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TEA AND TEA BLENDING.

TEA

AND

TEA BLENDING,

BY

A MEMBER OF THE FIRM OF LEWIS & CO.,
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INTRODUCTION.

The present volume is intended to give all those engaged in the Tea Trade, who wish to take an intelligent interest in it, a sketch of its growth and development in this country and a comprehensive review of its present scope and position; to bring together a mass of hitherto inaccessible facts and details of practical importance to the Trade, and to give such instructions, hints and advice, on the subject of blending, as shall enable every reader to attain with facility a degree of proficiency in the art which previously could only be arrived at by a course of long and often costly experience.

No pains have been spared in the collection of materials, the best authorities having been consulted with regard to all matters on which the author cannot speak from personal experience, and all information is brought down to the latest moment.

The review of the great variety of kinds of Tea reaching our market from China, India, Ceylon, Japan and Java, and their reduction to harmonious blends being the work of a practical man, will be found a valuable assistance to every blender, and we trust our readers, on making a practical test of the soundness of our counsel, will find it result in great and lasting benefit to their trade.

London, 1894.

TEA IN ENGLAND.

THE earliest mention of tea, outside the literature of China, is found in the writings of an Arabian merchant named Soliman, who, in an account of his travels in the East more than a thousand years ago, mentions it as the usual beverage of the Chinese. With the exception of a more or less doubtful reference in Marco Paolo's "Marvels in the World," published in the thirteenth century, nearly seven hundred years elapsed before it was again heard of in Western literature; Jesuit missionaries, having in the sixteenth century penetrated far into the East, brought back information, which was published by Giovanni Botero, an Italian author, in 1590, to the effect that "the Chinese possess a herb out of which they press a delicate juice which serves them as a drink instead of wine; it also preserves the health,

and frees them from all those evils which the immoderate use of wine produces amongst us." Shortly afterwards Father Recci, one of the before-mentioned Jesuit missionaries, published his "Letters on China," giving a further account of its nature and properties. Vague and incorrect as the information was, it had the effect of stimulating inquiry; and as trade and adventure brought the Western nations into contact with the Chinese at various points, small consignments of tea gradually found their way into the hands of European merchants. The strange new commodity at once attracted considerable attention and speculation; an attempt was made in "Hints on certain plants, imperfectly known to modern botanists," published in 1612, to show that China was known to the Romans, and that at their feasts they drank tea from costly vases.

In the year 1605 the Dutch East India Company, taking advantage of the public curiosity concerning this strange drink of the East, instructed their agents in Yeddo and Macao to obtain a supply, and it is said that one of their agents, with perhaps more shrewdness than honesty, impressed on the Chinese and Japanese that Europe also possessed herbs of wondrous virtue, and induced them to part

with tea in exchange for equal weights of dried sage and borage, a profitable stroke of business which was commented on as follows by Father Rodes, who wrote in 1653:—"In France the knowledge of tea was introduced by the Dutch, who sold at Paris at 25/- per lb. tea which had cost them in exchange some 2d. or 2½d. in China."

The new drink, however, made but slow progress amongst the Western nations at first, and the references to tea in European writings before 1650 are few, and show that its qualities were not by any means generally known or appreciated. In 1633, Olearius, a German writer, describes tea as a strange drink in use amongst the Persians, who obtained it from the Chinese by means of the Usbeck Tartars, and described it as "a black water with an acrid taste." In 1639 the Russian Ambassador at the Court of the Mogul declined to accept a present of tea for his master, the Czar, stating "it would only be encumbering him with a commodity for which he had no use." In 1641 the author of a "Treatise on Warm Beer," writing to recommend hot in preference to cold drinks, refers to tea only by quoting the statement of the Jesuit Maffei, that "they (the Chinese) do for the most part drink the strained liquor of an herb called 'Chia' hot." Continental

doctors differed widely as to its merits and demerits. A Leyden physician, Botenkoe, hailed it as an infallible remedy for almost all diseases, stating that "if men could be prevailed upon to drink enough of it"—his idea of "enough" appears to have been two hundred cups daily—"the innumerable ills to which mankind is subject would not only be much diminished, but would entirely disappear." Dr. Waldsmeck, Professor of Physic at Marpurg, with equal enthusiasm, calls it "the defence against the Enemies of Health—the universal panacea which has so long been searched for; it is impossible for the obstructions of Hypochondria and the distempers which proceed therefrom, to withstand the virtues of this healthful Herb," and concludes in the raptured exclamation, "Oh, admirable virtue of tea! Oh, precious treasure of life!" And Morisset in his "Apology for Tea" (1648), hails it as "The drink beloved by the gods."

Other continental writers, on the contrary, bitterly denounced it. In Holland, in 1641, Paul Simon published a treatise against both tea and tobacco; and Fagon, the physician of Louis XIV., declared that amongst other ill effects the use of tea blackened the teeth and caused them to drop out. For more than a hundred years the controversy raged all over the

Continent; between 1650 and 1700 more than seventy special treatises appeared on one side or the other.

The date of actual introduction of tea into this country cannot be ascertained with absolute certainty, some authorities giving the date as 1591, others as 1597, and others again as 1610, which last appears most likely to be correct; the price at first was ten guineas per pound, and naturally it was only used by the upper ten, and by them only on great occasions.

By the middle of the seventeenth century, however, it was getting into more general use. An advertisement in the "Gazette" of 1658 calls attention to the fact that "that excellent and by all physicians approved Chinese drink called by the Chinese Toha, and by other nations Tay, *alias* TEE, is sold at the Sultaness Head Cophee House, in Sweeting's Rents, by the Royal Exchange, London," and in 1660, Samuel Pepys entered in his diary the oft-quoted sentence, "I did send for a cup of tea (China drink), of which I had never drank before;" he does not, however, inform us how he liked it. Seven years afterwards it appears to have found its way into his house, and he writes, under date June 18th, 1667, "Home and found my wife making of tea, a drink which Mr. Pelling, the 'pothecary, tells her is good for her cold and defluxions."

About this date tea began to be imported into England from Holland in somewhat larger quantities, the price falling rapidly to 60/- per lb.; and by the close of the Commonwealth period it had become quite a popular drink, a result, doubtless, brought about in great measure by the vigorous advertising of one Thomas Garway, or Garaway, a "tobacconist and seller and retailer of tea and coffee," as he somewhat cumbrously describes himself, who, in 1659, published a striking handbill, dated from "Exchange Alley, hard by the Royal Exchange," and headed "An Exact Description of the Growth, Quality and Virtues of the Leaf Tea," which, amongst other curious statements informs its readers that "tea is generally brought from China, and groweth there upon little shrubs and bushes; the branches whereof are well garnished with white flowers that are yellow within, of the likeness and fashion of sweet-briar, but in smell unlike; bearing thin green leaves about the bigness of scordium, myrtle, or sumack, and is judged to be a kind of sumack. This plant hath been reported to grow wild only, but doth not; for they plant it in the gardens, about four foot distance, and it groweth about four foot high; and of the seeds they maintain and increase their stock. Of this leaf there are divers sorts (though all one

shape); some much better than others, the upper leaves excelling the others in fineness—a property almost in all plants; which leaves they gather every day, and drying them in the shade or in iron pans, over a gentle fire, till the humidity be exhausted, then put close up in leaden pots, preserve them for their drink-tea, which is used at meals and upon all visits and entertainments in private families, and in the palaces of grandees; and it is averred by a padre of Macao, native of Japan, that the best tea ought to be gathered but by virgins who are destined for this work. The particular virtues are these: it maketh the body active and lusty; it helpeth the headache, giddiness and heaviness thereof; it removeth the obstructiveness of the spleen; it is very good against the stone and gravel; being drank with virgin honey instead of sugar, it taketh away the difficulty of breathing, opening obstructions; it is good against tipitude, distillations, and cleareth the sight; it removeth lassitude and cleanseth and purifieth acrid humours and a hot liver; it is good against crudities, strengthening the weakness of the ventricle, or stomach, causing good appetite and digestion, and particularly for men of corpulent body, and such as are great eaters of flesh; it vanquisheth heavy dreams, easeth the frame and strengtheneth the memory; it overcometh

superfluous sleep and prevents sleepiness in general: a draught of the infusion being taken so that, without trouble, whole nights may be spent in study without hurt to the body."

In addition to this remarkable panegyric, he issued the following practical and interesting handbill:—

"Tea in England hath been sold in the leaf for £6 and sometimes £10 the pound weight, and in respect of its former scarceness and dearness it hath been only used as a Regalia in high Treatments and Entertainments, and presents thereof made to Princes and Grandees, till the year 1657.

"The said Garway did purchase a quantity thereof, and first publicly sold the said Tea in *leaf* and *drink*, made according to the directions of the most knowing Merchants in those Eastern Countries.

"On the knowledge of the said Garway's continued care and industry in obtaining the best tea, and making drink thereof, very many noblemen, physicians, merchants &c., have ever since sent to him for the said leaf, and daily resort to his house to drink the drink thereof.

"He sells tea from 16/- to 50/- a pound," prices which by comparison with those previously current must be considered as very moderate.

The Sultaness Head and Garway's lead was speedily followed by other coffee houses, and in "Rugge's Diurnal," in 1659, it is noted that "coffee, chocolate, and a kind of drink called Tee was sold in almost every street."

At the same time as Garway and his fellow coffee-house keepers were thus bringing the new drink prominently before the City merchants, its use was becoming fashionable in the Court. In 1662 Charles II. married Catherine of Portugal, who had enjoyed the drink in her own country, and who, we may presume, had some share in popularising it here; at any rate we learn that in 1666 Lords Ossory and Arlington obtained a consignment of fine quality from Holland, then the headquarters of the trade in Europe, and distributed it amongst persons of rank, by whom it was greatly admired.

In 1686 the widow of the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth made a present of a pound of the new luxury to some of her relations in Scotland, but this being its first introduction to that country, and as no directions for its use accompanied the gift, the tea was boiled, and after carefully straining the leaves, they were served as a vegetable, the result being probably sufficiently unsatisfactory to give the partakers but a poor opinion of the tastes of their friends at the English capital.

Meanwhile the coffee-house of our friend Garway, on account of its proximity to the Royal Exchange, and doubtless also on account of the excellent quality of the tea he supplied, became famous, and remained for two centuries a great resort of the leading citizens and merchants. Tea, as we have seen, was also on sale at the various other coffee-houses which were opened in London and elsewhere about this time, and which for a century and a-half were to play such an important part in the social history of the nation, answering as they did the double purpose of the clubs and exchanges of the present day, and doubtless they had much to do with popularising the new beverage.

Disraeli the elder, in his "Curiosities of Literature," informs us that, soon after their establishment, these coffee-houses appear to have fallen under the disapprobation of the authorities, and in the year 1675 they were all closed by Royal Proclamation.

Roger North, in his "Examen," has given a full account of this bold stroke. It was, it seems, not done without some show of respect to the British Constitution, the Court affecting not to act against law; for the judges were summoned to a consultation, when it appears the five who met did not agree in opinion;

but a decision was contrived "that the retailing of Tea and Coffee might be an innocent trade, but as it was said to nourish sedition, spread lies, and scandalize great men, it might also be a common nuisance." A general discontent arose in consequence, and emboldened the merchants and retailers of tea and coffee to petition, and permission was soon granted to open the houses for a certain period, under a severe admonition that the masters should prevent all scandalous papers, books, and libels from being read in them, and hinder every person from spreading scandalous reports against the Government. It must be confessed that all this must have frequently puzzled the coffee-house keeper to decide what was scandalous, what book was fit to be licensed to be read, and what political intelligence might be permitted to be communicated. The object of the authorities, however, was probably to intimidate rather than persecute at that moment.

