, and into every rude carving of this cupboard. And the stove and cup-

board live, for a human being has infused into them a portion of its own soul. It was this life of contemplation—of immediate perceptions,—that gave birth to the German *Marchen*, the peculiarity of which consists in this,—that not only animals and plants, but also objects apparently destitute of all life, speak and act. To the thoughtful and simple people, in the quiet contented privacy of their lowly cottages, on mountain or in forest, the inward life of such objects revealed itself; they acquired an indelible and consistent character, a charming mixture of fantastic humours, and thoroughly human dispositions. And so we see them in the *Marchen*, in which the wildest wonders are told in the easy matter-of-course style of daily occurrences; needles and pins come out of the tailor's shed, and lose themselves in the dark; straws and bits of charcoal try to cross the brook, and are cast away; the shovel and the broom stand upon the step, and quarrel and fight; the questioned looking-glass shows the face of the prettiest girl, and drops of blood begin to speak mysterious fearful words of anxious pity. From the same cause is our life in childhood so infinitely significant; at that age everything is of importance to us; we hear everything; see everything, and all our impressions are vivid; whereas at a later age, we do everything with design, and we lose in depth what we gain in extension of impressions. Now we are grown up gentlemen and ladies; we frequently change our dwellings; the housemaid daily clears everything away, and alters at her will the position of the furniture, which has little interest for us, as it is either new, or it belongs to-day to John, to-morrow to Peter; our very clothes are strangers, we hardly know how many buttons there are on the coat upon our back; we change our clothes as often as we can so that not one of them remains connected with one inward or outward history.—*Henriche Heine.*

GASTRONOMY IN SPAIN.—Spanish cookery is not generally considered to be first-rate, and the oil and garlic certainly do predominate a little at times; but yet they have many excellent dishes, and have also the good sense to repair their deficiencies by borrowing from the French. The Spaniards in general, I think, care little about eating. Give them a *puchero* and a glass of water, just coloured with wine, and they will dine as contentedly on it, as if they had three courses and a dessert. The cigar that follows the repast always appears to be a much greater gratification to them than the meal itself. The *puchero*, by the by, is a capital plain dish. It is composed of beef, bacon, some of the exquisite little *chorizos* or sausages of Estremadura, white beans and *garbanzos*, a sort of large dried pea, exceedingly farinaceous. This is all boiled together, and then served up dry on different dishes. Tomato or some other sauce is frequently eaten with it. The *refrescos* and cooling drinks have, not unnaturally in a hot climate like Spain, received much attention; and certainly they are most delicious. I recollect dining with some officers of the guard, who drank nothing, both during and after dinner, but a mixture of sherry and lemonade, equal parts of each. This was kept in a large silver pail that stood in a tub of ice, and a waiter served it out with a punch ladle as it was called for. There is another excellent drink, although its composition may seem strange. A bowl half full of iced lemonade is filled up with the light frothy beer drunk on the continent. It is the most refreshing beverage I ever tasted; and, when one is used to it, perhaps the most agreeable, in hot weather. The *leche helado*, milk half frozen, and flavoured with cinnamon and orange flowers, is another delicious draught.—*Colburn's New Monthly Magazine for November.*

SHORT SERMON.—If you can do a favor to a neighbor, don't hesitate.—Man best secures his own happiness by contributing to that of others.—*Selected.*

Gentle treatment and rapid and close milking will tend to the greatest development of the milk in cows, and the contrary practices will have the effect of materially reducing the quantity.