



"Old Folks at Home."

OLD FOLKS AT HOME.

THE TALE OF A TEAPOT.

It was a choice and elegant bit of crockery, that teapot of ours, and had been in the family for goodness knows how many years. My dear old grandmother always regarded it as a most cherished object, some of the pleasantest memories of her life being associated with it. For many years, however, it had worn the aspect of decay, discomfoting lines indicative of trouble having broken over its smooth surface; but recently, I am happy to add, it has undergone a decided change for the better in its external aspect, and much of its ancient beauty has returned to it. That such a rejuvenescence should take place in an old teapot is, it may be admitted, very remarkable, and I sat myself the task one evening of finding out the why and wherefore of the change. First of all, I had a cup of tea poured from its dainty old spout, and as I sipped, and sipped, I thought I never tasted tea so deliciously fragrant before, and the sweet piece of antiquity actually seemed to smile upon me from the tea-tray as I sat there dreaming and thinking, thinking and dreaming, and at last—wonder of wonders!—the dear old teapot seemed to be endowed with the power of utterance, and words of sweet meaning fell from it in a soft, clear, continuous flow for several minutes. And this was the tale that the teapot told:—

"Ah, my dear," it began, "I never thought to experience the pleasures of my youthful days again; but so it is, and I am so delighted to find it so that I cannot restrain myself from speaking about it. Well, it was time something was done to stop the stream of pollution that has been passing through my lips for these

twenty or thirty years back; for all kinds of teas have been tried upon me, high-priced and low-priced, thick and thin, black and green, some made up of broken leaves, stalks, and dust, and some compounded of vegetable oddities for which it would be impossible to claim even the remotest kinship to the tea-plant. With few exceptions, the teas that have been submitted to my brewing during the last quarter of a century have been rubbish. Rubbish, rubbish, rubbish! Yes, that's the only name for them. No wonder that I have felt crusty and sour and out of temper; no wonder that the members of your family have become so sallow, and dyspeptic, and miserable. Why, my dear, if it hadn't been that your sister Hilda had happened to bring in a packet of Mazawattee Tea the other week and let us have a taste of it, I verily believe we should soon have forgotten altogether what the taste of pure, good tea was like. Oh, what a delicious moment it was when I took my first draw of that precious Mazawattee! It was just as if I had been put back thirty years—just as if the grand old flavour and exquisite aroma that your darling old grandmother loved so much had by some magical means been restored to me. Yes, the Mazawattee Tea brings back the old times and the old joys, and I am once more happy and contented, and our social circle becomes bright and cheerful again under its benignant influence.

"I am glad to find, my dear, that Dr. Mazawattee, as the proprietor of this tea has been happily styled, is showing the public the way to an appreciation of what is good by offering them what is good. One cup of fine tea is worth a gallon of common. The Mazawattee is a Ceylon tea, you must know, and it is in

that favoured isle that the most palatable, the mellowest, and best teas are now grown, the teas of China bidding fair to be superseded by them. The finer growths of Ceylon tea are, in fact, simply perfection, but the medium and lower qualities of other teas are greatly improved by being mixed with a certain proportion of Indian tea, which has the effect of adding the briskness and piquaney necessary to a perfect blend. Another good thing about the Mazawattee blends is that they are always absolutely uniform and of the highest possible standard in quality. Give me nothing but Mazawattee, my dear, and I will brew tea for your grandchildren yet."

At this point I partook of another cup of the much praised beverage, but no sooner had the teapot been put down on the tray than it began to jingle impatiently, as if it had suddenly remembered something more.

"Another word, my dear," it went on, "and then I have done. Never spoil good tea by bad brewing, as so many people do. To begin with, the water should be quite boiling, and should then be poured on the tea instantly, as water that has been boiling for any length of time loses its drawing power. No tea should be allowed to stand more than five minutes. It is when tea is kept standing for ten minutes or more that the mischief is done. And now, my dear, I say again, stick to Mazawattee and mind your brewing, and you and I shall get along happily together for many a long year to come. Good night."

And the dear old teapot retired into itself with a little hiss and sputter of delight, and I was left to draw my own moral—a very distinct one, by the way—from this Tale of a Teapot.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)