In the literature of the period we find allusions to tea become increasingly frequent. In 1668 Sir Charles Sedley, in the play of "The Mulberry Garden," lays it down that "he who would be considered a man of fashion always drank wine and water at dinner, and a dish of tea afterwards." Congreve, the dramatist, in his play, "The Double Dealer" (1694), makes one of

the characters state that "the ladies have retired to tea and scandal." Edmund Waller, the poet, in a birthday ode to the Queen Catherine before referred to, calls tea "the best of herbs" and "the Muses' friend," and asserts that it does—

> "Repress those vapours which the head invade,
> And keeps that palace of the soul serene."

And Pope afterwards, in his "Rape of the Lock" (1711), addresses another Queen (Anne), when at Hampton Court, as follows—

> "Here, thou great Anna! whom three realms obey,
> Dost sometimes counsel take and sometimes tea;"

from which it seems, we may infer, that the then fashionable pronunciation of the word was "Tay"; and in the same poem makes his heroine, Belinda, protest that, rather than lose her favourite curl, she would be—

> "In some isle
> Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,
> Where none learn ombre, none e'er drink Bohea."

Allusions to tea are frequent in the "Spectator" papers, and amongst the many interesting glimpses of the social life of the period which they afford us, we see the fashionable young lady taking her morning and

evening "dish of tea," "the infusion of a China plant sweetened with the pith of an Indian cane"; and a tea-table is the latest fashionable addition to the furniture of her boudoir, around which assemble her acquaintance to discuss the issue of the "Spectator" of the day, and to circulate the latest gossip and scandal which, in its turn, will be duly communicated to Mr. "Spectator" by his fair correspondents. Sugar, as we find by numerous allusions, was always taken, and "Bohea," "Peco," and "Green Imperial" are mentioned as the kinds most in favour, green tea having been first imported in 1715. Significant allusions to the smashing of the tea-dishes as a frequent accompaniment to family jars are to be found.

Mr. "Spectator" also introduces us to his friend "Mr. Peter Motteux"—an industrious man of trade, formerly a brother of the quill—who describes his shop as "in Leadenhall Street, near the India Company, and in the centre of that trade, and known for choice and cheapness of China and Japan wares, teas, fans, muslins, pictures, arrack, and other Indian goods." He had dedicated a poem on tea to the "Spectator," which is thus commented on: "It would injure him, as a man of business, if I did not let the world know that the author of so good verses wrote them before he was

concerned in traffic. In order to expiate my negligence towards him I paid him a visit. I found his spacious warehouses filled and adorned with tea, China and India ware. I could observe a beautiful ordinance of the whole, and such different and considerable branches of trade carried on in the same house I exulted in seeing disposed by a poetical head."

One other tea dealer, a lady, appears in these papers, signing herself "Rebecca, the Distressed." She is "one of the top China women about town," and complains bitterly of the idle young ladies of fashion who plague her twice or thrice a day "to cheapen tea or buy a skreen." "One calls for a set of tea-dishes, another a basin, a third for my best green tea," and so disorganise her whole shop, although they seldom or never buy anything.

In the paper of June 19th, 1712, the writer states: "I know a person who possesses the sense of taste in so great a perfection that, after having tasted ten different kinds of tea, he would distinguish, without seeing the colour of it, the particular sort which was offered him; and not only so, but any two sorts of them that were mixed together in equal proportion. Nay, he has carried the experiment so far as, upon tasting the composition of three different sorts, to name

the parcels from whence the three several ingredients were taken." We may assume that the gentleman in question was only an amateur, as in those days tea-tasting had scarcely taken rank as a profession; had he been born a hundred and fifty years later, he would have been able to turn his talent to profitable account.

We also have several sketches of the fashionable young man of the period sipping his tea in the coffee-houses, giving himself airs, and ogling the "idols," as the barmaids of that day were termed.

In 1728 Dr. Short writes of tea as follows:—

"The use of tea has so singularly prevailed in England, for these forty or fifty years past, among all persons (except of the very lowest rank), and has been so taking with the fair sex, that 'twere a shame our examination and undertaking should not bear some proportion to the use and preference we have made of it.

"Whoever well considers what a superior figure this humble shrub makes in commerce, what an important article 'tis in the traffic of the East India Companies, what a great revenue the duty upon this little crumbled leaf returns to the Crown of England, whereby the general taxes are so much lessened to the poor; whoever further observes, after all this, the trade it variously

advances, the equipage, and all its concomitants; and, lastly, the Societies it assembles, there being more than three thousand houses of reception for them in London, as a certain author computes, where this liquor is daily drunk; whoever would remark the business, conversation and intelligence it there promotes, as also the expense and debauchery it prevents, will readily conclude with me, that this, as well as other things, demands our observance and regard, not according to the simple appearance it makes, but the consequences which flow from it."

Other sketches of fashionable life in the reign of Queen Anne show us the high-born dames of that period flocking to the fashionable tea-houses in the Strand, and sipping the beverage from oriental china cups of infantile size.

Favoured by fashion and recommended by the physicians, the consumption of tea increased rapidly, and the taste for it spread to all classes, but its progress was not to be unopposed, and in the early part of the eighteenth century it encountered numerous bitter attacks. As we have already seen, certain continental doctors had given opinions hostile to it; and in 1722 a pamphlet was written by a certain John Lacy, addressed to the ladies of England, denouncing tea as

a slow but sure poison, and comparing it with opium, and tracing to its use almost all the ills that flesh is heir to. Soon afterwards the Methodists took up the crusade against tea. "After talking to both the men and women leaders," writes John Wesley, "we agreed it would prevent great expense, as well of health as of time and money, if the poorer people of our Society could be persuaded to leave off drinking of tea," and he proceeds to denounce it as the cause of dire physical spiritual ills, and exhorting his followers to "abhor it as a deadly poison, and to renounce it from this very hour." Edward Young, author of "Night Thoughts," calls tea "a fatal stream, dreadful to the love of fame" —whatever that may mean. It was not, however, without eloquent advocates, one of whom replied to these and similar attacks as follows:—"The progress of this famous plant has been something like the progress of truth, suspected at first, though very palatable to those who had courage to taste it, resisted as it encroached, abused as its popularity seemed to spread, and establishing its triumph at last in cheering the whole land, from the palace to the cottage, only by the slow but resistless efforts of time and its own virtues."

On the other hand, a certain Jonas Hanway, who is credited with being the first person to carry an

umbrella in the streets of London, published, in 1756, an elaborate essay against tea-drinking, denouncing it as pernicious to health, obstructing industry, and bringing ruin on the nation and on everyone who indulged in its use. "Women," he writes, "lose their beauty from tea-drinking, and languish with weak digestions and low spirits, while men lose their stature and comeliness. I am not young, but, methinks, there is not so much beauty in this land as there was. Your very chambermaids have lost their bloom, I suppose, by sipping tea. What Shakespeare ascribes to the concealment of love is in this age more frequently occasioned by the use of tea." Aroused by this attack upon his favourite beverage, Dr. Johnson nobly entered the lists in its defence, and easily succeeded in refuting the arguments of its detractors, and in covering them with ridicule. Boswell's account of the Doctor's controversy with Hanway being as follows :—"His (Dr. Johnson's) defence of tea against Mr. John Hanway's violent attack upon that elegant and popular beverage, shows how well a man of genius can write upon the slightest subject when he writes, as the Italians say, *con amore*. I suppose no person ever enjoyed with more relish the infusion of that fragrant leaf than Johnson. The quantities which he drank of it at all hours were so great

that his nerves must have been uncommonly strong not to have been extremely relaxed by such an intemperate use of it. He assured me that he never felt the least inconvenience from it, which is a proof that the fault of his constitution was rather a too great tension of fibres than the contrary. Mr. Hanway wrote an angry answer to Johnson's review of his 'Essay on Tea,' and Johnson, after a full and deliberate pause, made a reply to it; the only instance, I believe, in the whole course of his life when he condescended to oppose anything that was written against him. I suppose, when he thought of any of his little antagonists, he was ever justly aware of the high sentiments of Ajax in the 'Ovid'—

> 'Iste tulit pretium jam nunc certaminis hujus,
> Qui cum victus erit mecum certase feretur;'

rendered by Dryden—

> 'Losing he wins, because his name will be
> Ennobled by defeat, who durst contend with me.'

But, indeed, the good Mr. Hanway laid himself so open to ridicule that Johnson's animadversions upon his attack were chiefly to make sport."

In his reply Johnson describes himself as a "hardened and shameless tea-drinker, whose kettle has scarcely time to cool, who with tea amuses the

evening, with tea solaces the midnight, and with tea welcomes the morning." The worthy Doctor, however, appeared to have been prepared to make considerable concessions to the enemy. "I readily admit," he says, "that tea is a liquor not proper for the lower classes of the people, as it supplies no strength to labour or relief to disease, but gratifies the taste without nourishing the body." And then, being confronted with the fact that in England no less than £300,000 was spent annually in this article of superfluous luxury, he does not hesitate to say that its importation ought to be stopped by a penal law. This must, however, be taken as merely a "pious opinion," and we know it had no effect on his own continued use of the beverage; Mrs. Thrale telling us that she would often sit up until four o'clock in the morning making tea for him in his Gargantuan teapot, which history records held two quarts. Garrick, the famous actor, who was a townsman and a friend of the Doctor, was also a drinker of tea, but from motives of economy preferred it weak; and it is on record that on one occasion Peg Woffington incurred his severe displeasure for making it too strong, or, as he phrased it, "as red as blood." At this period it appears to have been generally made very weak, if we may judge from a passage in Dr. Johnson's "Essay on Tea" above re-

ferred to. "Three cups," he says, "make the common quantity so slightly impregnated that, perhaps they might be tinged with the *Athenian cicuta*, and produce less effects than these letters (Hanway's) charge upon tea." It appears, however, that Hanway would have had the support of Dr. Johnson's father, had he been living, for as his son writes, "he considered tea as very expensive, and discouraged my mother from keeping company with the neighbours, and from paying visits or receiving them."

Before the close of the Doctor's life he was destined to see tea play an important part in changing the destiny of a large part of the world. On the 14th June, 1767, the British Parliament passed the memorable Act imposing heavy duties on tea, paper, painted glass, &c., imported into America. These imposts were stoutly resisted by the colonists, who in retaliation refused either to buy or use tea, and matters soon assumed a threatening aspect. The other duties were withdrawn, but King George III. determined that not only should the tea duty be maintained, but that tea should be forced upon the stubborn colonists. Accordingly, in December, 1773, English ships, bearing three hundred and forty chests of tea, arrived at Boston; but the opponents of the obnoxious taxation were fully as determined as the

King, and a band of them, disguised as Indians, boarded the vessels on their arrival, emptied the chests overboard, and "Boston harbour was black with unexpected tea."

A hundred years afterwards Emerson commemorated the event in a poem, read in the Faneuil Hall on December 16, 1873, from which we take the following stanzas :—

> " Bad news from George on the English throne ;
> ' You are thriving well,' said he ;
> Now by these presents be it known
> You shall pay a tax on tea ;
> 'Tis very small,—no load at all,—
> Honour enough that we send the call.
>
> "'Not so,' said Boston, 'good, my lord,
> We pay your governors here
> Abundant for their bed and board,
> Six thousand pounds a year.
> (Your Highness knows our homely words)
> Millions for self-government,
> But for tribute never a cent.'"
>
> The cargo came! and who could blame
> If *Indians* seized the tea,
> And, chest by chest, let down the same
> Into the laughing sea?
> For what avail the plough or sail,
> If land, or life, or freedom fail."

This defiant act was the prelude of the American War of Independence.

Meanwhile, in England, tea was steadily growing in favour. Horace Walpole, writing in 1743, says, "they have talked of a new duty on tea, to be paid by every

housekeeper for all the persons in their families, but it will scarce be proposed. Tea is so universal that it would make a greater clamour than a duty on wine." About the same date an Italian visitor, writing on English customs, finds tea so popular in fashionable life that "even the maid-servants must have their tea twice a day in all the parade of quality: they make it their bargain at first"; and, considering the price of tea at the time, we are not surprised at the comment that "this very article amounts to as much as the wages of such servants in Italy." Afternoon teas must have also become fashionable about this period; for, in describing the mode of living in Harrogate in 1763, Dr. Alexander Carlyle says, in his Autobiography, "The ladies gave afternoon's tea and coffee in turn, which, coming but once in four or six weeks, amounted to a trifle."

At the close of the eighteenth century we find another poet singing the praise of tea as follows—the quotation is from Cowper's "Task," written in 1785:—

> "Now stir the fire and close the shutters fast,
> Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round;
> And while the bubbling and loud hissing urn
> Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
> That cheer but not inebriate wait on each,
> So let us welcome peaceful evening in."

In 1718 Mrs. Montagu adopted the fashion introduced from France by the Duke of Dorset, of giving teas at the assemblies of the "Blue Stocking Club," which were held at her mansion in Portman Square. These meetings were commemorated by Cowper in the following couplet :—

> "There genius, learning, fancy, wit,
> Their ruffled plumage calm refit."

Soon after, Hartley Coleridge, then a very young man, wrote the following lines in praise of tea :—

> "Though all unknown to Greek and Roman song,
> The paler Hyson and the dark Souchong,
> Though black, nor green, the warbled praises share
> Of knightly troubadour or gay *trouvère;*
> Yet deem not thou, an alien quite to numbers,
> That friend to prattle, and that foe to slumbers,
> Which Kian-Long, imperial poet, praised
> So high that cent. per cent. its price was raised;
> Which Pope himself would sometimes condescend
> To plead commodious at a couplet's end;
> Which the sweet bard of Olney did not spurn,
> Who loved the music of the 'hissing urn,'
> Let her who bade me write exact the muse,
> Inspire my genius and my tea infuse,
> So shall my verse the hovering sylphs delight,
> And critic gnomes relinquish half their spite.
> Clear, warm, and flowing is my liquid theme,
> As sweet as sugar and as smooth as cream."

Hazlitt, who commenced his career as an author early in the present century, seems to have been, if possible, a greater tea-drinker than even Dr. Johnson. We are told that he never touched any but black tea, and was very particular about the quality of that, always using the most expensive that could be obtained; and he used, when living alone, to consume nearly a pound a week. A cup of Hazlitt's tea, if you happened to come in for the first brewage of it, was a peculiar thing. He always made it himself, half filling the teapot with tea, pouring boiling water on it, and then almost immediately pouring it out, using with it a great quantity of sugar and cream.

In 1821 De Quincy writes of it, in his "Confessions of an English Opium Eater," enthusiastically, as follows:—

"Surely everybody is aware of the divine pleasures which attend a winter fireside: candles at four o'clock, warm hearth-rugs, tea, a fair tea-maker, shutters closed, curtains flowing in ample draperies on the floor, whilst the wind and rain are raging audibly without. Happiness, in my judgment, enters the room with the tea-tray; for tea—though ridiculed by those who are naturally of coarse nerves, or are become so from wine-drinking, and not susceptible of influence from

so refined a stimulant—will always be the favourite beverage of the intellectual; and for my part I would have joined Dr. Johnson in a *bellum internecium* against Jonas Hanway or any other impious person who should presume to disparage it. * * * * * But here, to save myself the trouble of a verbal description, I will introduce a painter, and give him directions for the rest of the picture. Paint me, then, a room seventeen feet by twelve, and not more than seven and a-half feet high, and near the fire paint me a tea-table and (as it is clear that no creature can come to see one such a stormy night) place only two cups and saucers on the tea-tray; and, if you know how to paint such a thing symbolically or otherwise, paint me an eternal tea-pot—eternal *à parte ante* and *à parte post*—for I usually drink tea from eight o'clock at night to four o'clock in the morning. And, as it is very unpleasant to make tea or pour it out for oneself, paint me a lovely young woman sitting at the table—paint her arms like Aurora's and her smiles like Hebe's."

Nor was it only amongst literary men and the fashionable world that tea was during this time increasing its popularity. What the coffee-houses were doing in this direction for the merchant and man-about-town

was being done for the tradesmen and working-man by the "tea gardens," which were opened in what were then pleasant rural retreats within easy distance of London.

About 1836 a strong impetus was given to the consumption by the great temperance movement which was inaugurated about that time, in the propaganda of which movement, and also later on in connection with the Corn Law League, tea-meetings on a gigantic scale were held. These meetings—backed by the earnest efforts of the temperance reformers to make tea the national drink and a substitute for alcoholic liquors—had an immense effect in increasing its use, especially amongst the working classes. In the course of a few years the imports had risen to 40,000,000 pounds per annum, and the tea trade had become established as an important item of the commerce of this country.

Dr. Sigismund, in "Tea: its effects medicinal and moral," published in 1839, writes :—

"A curious and not uninstructive work might be written upon the singular benefits which have accrued to this country from the preference we have given to the beverage obtained from the tea-plant, above all those that might be derived from the rich treasures of

the vegetable kingdom. It would prove that our national importance has been intimately connected with it, and that much of our present greatness and even the happiness of our social system springs from this unsuspected source. It would show us that our mighty empire in the East, that our maritime superiority, and that our progressive advancement in the arts and sciences, have materially depended upon it. Great indeed are the blessings which have been diffused amongst immense masses of mankind by the cultivation of a shrub whose delicate leaf, passing through a variety of hands, forms an incentive to industry, contributes to health, to national riches, and to domestic happiness. The social tea-table is like the fireside of our country—a national delight; and if it be the scene of domestic converse and agreeable relaxation, it should likewise bid us remember that everything connected with the growth and preparation of this favourite herb should awaken a higher feeling—that of admiration, love, and gratitude to Him, who 'saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good.'"

The value of tea as a beverage being now more generally recognised, its invigorating and sustaining properties began to be appreciated by the workers of

the world. In the Army and Navy the use of tea slowly but surely to a great extent supplanted the use of grog. Admiral Inglefield states that sailors under him in the Arctic regions, after one day's experience of rum-drinking, came to the conclusion that tea was much preferable, and they derived much advantage from its use while undergoing hard work and considerable cold. Lord Wolseley is of the same opinion. "Once, during my military career," he says, "it fell to my lot to lead a brigade through a desert country for a distance of over six hundred miles. I fed the men as well as I could, but no one, officer or private, had anything stronger than tea to drink during the expedition. The men had peculiarly hard work to do, and they did it well and without a murmur." In his recent Egyptian campaign he carried out the same plan, and the troops who captured Tel-el-Kebir drank nothing but tea, which was served out to them three times a day.

We have seen how much some of the leading literary men of the last century were indebted to tea, and how enthusiastic were their praises of it; to enumerate the celebrated men of more recent times who have placed their appreciation of it on record would be to trench too much upon our available space,

for their name is legion ; but the curious will find much information on the point in Mr. A. Reade's interesting little book on "Tea," and also in his book on "Study and Stimulants."

The prediction that tea is to be the national beverage of England seems rapidly fulfilling itself; the consumption here is still increasing "by leaps and bounds." Fifty years ago 40,000,000 pounds per annum fully supplied all requirements: to-day 200,000,000 pounds are barely sufficient for home consumption alone. Fifty years ago the consumption of tea was little over one pound per head of the population: to-day it is about five pounds per head. Our countrymen who have left our shores to seek new homes beyond the seas have carried with them their taste for tea, and large quantities are annually taken by Australia, Canada and our other Colonies.

Vast and rapid as has been the increase in the demand, the supply has fully kept pace with it. Our Indian Empire, although it has only been a tea-growing country about thirty years, sends us over 100,000,000 pounds annually, or more than half of our total requirements, and India itself has now to face in Ceylon a competitor which, although young, has already proved a most dangerous rival;

and experimental plantings are being made by our countrymen in Fiji and Natal, by Italians in Sicily, by Russians in the Caucasus, and by Americans in California.

Thus we have traced the history of the consumption of tea from its inception, with the tentative introduction of the strange Chinese beverage as a curiosity two hundred and seventy years ago, to its colossal proportions at the present day, when, by every class of our population, from prince to pauper, it is drunk once or twice a-day; and the enormous debt humanity owes to this precious herb is acknowledged on all hands. Great indeed would be the blank in English social life were we deprived of tea. The brain-worker would find the strain of sustained thought still more intolerable in the noisy world of to-day; the man of business would find it still more difficult to maintain the high pressure of modern commerce; the soldier and sailor and labourer would be deprived of the best and safest of stimulants; the athlete of one of the few comforts left to him by the strict rules of training; the watcher by the sick bed would find her task doubly heavy; the weary seamstress would find the strain of poverty harder to endure; and the lady of fashion would sadly miss her five o'clock teas which have of late played so important

and refreshing a part in the whirl of the fashionable day; and last, but not least, Her Majesty's Customs would lose a solid revenue of four millions sterling per annum.

HISTORY OF THE TEA TRADE IN ENGLAND.

AS the tea trade in England was for more than a century and a-half a monopoly in the hands of the East India Company, we may briefly sketch the rise of that institution.

About the beginning of the 16th century the exclusive right of trading with the East was secured to the Portuguese by a Papal Bull, but it passed into the hands of the Spaniards when they conquered Portugal in 1580; soon afterwards, during the struggle between England and Spain, which led to the destruction of the Spanish navy, the Spanish East Indiamen captured by the English proved such rich prizes, being laden with silks, spices, precious stones and

precious metals, that the English merchants and seamen determined on opening up the treasures of the East to English enterprise, and a charter of incorporation was, on the last day of 1600, granted to a corporation under the title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies."

Under this charter the Company acquired, with various other privileges, the right to exclude any person from trading with any country beyond the Cape of Good Hope or the Straits of Magellan without a licence from the Company.

In 1634, one of the Company's captains penetrated into China and succeeded in establishing commercial relations with Canton, and in 1669 the importation of tea from Holland, to which country it was brought by the ships of the Dutch East India Company, was prohibited, and the tea trade thus became a monopoly of the East India Company, and they retained the exclusive privilege of importing tea into this country for more than a century and a-half. Their consignments at first were small; in 1669 they received from their station at Bantam, in Java, two canisters, containing one hundred and forty-three pounds and eight ounces. Their imports for the next year were four pots, weighing seventy-nine

pounds six ounces; and in 1671 they received two hundred and sixty-four pounds, being a total for the three years of four hundred and eighty-six pounds, of which no less than one hundred and thirty-two pounds were damaged. The sound tea appears to have been reserved for the use of the Court of Committee and for presents, while the damaged tea was sold in their sale for three shillings and twopence per pound. During the next six years their importations ceased, and in 1672-4 they purchased from various persons—Garway, the coffee-house keeper, amongst them—fifty-six pounds ten ounces, chiefly for distribution as presents; two pounds two ounces of the finest being presented to the King. In 1678, however, they imported nearly 5,000 lbs., which appears to have glutted the market, as their imports were merely nominal for several years after.

In 1683 the English were driven out of Bantam by the Dutch, which put an end to the imports from that quarter; and in 1684 the Directors wrote as follows to their agent in Madras: "In regard to Thea, it is grown to be a commodity here; and we have occasion to make presents therein to our great friends at Court. We would have you send us yearly five or six canisters of the very best and freshest tea; that which will

colour the water in which it is infused, most of a greenish complexion, is generally best accepted." In 1685 they received, chiefly from Surat, over 12,000 lbs. Some old stock disposed of by them about this time must have been of very inferior quality, as it realised only from fourpence to sixpence per pound, being graphically described as "trash tea from Bantam."

Their imports from this time rapidly increased, and in 1726 we find an entry of one cargo, by the "Cæsar," of 358,100 lbs., on which they paid duty to the amount of £71,620.

The following is a description of the various kinds of tea imported by the Company in 1730, from a contemporary writer. It will be noted that at this period all the black kinds were included under the head of "Bohea," a name which shortly after was exclusively applied to the lowest grade:—

"Of Bohea, called by the Chinese "Voui," or "Bui," we have the following sorts imported, viz.:—1. Pekoe, which has the most pleasant and delicate flavour of all this first class; its leaf is very small and black, and has many small white flowers mixed with it; its liquor is not of so deep a tincture as the rest, and creams briskly when poured out; the water must stand on it a considerable time to draw out its virtues, and 'twill

bear four or five sundry waters. The closer connection, or cohesion of its principles, renders it more balsamic, and also hereby it grows better by keeping, which is the reverse of Green Tea. The price of this at present is 15/- per pound with us.—2. Congo, which has a larger leaf, and is of a deeper brown colour than the former; this will bear five waters, but then they must not stand long upon it, for unless the water is presently poured off, the whole strength of the tea will be drawn out at once. Hence, if you mix Pekoe and Congo, you shall have an admirable fine tea; you have all the goodness of the last in the first two waters, and of the first in the last two or three, but even then the water should not stand long. This is sold at 14/- a pound.—3. Common Bohea is blacker and larger leaved than either of the former, and smells and tastes more faint, not unlike dried hay; it gives the water the deepest tincture of all, and two or three waters draw out its strength and virtue. Price 12/- per pound.

"The different sorts of Green Tea are these:—1. Hyson, so called from the name of a rich East India merchant, who was the first importer of it; it has a smaller, harder, and more curled leaf than the common green; 'tis of a more blue colour, tastes crisp in the mouth when chewed, and afterwards looks green

upon the hand. It scarce tinctures the water (with a pale greenness) when strongest, and yet is of a most delicious taste. All or most of the leaves should be of a clear bluish-green, for if they seem decayed, or look brown or blackish, the tea is old and has lost part of its virtue. Or, if you pour out a cupful of its liquor, and let it stand all night, if its colour continues then 'tis good; but if that fades, its virtues are gone, especially if its delicate smell and bitterish-sweet taste be impaired. This tea will bear four or five waters, and requires not so much tea to the same quantity of water as the other. 'Tis seldom used alone, but mixed with common green, one part to three of the last. The price is 36/- per pound.—2. Imperial Green Tea; this is of a lighter green colour, has a more flat, large, loose leaf than either the last or those which follow. 'Tis green to the eye, crisp in the mouth, and pretty pleasant to the smell, but has the faintest taste of any green tea. Its specific gravity is the least of all, its principles sit loosest, and therefore two waters will draw off its strength. Price 18/- per pound.—3. Common Green Tea of the better sort has not so large a leaf as the last, is of a darker green colour, rougher, and more astringent to the taste; 'twill bear three or four waters. Price 15/- per pound.—4. Ordinary Green Tea is yet

of a darker (or if very coarse, of a light whitish green) colour, neither so pleasant to the taste nor smell, and is sooner drawn off. Price 13/- per pound.—5. Dutch Bloom is a very fine Green Tea, and bears a proportionable rate; 'tis, probably, one of the Japan Teas, but having seen none of it, I will not pretend to describe or judge.—6. There grows also a very rough, coarse, unpleasant Green Tea in the Northern Province of Xensi, which the hardy Cannibal Tartars, the present masters of China use, whose delicate dish is raw horse-flesh, and when their dinner sits uneasily upon their stomach, they drink of this, and it rarely fails to restore their appetite and digestion."

The downward course of prices since Thomas Garway's handbill was published may best be traced by a few selected advertisements. In the "Tatler," of March, 1710, we find "R. Tate, at the 'Star,' in Bedford Court, near Bedford Street, Covent Garden, offering the finest Bohea at 12/-, 16/-, 20/-, and 24/-, and all sorts of Green, the lowest, 12/-." In 1740, a grocer, successor to the father of Cowley, the poet, at the shop which stood on the site of 192, Fleet Street, quoted his prices as follows: "The finest Caper Tea at 24/- per lb., fine Gunpowder at 18/- per lb., Hyson at 16/- per lb., and Bohea at 7/- per lb."

A circular of May 8th, 1760, fixes the wholesale prices current as follows :—

Black Teas.	s.	d.	Green Teas.	s.	d.
Bohea, best ..	5	1	Twankay, good ..	7	6
Congou, good ..	8	0	Hyson, good ..	9	6
,, fine ..	8	9	,, fine ..	11	0
,, best ..	9	6	Gunpowder, good..	13	0
Souchong, good ..	8	6	,, fine..	15	6
,, best ..	9	6	,, best..	18	6

In 1796, William Bennett, of 11, George Yard, Lombard Street, quotes far lower prices, as follows :—

					s.	d.
Common Bohea, 1/10; Good, 1/11; Best					2	0
Congou leaf kind, 2/3 and 2/4; Fine Congou leaf ..					2	6
Congou, 2/9 to 3/6; Good	3	7	and		3	8
,, Fine	3	9	to		4	10
,, Superfine					5	3
Souchong, 3/9 to 4/3; Fine	4	6	to		7	0
,, Superfine	7	3	to		8	0
Pekoe, 5/9 to 6/9; Superfine					7	0
Common Green, 3/2; Good					3	3
Best ditto..					3	4
Curled leaf, better than Common					3	5
Twankay and Singlo, 3/6 to 4/3; Fine					4	6
Fine Green and Bloom..	4	6	to		5	0
Hyson kind	5	2	to		5	4
Hyson, 5/6 to 5/9; Good	6	0	to		6	6
Fine Hyson, 7/- to 8/6; Superfine ..	9	0	to		9	6
Gunpowder Tea, 9/-; Good	10	6	to		11	6
,, ,, Superfine	12	0	to		14	0

Although prices were thus coming down, it is evident that the tendency of the monopoly was to tend to keep prices above the level that they would naturally find in a competitive market, and as a matter of fact the prices on foreign markets were considerably lower than those the Company was able to exact from English buyers; statisticians compute that in the latter years of the Company's monopoly the consumers of tea in this country had to pay £2,000,000 sterling a-year more for their tea than the same quantities and qualities could be bought for on the open markets of the Continent.

In the hope of in some degree lessening this abuse, the Government from time to time when legislating on the tea duty, or renewing the Company's charter, introduced specific regulations for controlling the supply; thus, upon the re-adjustment of duty in 1745, it was enacted that as the reduction would tend to increase the consumption, the Company should be empowered, upon giving notice to the Commissioners of the Treasury, to import any quantity of tea that might be necessary from the continent of Europe, and if the Company should refuse, or be unable to bring forward a sufficient quantity, the Government took power to themselves, "to grant licences to other

persons, bodies politick or corporate to import tea from any part of Europe"; this power, however, was never put in exercise, and prices were still kept up above the normal level of other markets. Accordingly in 1784, when a further modification of duties took place, the Government legislated not only as to the supply, but as to the price, and in 24 George III., cap. 38, s. 5, it is set forth:—

"And Whereas it is just and reasonable that the said United Company should, in Consideration of the great Benefit which may result to their Commerce from the Reduction of Duties hereby made, contribute their utmost endeavours for securing to the Public the full Benefit which will arise from an immediate and permanent Reduction of Prices; be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the said United Company shall, as soon as may be after the passing of this Act, put up and expose to public Sale, at the least, Five Millions of Pounds Weight of Tea; and shall in like Manner, at some other time before the 31st day of December, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four, make another Sale, at which they shall in like manner put up at the least two Millions five hundred thousand pounds Weight of Tea; and shall thenceforward continue to make at the least Four Sales in every year, and as near as conveniently may be at equal Distances of Time, and shall put up at such Sales such Quantities of Tea as shall be judged sufficient to supply the Demand, and that at each and every such Sale the Tea to be put up shall be sold without Reserve to the highest Bidder, provided that an Advance of One Penny per Pound shall be bid upon Prices at which the same shall be put up; and that at the Four first Sales which shall be made after the passing of this Act, the Prices at which the said Tea shall be put up and exposed to Sale shall not

exceed the following rates, viz.:—For Bohea Tea, One Shilling and Sevenpence per Pound; for Congo Tea, One Shilling and Fivepence per Pound; for Souchong Tea, Three Shillings and Threepence per Pound; for Hyson Tea, Four Shillings and Elevenpence per Pound; and that it shall not be, at any Time hereafter, lawful for the said United Company to put up their Tea for Sale at any Prices which shall, upon the Whole of the Tea so put up at any one Sale, exceed the Prime Cost thereof with the Freight and Charges of Importation, together with lawful Interest from the Time of the Arrival of such Tea in Great Britain, and the common Premium of Insurance, as a Compensation for the Sea Risk incurred thereon."

The Company were also compelled to keep in warehouse in London, a stock of tea equal to one year's consumption; but despite all this legislation, the burden of the monopoly still pressed heavily on the consumer; in fact, to a great extent the restrictions imposed by the Government on the Company operated in the exact opposite direction to which they were intended, as they increased the expenses incident to the import of tea, and the monopoly, all legislation notwithstanding, enabled the Company to extort at their sales such excessive prices that tea could only be retailed at a cost which, except to the well-to-do, was prohibitive.

The following description of the leading kinds of tea put up in the quarterly sales above provided for, is taken from a work on the trade published in 1827.

"The following are the names with a description of the appearance, flavour, etc., of the teas imported into this country by the East India Company :—

"BLACK TEA.

"BOHEA.—The worst description of black tea, containing a very considerable proportion of dust, mixed with large flat brown and brownish-green leaves.

"Bohea, on infusion, generally imparts a dark and dull brownish-red colour to water, which, on standing, deposits a black sediment.

"CONGOU.—Congous form about five-sevenths of the teas imported by the East India Company ; some sorts possess a coarseness which approaches a Bohea ; others, on the contrary, are full of rich fragrance and flavour, and partake of Souchong or Pekoe ; on infusion Congou imparts a deep transparent red colour, and in taste possesses a strong and pleasant bitter with a rich and peculiarly pleasant flavour.

"SOUCHONG.—A fine black tea, similar in appearance to Congou, but generally larger ; on infusion, Souchong imparts a light but beautifully transparent red colour to water, and possesses a most delightful flavour.

"CAMPOI.—Is an inferior kind of Souchong.

"PEKOE.—The richest and most delicious flavoured

of all teas imported into this country. The leaves are long, black, and wiry, tipped at the end with white or whitish-grey. On infusion, Pekoe imparts to water a rich transparent red, approaching to crimson colour, and the infusion is fragrant as 'Gardens of Gul in their bloom.'

"In the chests containing this tea the Chinese often put orris root.

"CAPER.—Short curled blackish leaves; the great bulk now imported are 'faint,' 'odd,' or 'fishy,' and of these the liquor, on standing, deposits a sandy sediment intermixed with metallic particles, which probably composed the cement of which the balls are formed.

"TETSONG.—An illegitimate Souchong Tea.

"PADRAE, POUCHONG, ETC., ETC.—These are very fine delicate flavoured teas, generally imported in the rich present boxes brought over by the officers of the Indiamen. These teas are generally folded in small parcels in fine Chinese paper, and are chiefly of the Souchong kind and flavour.

"There are other descriptions of Black Tea, but they are so little known as scarcely to deserve notice; such as Camho, so called from the province where it grows; it is a pale-looking tea and has a violet smell.

"GREEN TEAS.

"TWANKAY.—A common green tea, plentifully intermixed with large flat and yellow leaves. On infusion it imparts a yellowish light brown colour to water, is slightly bitter, with rather a fishy flavour.

"HYSON.—Bright curled green leaves. On infusion it imparts a primrose colour to water; it possesses a pleasant briskness and agreeable flavour.

"GUNPOWDER differs from Hyson only in appearance."

The same writer gives the following description of the method of conducting the wholesale tea trade during the latter days of the Company's monopoly.

"The tea sales at the India House are held quarterly, viz., in March, June, September and December, at which none but sworn tea brokers are allowed to bid, and who, consequently, must not be tea dealers. The room in which the sale is held is the court in which the proprietors meet to transact their affairs. The sale generally occupies about ten days, during which time noise and confusion reign. To the uninitiated a tea sale appears to be a mere arena in which the comparative strength of the lungs of a portion of his Majesty's subjects are to be tried.

"The wholesale tea dealers attend these quarterly

tea sales and purchase by their brokers a quantity of tea sufficient for their trade, the whole or a part of which, according to circumstances, is taken home to their private warehouses, where the different sorts and flavours are mixed together to meet the wishes of their customers."

As time went on public opinion became more and more alive to the drawbacks of the monopoly; not only had enormous prices to be charged to cover the large profits the Company put on their tea and their reckless expenditure, but in every way the business was inefficiently conducted; men of no commercial experience and cramped ideas ruled the Company; the qualities of courage, foresight, energy, enterprise, and originality in their servants, were distasteful to them; their desire was solely to keep business in its old channels and pursue their own high and dry methods, which had been in vogue for centuries, but the time had come when modern commerce could no longer be cramped by such bonds.

In 1828 an investigation was made into the Company's manner of conducting the tea trade, and the result showed that although the public paid the Company for tea, from £1,500,000 to £2,000,000 sterling every year over and above the price at which

such teas could be bought for in New York or Hamburg, yet the Company only showed a profit of about £850,000 per annum, the rest being swallowed up in extravagant administration.

It was obvious that the monopoly was doomed, and when in 1834, the time came for the renewal of the Charter, the Act 3 & 4, William IV., c. 85, abolished the monopoly and threw open the trade to all.

THE TEA DUTY.

Almost immediately on its first introduction tea was seized upon by the Government as a source of revenue, and it has ever since had to contribute largely to the exchequer of this country.

In 1660 a tax of 8d. per gallon was imposed on all tea made for sale in the coffee-houses, and the keepers of them were required to take out licences at the Quarter Sessions and enter into securities for the due payment of this duty; neglect was punishable by a penalty of five pounds per month. The duty was collected by officers of the Excise, who made the rounds of the licensed coffee-houses at stated periods to take account of the number of gallons sold, and upon the totals furnished duty was charged. As might have been expected, the results obtained under this system of collection were anything but satisfactory; but it remained in force until the reign of William and

Mary, when, in 1689, an Act was passed which set forth that "It being found by experience that collecting the Excise duty upon the liquors of coffee, tea and chocolate was troublesome and unequal upon the retailers, and required such an attendance of officers as rendered the receipt thereof very inconvenient," it was resolved to discontinue it, and in place a Customs duty on tea of 5s. per lb. was imposed.

After many alterations and much legislation, during which the tax on imports of tea was increased to 50 per cent. of its value, a Commutation Act was passed in 1784 reducing it to 12½ per cent., and imposing a tax on windows in its place. In 1796, however, new duties were charged, and they were gradually increased until they amounted to 96 and 100 per cent. on the value; these heavy taxes had the natural effect of encouraging smuggling and adulteration, which were carried on to an enormous extent. Several committees of the House of Commons examined the question, and no less than 4,000,000 pounds of fictitious tea was annually manufactured in different parts of England from sloe leaves, ash leaves, and liquorice; at this time the total quantity of genuine tea imported was only about 8,000,000 pounds per annum. Again, in 1818, another committee reported that "millions of pounds

weight of sloe and ash-tree leaves are every year mixed with Chinese tea in England." Shortly after the expiration of the East India Company's monopoly the duties were much reduced and a new system of collection was introduced, the duty being fixed in 1836 at 2s. 1d. per pound instead of a percentage on the value. This was raised to 2s. 2¼d. in 1840 by the imposition of an extra 5 per cent., and by 1844 the duty realised more than four millions and a-half pounds sterling. Agitation was, however, being carried on throughout the country for a further reduction in the duty, which produced £5,471,461 in 1850, and close on £6,000,000 in 1852, and schemes were introduced in the Budgets of 1852 and 1853 for its gradual reduction to 1s. The Crimean War, with its vast expenditure, intervened to postpone these reductions; but in April, 1857, it was lowered to 1s. 5d. per pound; from this it was reduced, in 1863, to 1s., and on the 1st June, 1865, to 6d. In 1890 a further reduction to 4d. per pound was made, at which figure it now stands, affording a revenue of nearly four million pounds per annum. Tea licences were abolished in 1869.

HINTS ON TEA-MAKING.

A CURIOUS point is that out of the millions who use this valuable beverage, and acknowledge its mighty influence, only a small proportion understand how properly to prepare it; and too many abuse the gift by drinking it under conditions that not only deprive it of its value, but render it absolutely harmful. Unskilful preparation can make good tea into a nauseous draft, and the toughest constitution in the world cannot fail to be eventually injured by constantly imbibing tea that has been overdrawn. A few hints as to the correct method of preparation must therefore be of service. First, the water in which the leaf is infused should be poured upon the tea the moment it boils; with every moment beyond that time the peculiar property of boiling water that acts upon the fragrant leaf evaporates more and more, and eventually disappears. Next, both kettle and teapot must be immaculately clean and of a shining radiance. Of all teapots the little brown earthenware teapot, although despised by the æsthetic because comfortably easy to live up to, is the very best for the purpose. It seems to be thoroughly impregnated

with the flavour and redolent of the aroma of the plant. A silver teapot is next best, but there is a natural hesitation about exposing the precious metal to the fire, which militates against its usefulness in this regard, for heating the pot is a great essential in making good tea. It is more important than the novice might imagine to have the teapot made thoroughly hot before the tea is put into it. The connoisseur will half fill it with hot water, put on the lid, and set it by the fire until only the handle can be touched with impunity from heat. After this has been carefully attended to, better tea can be produced from a less quantity of the leaf than if the thorough heating of the receptacle had been neglected. Opinion is divided as to the precise number of minutes which should be devoted to the process of infusion. Some authorities say five minutes, others seven. A few even go so far as to recommend ten. It is, however, a matter that depends in great measure upon the nature of the water—all teas taking longer to draw in "hard" than in soft water. Only experience can afford a safe guide. Coseys are dangerous, if occasionally ornamental, articles. Originally intended to keep the teapot hot during the legitimate period of drawing, they have been utilized for maintaining the process of infusion during the greater part

of an afternoon, until the decoction is brought into a condition that renders it alike hurtful to the nerves and to the digestive organs. The facilities they offer are but temptations to avoid the trouble of making fresh tea for every fresh set of callers, which should invariably be done by every hostess jealous of her reputation as an artist in tea-making. Where, however, economy must be studied, it may be permitted, although not recommended, to make the tea as before instructed, and to pour off the infusion at its perfection into a second teapot, and keep that warm under the cosey for refreshment of visitors as they arrive.

It may not be inappropriate to quote here the advice of a Chinese author on the subject of tea-making. "Whenever tea is to be infused for use," says Tung Po, "take water from a running stream and boil it over a lively fire; that from springs in the hills is the best and river-water the next, while well-water is the worst. A lively fire is a clear and bright charcoal fire. When making an infusion, do not boil the water too hastily, as first it begins to sparkle like crab's eyes, then somewhat like fish's eyes, and lastly it boils up like pearls innumerable, springing and waving about."

TEA STATISTICS

FROM ITS INTRODUCTION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

IMPORTS OF TEA INTO ENGLAND,

FROM ITS INTRODUCTION TO 1841.

1610—1668	Nominal.
	Lbs.
1669, from Bantam	143
1670 "	79
1671 "	264
1672—1674, sundries	56
1675—1677	No imports.
	Lbs.
1678, from Gangam and Surat	4,713
1679 " " "	197
1680 " Surat	143
1682 " "	70
1683—1684	No imports.
	Lbs.
1685, from Madras and Surat	12,070
1686 " "	65
1687 " "	4,995
1688 " "	1,666

				Lbs.
1689,	from	Madras and Amoy	.....	25,300
1690	"	Surat	.....	41,471
1691	"	"	.....	13,730
1692	"	Madras	.....	18,376
1693	"	"	.....	711
1694	"	"	.....	352
1695	"	"	.....	132
1696	"	"	.....	70
1697	"	East Indies	.....	22,416
1698	"	"	.....	21,302
1699	"	"	.....	13,221
1700	"	"	.....	91,138
1701	"	"	.....	66,738
1702	"	"	.....	37,061
1703	"	"	.....	77,974
1704	"	"	.....	63,141
1705	"	"	.....	6,739
1706	"	"	.....	137,768
1707	"	"	.....	31,700

						Yearly Average. Lbs.
1708—1717,	10 years,	from	East	Indies	...	240,000
1718—1727		"	"	"	...	600,000
1728—1737		"	"	"	...	1,250,000
1738—1747		"	"	"	...	2,000,000
1748—1757		"	"	"	...	2,700,000

				Yearly Average. Lbs.
1758—1767, 10 years from sundry countries				3,900,000
1768—1777	"	"	"	6,850,000
1778—1787	"	"	"	9,300,000
1788—1797	"	"	"	17,800,000
1798—1817	"	"	"	24,000,000
1818—1827	"	"	"	29,000,000
1828—1837	"	"	"	31,000,000
1838	"	"	"	38,000,000
1839	"	"	"	40,000,000
1840	"	"	"	35,000,000
1841	"	"	"	42,000,000

TEA STATISTICS FOR THE FIFTY YEARS, 1842—1892.

DELIVERIES.

Year.	China—Black.	China—Green.	Japan and Java.	Indian.	Ceylon.	Grand Total.	Exports.	Total for Home Consumption.	Year.
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	
1842	35,132,000	8,172,000				43,304,000	5,750,000	37,554,000	1842
1843	35,369,000	8,928,000				44,297,000	4,395,000	39,902,000	1843
1844	38,165,000	8,512,000				46,677,000	5,501,000	41,176,000	1844
1845	39,362,000	9,065,000				48,427,000	4,300,000	44,127,000	1845
1846	41,499,000	9,492,000				50,991,000	3,457,000	47,534,000	1846
1847	42,326,000	8,821,000				51,147,000	4,900,000	46,247,000	1847
1848	42,178,000	10,053,000				52,231,000	3,800,000	48,431,000	1848
1849	45,445,000	9,855,000				55,300,000	5,200,000	50,100,000	1849
1850	46,847,000	9,553,000				56,400,000	5,400,000	51,000,000	1850
1851	49,526,000	8,974,000				58,500,000	4,700,000	53,800,000	1851
1852	52,659,000	9,141,000				61,800,000	6,700,000	55,100,000	1852
1853	54,582,000	8,818,000				63,400,000	4,900,000	58,500,000	1853
1854	60,674,000	9,526,000				70,200,000	9,000,000	61,200,000	1854
1855	67,538,000	10,462,000				78,000,000	15,000,000	63,000,000	1855
1856	59,804,000	9,296,000		100,000		69,200,000	6,241,000	62,959,000	1856
1857	65,850,000	11,850,000		300,000		78,000,000	9,600,000	68,400,000	1857
1858	69,914 000	10,586,000		500,000		81,000,000	8,000,000	73,000,000	1858
1859	71,825,000	10,975,000		700,000		83,500,000	7,200,000	76,300,000	1859
1860	75,261,000	9,639,000		1,000,000		85,900,000	9,100,000	76,800,000	1860
1861	80,808,000	9,642,000		1,300,000		91,750,000	13,750,000	78,000,000	1861

1862	92,934,000	11,616,000		1,700,000		106,250,000	27,500,000	78,750,000	1862
1863	93,488,000	15,962,000		2,300,000		111,750,000	26,250,000	85,500,000	1863
1864	99,665,000	11,075,000	2,460,000	2,800,000		116,000,000	27,500,000	88,500,000	1864
1865	109,450,000	17,150,000	2,400,000	3,000,000		132,000,000	32,633,000	99,367,000	1865
1866	113,726,000	12,444,000	1,250,000	4,580,000		132,000,000	30,245,000	101,755,000	1866
1867	122,450,000	12,556,000	1,652,000	6,342,000		143,000,000	32,000,000	111,000,000	1867
1868	119,613,000	13,700,000	1,212,000	7,475,000		142,000,000	35,512,000	106,488,000	1868
1869	123,120,000	11,335,000	829,000	10,716,000		146,000,000	33,900,000	112,100,000	1869
1870	124,380,000	10,581,000	539,000	13,500,000		149,000,000	31,000,000	118,000,000	1870
1871	138,730,000	11,900,000	300,000	13,600,000		164,530,000	41,000,000	123,530,000	1871
1872	138,984,000	11,531,000	1,185,000	16,300,000		168,000,000	39,000,000	129,000,000	1872
1873	135,936,000	10,251,000	413,000	18,400,000		165,000,000	33,000,000	132,000,000	1873
1874	140,640,000	9,555,000	422,000	17,756,000		168,373,000	30,980,000	137,393,000	1874
1875	143,904,000	9,614,000	131,000	23,513,000		177,162,000	31,704,000	145,458,000	1875
1876	143,169,000	8,636,000	427,000	26,735,000		178,967,000	29,835,000	149,132,000	1876
1877	148,977,000	8,458,000	710,000	28,230,000		186,305,000	35,030,000	151,275,000	1877
1878	149,676,000	7,942,000	2,849,000	36,776,000		197,243,000	39,551,000	157,692,000	1878
1879	150,314,000	7,970,000	3,275,000	35,243,000		196,822,000	36,170,000	160,652,000	1879
1880	151,088,000	6,165,000	3,784,000	43,707,000	100,000	204,944,000	44,000,000	160,000,000	1880
1881	146,250,000	6,500,000	1,400,000	48,600,000	250,000	202,000,000	40,000,000	162,000,000	1881
1882	148,600,000	7,500,000	1,800,000	50,000,000	500,000	207,400,000	40,000,000	162,000,000	1882
1883	143,600,000	8,200,000	2,200,000	58,100,000	1,000,000	213,100,000	42,100,000	171,000,000	1883
1884	143,800,000	8,500,000	3,200,000	62,600,000	1,600,000	219,700,000	44,600,000	175,100,000	1884
1885	142,400,000	9,200,000	3,600,000	65,600,000	3,200,000	224,000,000	42,000,000	182,000,000	1885
1886	130,800,000	7,900,000	3,700,000	68,400,000	6,200,000	217,000,000	44,000,000	177,000,000	1886
1887	112,400,000	6,300,000	3,200,000	83,100,000	10,000,000	215,000,000	35,000,000	180,000,000	1887
1888	105,400,000	7,100,000	3,800,000	87,200,000	18,500,000	222,000,000	38,000,000	184,000,000	1888
1889	84,586,000	5,897,000	3,630,000	98,910,000	30,167,000	223,190,000	36,350,000	161,293,000	1889
1890	80,493,000	6,099,000	3,637,000	102,846,000	37,653,000	230,728,000	37,850,000	167,843,000	1890
1891	68,213,000	6,022,000	4,132,000	101,194,000	53,487,000	233,048,000	33,450,000	176,238,000	1891
1892	54,689,000	5,374,000	3,034,000	111,247,000	66,339,000	240,683,000	37,650,000	181,547,000	1892

TEA STATISTICS FOR THE FIFTY YEARS,

1842 to 1892.

Year.	Home Consumption.	Consumption Per Head of Population.	Price of Sound Common Congou.	Duty.
	lbs.	lbs.	s. d.	s. d.
1842	37,654,000	1.38	1 2½	—
1843	39,902,000	1.48	0 11½	—
1844	41,176,000	1.50	0 10½	—
1845	44,127,000	1.59	0 9½	—
1846	47,534,000	1.69	0 9½	—
1847	46,247,000	1.66	0 7½	—
1848	48,431,000	1.75	0 7	—
1849	50,100,000	1.81	0 8¼	—
1850	51,000,000	1.86	0 10½	—
1851	53,800,000	1.97	0 10¼	—
1852	55,100,000	1.99	0 8¼	—
1853	58,500,000	2.14	0 11¼	1 10
1854	61,200,000	2.22	0 11¼	1 6
1855	63,000,000	2.28	0 9	1 9
1856	62,959,000	2.26	0 9¼	1 9
1857	68,400,000	2.45	1 1	1 5
1858	73,000,000	2.58	0 11¼	—
1859	76,300,000	2.67	1 2¾	—
1860	76,800,000	2.67	1 4¼	—
1861	78,000,000	2.69	1 0	—

1862	..	..	78,750,000	..	..	2.70	..	..	1	1½	..	..	—				
1863	..	..	85,500,000	..	..	2.90	..	..	1	0¾	..	..	1	0			
1864	..	..	88,500,000	..	..	3.00	..	..	0	11	..	..	—				
1865	..	..	99,367,000	..	..	3.29	..	..	0	11	..	..	0	6			
1866	..	..	101,755,000	..	..	3.42	..	..	0	11¾	..	..	—				
1867	..	..	111,000,000	..	..	3.68	..	..	0	11¾	..	..	—				
1868	..	..	106,488,000	..	..	3.52	..	..	1	2	..	..	—				
1869	..	..	112,100,000	..	..	3.63	..	..	1	0	..	..	—				
1870	..	..	118,000,000	..	..	3.81	..	..	1	0	..	..	—				
1871	..	..	123,530,000	..	..	3.92	..	..	0	11½	..	..	—				
1872	..	..	129,000,000	..	..	4.01	..	..	0	11½	..	..	—				
1873	..	..	132,000,000	..	..	4.11	..	..	1	0	..	..	—				
1874	..	..	137,423,000	..	..	4.23	..	..	0	11	..	..	—				
1875	..	..	145,458,000	..	..	4.44	..	..	0	11	..	..	—				
1876	..	..	149,132,000	..	..	4.50	..	..	0	9½	..	..	—				
1877	..	..	151,275,000	..	..	4.52	..	..	0	7¾	..	..	—				
1878	..	..	157,692,000	..	..	4.66	..	..	0	7¾	..	..	—				
1879	..	..	160,652,000	..	..	4.70	..	..	0	9	..	..	—				
1880	..	..	158,570,000	..	..	4.59	..	..	0	8¾	..	..	—				
1881	..	..	160,230,000	..	..	4.58	..	..	0	6¼	..	..	—				
1882	..	..	165,100,000	..	..	4.67	..	..	0	4¾	..	..	—				
1883	..	..	171,000,000	..	..	4.73	..	..	0	4¾	..	..	—				
1884	..	..	175,100,000	..	..	4.90	..	..	0	5¼	..	..	—				
1885	..	..	182,000,000	..	..	5.00	..	..	0	6¾	..	..	—				
1886	..	..	177,000,000	..	..	4.87	..	..	0	6	..	..	—				
1887	..	..	180,000,000	..	..	4.95	..	..	0	5½	..	..	—				
1888	..	..	184,000,000	..	..	4.95	..	..	0	5¼	..	..	—				
1889	..	..	186,900,000	..	..	5.01	..	..			..	..	—				
1890	..	..	192,900,000	..	..	5.14	..	..			..	..	0	4			
1891	..	..	199,600,000	..	..	5.30	..	..			..	..	—				
1892	..	..	203,000,000	..	..	5.33	..	..			..	..	—				

CHINA TEA.

CHINA TEA.

CULTIVATION AND MANUFACTURE.

THERE is substantially but one tea-plant, and all the varieties that come into the market are derived from different methods of preparing the leaf. Its original habitat appears to have been in the hill-countries between India and China; but while it remained unnoticed in the former country, until comparatively recently, its value was discovered and its virtues appreciated in China before the dawn of reliable history.

Chinese traditions as to the origin of tea extend back to the time when Noah was engaged in planting his vineyard; or, to be particular as to date, to the year B.C. 3254. At that date the father of Chinese agriculture, the Emperor Shing Nong, discovered the virtues of the shrub, and, like a practical man, set about planting a tea-garden and teaching his subjects the art of concocting his favourite beverage.

Certain somewhat obscure allusions in the "Shee-King," compiled by the great Chinese philosopher and moralist, Confucius, some 500 years before our era, are construed by native authorities as referring to tea. Many centuries, however, elapse before we can make certain of our ground, but from a critical examination of the fables and traditions which have reference to the discovery and early use of tea, we may surmise with some approach to certainty that the tea-plant was known to the Chinese, and its leaves used by them for medicinal purposes from a very remote antiquity, but that it was not in general use as a beverage before the sixth century. Even then it appears to have been only locally used, but during the next two or three hundred years its use spread throughout the whole Chinese Empire, and it was the theme of numerous treatises giving palpably fabulous accounts of its introduction and use by various emperors of ancient dynasties. We have, however, a probably reliable account of its use by the Emperor Ven Ty in 584, but it appears to have been prescribed to him as a medicine by a priest acquainted with its virtues. In 780 the learned Lo-Yu wrote an interesting treatise on tea, entitled "Cha-Kin," which still remains, and is perhaps the most ancient, really authentic description of tea

preserved in the Chinese annals. This author gives the following directions for its preparation:—"All tea is gathered in the second, third, and fourth moons; the leaves must not be gathered in rainy, or even in cloudy weather, but when it is fair and clear. Bruise and pat them with the hands, roast them over a fire, pack and close them up. In this manner tea is prepared, and there are a thousand and ten thousand different kinds" —surely a truly Oriental exaggeration. After eulogising at length its fragrance and flavour, he observes: "Tea tempers the spirit and harmonizes the mind; dispels lassitude and relieves fatigue; awakens thought and prevents drowsiness; lightens and refreshes the body and clears the perceptive faculties."

At this time tea must have been of sufficient importance as a commodity to allow of its being made a source of revenue; for in 783, in the reign of the Emperor Te Tsong, the first Chinese Tea-duty was levied, and, as we noticed in our opening chapter, Arabian merchants who visited China in the ninth century found tea the common beverage of the country.

At first, tea appears to have been prepared by gathering the leaves and, after pressing them into cakes with the hands, drying them over a charcoal fire. When required for use, a portion of the cake was

broken off, reduced to powder, and placed in a cup; boiling water was then poured on and stirred, and the liquor and powder drunk together. Very early allusions to the present custom of rolling the leaf are, however, to be found, and in the main the methods of cultivation and manufacture in use to-day are the same as those employed from time immemorial; some minor modifications in respect to fermentation, etc., may have been rendered necessary by the European demand which has sprung up within the last three centuries, as the Chinese say that their more delicately cured tea would be unable to stand the voyage without ruinous deterioration, and assert that Chinese tea is never seen in its perfection in this country. Be this as it may, millions of acres are devoted to the cultivation of this herb, or rather shrub, in China, and millions of the population are dependent on the crop as a means of existence.

It is said that the poorer land in each tea-growing district is given up to the production of tea, the Chinese believing that tea will thrive where nothing else will; but this appears to be only partially true. The method of cultivation is as follows: In February or March, the seeds are sown in specially prepared ground, very moist, and in a sheltered situation. When the plants are

three months old, they are planted out in rows about four feet apart, on a hill-side if possible, and carefully tended and watered. These plantations are often very picturesque, the whole hill-side being covered with terraces of tea shrubs; when they are two or three years old, the plucking commences. The times of plucking are busy times in the tea-districts, and the population turn out into the tea-gardens to gather the leaves, much as they do into the hop-fields in England. The first picking of the youngest and tenderest leaves takes place in April and May, and the teas produced from it are known here as 'First Crop Teas'; the second picking takes place when the foliage is at its fullest, in about June or July, and after that there is a third picking, in which the coarse leaves, twigs, and indeed everything which can be made into tea, and which can be taken without damaging the shrub, is picked; the first picking is a delicate operation, and requires skill and discrimination, and but small quantities are secured; for the others, all comers are employed, and the pickers can gather from twelve to fifteen pounds weight of the leaves in a day. Unlike the system prevailing in India, the tea is not manufactured on the estate where grown, but, after being withered by being spread in shallow trays in the sun,

the leaves are carried to the hongs for sale." A writer thus describes the process:—

"The tea-buying is carried on very rapidly. The buyer stands on a raised platform, the sellers in the large open court in front. Each seller hands up a sample of his leaf on a small wicker tray for inspection, when the buyer, without a moment's hesitation, fixes the price and writes it on a slip of paper, which is handed to the seller, who is equally prompt in accepting or rejecting the price offered, and there is no chaffering, time being too precious. If the price is accepted, the leaf at once is carried into the hong, weighed, and the money paid on the nail. There is always keen competition among the buying hongs, and the growers are thus secured a full market price."

After the buying for the day is over, the qualities are sorted out, the leaves are slightly fired, and then packed away as tightly as hay in a stack, in dark stalls, in the interior of the hong, where the tea is left till fermentation commences. It is then put into the hands of the pickers, women and girls, each of whom receive one katty (equal to 1½lb.) at a time, from which they pick out the brown leaves and stalks. The leaf is then winnowed to throw the dust off. The fresh leaves which are left are gathered together and fired, which

is the most important process of all, as the appearance, character, and flavour all depends on the skill and care of the firing. When the charcoal fire is ready, a deep basket is placed above it with a grating in the middle, over which the leaves are thinly spread, and the leaves are in this way rapidly dried; then they undergo a final rolling. When the whole of the leaf of one quality has been treated in this way, they are spread out again in thin trays in heated chambers for a few minutes to drive off any remaining moisture, and turned over until perfectly dry and uniformly dark. Nothing now remains but to pack them in the familiar lead-lined boxes and put them on the market as rapidly as possible.

The process of manufacture of green tea differs from that of black tea, mainly in the leaves not being allowed to remain moist long enough for fermentation to take place; the leaves are fired a little as soon as picked, and then rolled and rapidly dried in iron pans over a charcoal fire. The green tea of commerce is often artificially faced, and the Ping Suey kinds are coloured to improve their appearance; there is nothing in the small quantity of colouring matter used which is essentially injurious to health, but the tea itself is not so wholesome, more of the essential oil being preserved in the leaf.

Oolong tea is prepared somewhat in the same way

as green teas, but fired without rolling, and not faced. All scented teas are flavoured or scented with certain flowers which give them their distinctive aroma.

But whatever the method of preparation adopted, there is in each description nearly the same range of qualities, according to the size of the leaf and the season of picking.

Congous, besides this difference of time of plucking, are divided again into broad groups, defined by the district in which they are produced; those from the northern districts, shipped from Hankow or Shanghai, are technically styled "Black-Leaf Congous," and are known under the general name of Monings; those from the central districts, shipped from Foo Chow Foo, are technically styled "Red-Leaf Congous," and are known under the general name of Kaisows; those from the southern districts, shipped from Canton, are known as "New Makes," or "Province-Leaf Congous." Until very recently, these last have, as a rule, been ill-fired and of poor quality, but lately an immense advance has been made in the manufacture, and they have come more into favour.

Each of these three main branches of China Congou, *i.e.*, Moning, Kaisow and New Make, has numerous sub-divisions, which must be examined in detail.

MONINGS

(Or Black-Leaf Congous).

THERE are eight main classes into which the Black-Leaf Congous sent to this country are now divided, viz.: Kintucks, Keemuns, Kiukiangs, Ning Chows, Kutoans, Oonfaas, Oopacks, and Shantams. We will proceed to examine their special properties in the order as named.

KINTUCKS.—This description, although comparatively new to our market in comparison with some of the others hereafter dealt with, is greatly in favour, and the fine first crop parcels are more sought after year by year as their quality becomes more appreciated; they have a peculiar delicate flavour, a reddish infusion, and draw a liquor of good strength, with choice quality. The second crop lines, however, are usually not desirable teas, being rather ragged and uneven in appearance and deteriorating rapidly in quality.

KEEMUNS are grown in the adjoining district to

the Kintuck kinds, and much resemble them, but are richer, drawing a thick, full liquor, and the finer parcels are distinguished by a peculiar rich aroma and flavour which are found in no other kinds but the true Keemun.

Kiukiangs.—These teas, named from the town where packed, are from the Hoei Ho district, away in the north ; they possess many of the good qualities of the Kintuck kinds, possessing fragrance and flavour, but most of them sadly lack body, which, of course, detracts from their value in a blend.

Ning Chows.—These teas are, perhaps, the backbone of the Moning kinds, and although the finer lines have suffered somewhat in public estimation, in competition with their more modern rivals, the Kintucks and Keemuns, the medium to fine grades still maintain an almost undisputed superiority ; even the second crop parcels have usually a pretty grey leaf, with some tip, closely rolled and well cured, drawing a capital liquor. They are valuable teas in a blend, and for ordinary purposes are unrivalled amongst the Black-Leaf Teas.

Kutoan.—This most distinctive tea is often known as "Chinese Assam Pekoe"; it has a short rather rusty leaf with some tip, and possesses great strength, with much point and, sometimes, fine quality. It is a

most desirable tea if used quickly, but it has an unfortunate tendency, if kept long, to develop a "minty" or "herby" taste, which is most objectionable, and which no blending can entirely remove.

OONFAA.—This tea, from one of the most southerly districts, is not usually very taking in appearance, but is for its distinctive qualities much prized by certain blenders; the finer grades have very bright infusion, and often a marked "smoky" or "tarry" flavour that makes them great favourites in some districts.

OOPACKS are the produce of the district immediately above Hankow. Some time ago they were one of the leading kinds of Moning in demand, but they have gradually fallen into disfavour, and those now shipped are generally got up to imitate some other kind more in request, and so labelled.

SHANTAMS are the lowest kind of Moning grown. We notice them simply to advise our readers to leave them out of any blend, however low in price; they are loose and spongy in make and nasty in liquor, generally having a decidedly "mousey" twang.

In addition to these main divisions, there are several other varieties which are occasionally seen on our market, amongst which we may mention MONING SOUCHONGS with bold leaf and rich, fruity liquor; ICHANGS,

resembling KIUKIANGS in many respects; WENCHOWS, with very pretty leaf and thin flavoury liquor.

Broken leaf teas are known as siftings or fannings, being separated from the whole leaf by sifting or winnowing during the process of manufacture.

In conclusion, it may be noted that the description given on the package is not always a trustworthy indication as to the character of its contents; for, in addition to various fancy descriptions sometimes given, all the first three kinds enumerated are frequently labelled as "Ning Chows," and other discrepancies of a like nature are not uncommon.

KAISOWS

(Or Red-Leaf Congous).

THE port of Foo Chow was opened in 1854, and we now draw from thence one-third of the China Congou consumed in this country. Like the black-leaf kinds, Kaisows may be divided into eight main classes, viz., Soo Moos, Ching Wos, Pecco Congous, Panyongs, Paklums, Saryunes, Padraes, and Paklins.

The leading characteristics of these various branches may be summed up as follows :—

Soo Moos.—This is a good honest class of tea, not so attractive to the eye or nose as some of the other varieties, but possessing great body and power, the infused leaf being generally bright, and the finer parcels are distinguished by a very fine Souchong flavour, and are much sought after on that account.

CHING WOS.—This variety is a general favourite, and is so deservedly. The leaf is usually evenly and

tightly rolled, and of a silky black complexion, with some tip; the aroma is very fine and delicate; the liquor is, as a rule, of a bright reddish colour, and possesses considerable strength and a peculiarly fine flavour; in fact, Ching Wos are, in our opinion, the most valuable of the red-leaf teas for use in fine blends.

Pecco Congous are the most beautiful Kaisows imported, the leaf being very evenly and tightly rolled, and full of flower. They are held in great esteem in certain quarters, and command, on account of their appearance, far higher prices than their quality in the cup would warrant.

Panyongs—a variety which has recently come greatly into favour; they resemble in many respects the Ching Wo kinds, and are, as a rule, very serviceable and most reliable teas for use in blending, the finer parcels possessing a thick, rich, sappy liquor, with fine aroma and rich flavour; excellent foundation teas may be met with in the medium grades. Summer Crop Panyongs are often very distinctive teas, being fragrant, strong, brisk and pungent, with tippy leaf; they are known as "thorny" Panyongs, or Assam Panyongs.

Paklums much resemble Paklins, which will be noticed later on; the leaf is usually very prettily made

and closely twisted, and black, with tip; the liquor is rich and thick, but usually lacks point.

SARYUNES are the best possible foundation teas for low-priced blends, where pretty-looking tea is not a necessity. They are nearly always reddish in appearance, with a somewhat open leaf and inclined to be dusty, but in liquor they come out rich and ripe, with plenty of sap and stamina, and in every respect, except appearance, are invaluable in a blend.

PADRAES are highly fired teas, with black crapey leaf, fresh, brisk aroma, rich colour, and intense power in the cup, and a peculiar and striking flavour, much resembling that of black currants. They are a most valuable variety, but require skill in blending to make their flavour harmonize.

PAKLINS are handsomely-made teas from the districts immediately around Foo Chow; they are usually picked early, and carefully prepared and shipped by the mail steamers, thus reaching this country before the main Kaisow crop. They are almost invariably packed in boxes, and are much prized in some localities for their body and flavour; they, however, lack point and stamina.

The old-fashioned Lapseng Souchongs are also shipped from Foo Chow, and the finer grades keep up

the old characteristics and give us an idea of the sort of tea prized by our grandfathers; they still find their way into some of the best blends going into consumption; their make, however, is frequently loose and uneven, which is against their being generally used, but the rich, full, delicious liquor is difficult to equal with any of the more new-fashioned favourites.

Other less important varieties of Kaisow are SUEY KUTS, with pretty, tippy leaf, and pointy liquor; ANKOIS—strong useful teas, and SINCHUNES, which somewhat resemble common ANKOIS.

NEW MAKES

(Province-Leaf or New District Congous).

THESE Congous are grown in the Southern Provinces of China, and shipped from the Port of Canton. They are grown in the districts near the port of shipment, and the first pickings dispatched by the mail steamers reach this country some months before the New Season's teas from the more northern ports, the bulk of which comes from far inland.

These teas, known generally as New-Makes or "Province-leaf Congous," have several varieties comprised in two broad divisions, known commonly as Hoyunes and Pekoe Souchong Congous. Under the former heading are generally included all those kinds that are greyish in hue and bold in make, and that possess intense strength in liquor; under the latter are included the kinds in which greater attention has been paid to the appearance, and the leaf is usually closely rolled and tippy; after these two divisions come the

low grades of Canton Congou, which are still prepared in the old-fashioned style, with a bold, loosely-made leaf, and often having a peculiar "bready" smell.

Hoyunes.—This is a most useful class of tea where appearance is no consideration, the leaf being generally rough; the infused leaf, however, is of a rich copper colour, and the liquor is usually of most intense strength, with point and quality more resembling a fine Assam Souchong than any Chinese growth. Wherever the prejudice against their appearance is overcome, and these teas are fairly introduced, they invariably become great favourites.

Tarry Hoyunes.—The earliest pickings of Hoyune tea are greyish in appearance and have a peculiar "smoky" taste and smell that renders caution necessary in dealing with them in blending, this taste being almost impossible to mask, and being strongly objected to by some people; the teas have, however, many good points, and are made a spécialité of by some retailers.

Pekoe Souchong Congous.—These teas have a very prettily curled leaf, with tip, bright infusion, and frequently a very thick, rich, powerful liquor.

Honeysuckle Congous.—Some parcels of Pekoe Souchong Congou have a peculiar flavour, known as "honeysuckle flavour," and they are deservedly the

favourite Canton Cougou with the English trade. They have a small reddish leaf; the liquor is strong and brisk, with exquisite flavour.

Common New Makes have few desirable qualities, and are used chiefly for export; we cannot recommend their use in blending.

OOLONGS AND SCENTED TEAS.

We now have to review the class of teas which are prepared for the purpose of giving scent and flavour to the blends in which they are used. The teas differ from the Congous in the method of manufacture, being dried and rolled without previously undergoing a process of fermentation, thus preserving the pungent sharp flavour, but not acquiring thickness and colour. The principal flavouring kinds are three varieties of Oolong, from Formosa, Kokew, and Amoy respectively; several varieties of Scented Orange Pekoe, principally the long leaf from Canton, the short leaf from Foo Chow, the Macao kinds, and another variety of short leaf, made to imitate the Foo Chow teas, but shipped from Canton; the three leading varieties of scented Caper, viz., the black and the olive leaf Canton kinds and the Foo Chow Tea.

We will now deal in detail with the kinds enumerated :—

Formosa Oolongs.—This is, in our opinion, the prince of flavouring teas, the fine lines being highly

fired but not burnt, with crisp, dark green, dry leaf and some flower, the infused leaf being a bright yellowish green, with a tinge of copper colour, and the liquor having intense pungency and piquancy, with a most delicious flavour; a dash of the finest will give "nose," point, and style to a fine blend. During the last few years another variety has been shipped, which is very highly burnt, and lacking some of the point and sharpness of the old style, has a much darker liquor; this finds much favour with some blenders.

Kokew Oolongs.—These teas are, as a class, inferior to the Formosa growths, but as their range of price is much lower, considerable quantities go into consumption. The better grades are fairly brisk, with good flavour, but the common lines are too often rank and nasty; the leaf is generally loosely made and rough.

Amoy Oolong.—Very little of this tea is now shipped to this market. It somewhat resembles the Kokew, but is more yellow in appearance.

Foo Chow Scented Orange Pekoe is one of the most desirable of scented teas, the finer grades being of a beautiful tint of olive-green, with closely rolled leaf and some flower. They have an exquisite scent, and a flavour quite unrivalled. The medium to fine grades of this class are also very useful.

Canton Scented Orange Pekoe.—The leading variety of Scented Orange Pekoe shipped from Canton is the long-leaf kind, sometimes known as "spider-leg." This tea is prepared from the more mature leaves, lightly fired and twisted into the well-known long thin rolls so characteristic of this variety; the liquor should be strong and pungent, with fine flavour. These teas are now frequently made with a smaller leaf, which is more suitable for blending.

Short-Leaf Canton Scented Orange Pekoe.—These teas are prepared to resemble the Foo Chow kinds. They are usually strong and rasping, but somewhat lack flavour. The variety known as "Ouchaine" is greatly in favour with some blenders, who prefer it to Caper. The leaf is very short, and mixes well; they are generally strongly scented, and possess much grip and pungency.

Macao Scented Orange Pekoe.—These teas have usually a fairly well-made leaf, with an olive to somewhat yellowish complexion, and draw a pungent, rasping liquor; the finer grades are frequently called "Mandarin Pekoe."

Canton Scented Capers.—The two chief varieties of Caper shipped from Canton are the glazed kind and the olive-leaf kind; these are, however, sub-

stantially the same tea, and the leaf of the former being "faced" with soapstone, &c., the leaf of the other being left of its natural olive tint. The principal quality sought for in Canton Caper is extreme pungency and grip. In selecting lower-priced ones, care should be taken to avoid those with a common twang, as the facing process affords an opportunity to work up old and decayed leaves without detection in the appearance. From Canton we also obtain the intensely strong Hoyune Capers.

Foo Chow Scented Capers have a peculiar crapey appearance—perfectly pure and free from facing; they are, as a rule, richly scented with very choice flavour; they, however, lack the strength of the Canton kinds, and for this reason are but little used.

All Scented Orange Pekoes and Scented Capers are artificially scented usually with a flower called Qui Fa, somewhat resembling the Jessamine, but occasionally with the Gardenia, or other sweet smelling flower, by placing the tea and the scenting flower in alternate layers, and exposing to a gentle heat.

GREEN TEAS.

We have now to consider the characteristics of the various kinds of Green Tea now shipped to this country. They are broadly divided into two classes, viz., "Moyunes" and "Ping Sueys." The trade in the so-called "Canton Greens," which were simply common Black Teas made up with gum, sand, etc., and artificially coloured, has fortunately been stopped since the passing of the Adulteration Act.

The Moyune Teas are divided into three classes, viz., the "Nankin," "Fychow," and "True Moyune." The two former are usually of great strength and pungency, but often with a tendency to coarseness. The True Moyunes are distinguished by their pale complexion and peculiar "cowslip" scent and flavour. A variety of Moyune Gunpowder, known as "Ouchaine" is greatly in favour with some buyers on account of its great strength; they, however, lack make, the leaf being granulated and not rounded.

The Ping Suey Teas lack the power and quality of the Moyune varieties; indeed, they are produced principally for appearance, being made to imitate the finer lines of Moyune Gunpowder and Young Hyson. They usually come over in boxes of about 25 to 35 pounds nett, and are all more or less faced.

The varieties of Moyune Green, distinguished by the age of the leaf and by the make of it, are as follows:—

GUNPOWDER.—Young to medium leaves rolled in balls ranging from "Pinhead" to "Pea Leaf."

YOUNG HYSON.—Young to medium leaf made in Congou fashion; the finest and closest make is known as "Gomee."

IMPERIAL.—Older leaves, made in Gunpowder style.

HYSON.—Older leaves, made in Congou style. Amongst the finer grades, made from carefully selected mature leaves, manipulated with care, are some of the finest liquoring Green Teas produced; they, however, find less favour than they deserve on the home market, and the greater part are exported.

The lowest grades, known as "Twankay" and "Hyson Skin," when now shipped to this country, are usually labelled "Imperial" or "Hyson."

Of late the consumption of Green Tea has greatly decreased in this country, with probably beneficial results to the consumer, their very strong astringent qualities rendering them, it is reasonable to believe, injurious to nerves and the stomach if drunk in large quantities; indeed, the denunciation of tea-drinking by American doctors may be explained by the fact that Greens and Oolongs and other similar varieties form the greater part of the tea drunk in the United States. In this country the consumption of Green Tea is principally confined to the Midland districts, but even there the consumption appears steadily falling off.

We have now covered the whole ground as regards the varieties of tea sent to this country from China, and have endeavoured to give a fair estimate of the character and blending value of all the leading kinds.

INDIAN TEA.

TEA IN INDIA.

We noticed in a previous chapter that the original habitat of the tea plant is believed to have been in the hills between India and China, from whence it spread over both these countries; but while cultivated in China from time immemorial, its cultivation in India is of very recent date, although that Chinese plants had been imported and were growing in that country was known more than a hundred years ago. In 1780, Colonel Kyd, residing in Calcutta, had Chinese tea plants growing in his garden there, and other instances are on record of its presence in botanical and other gardens in India.

Sir J. Banks, in 1788, made efforts, in conjunction with Colonel Kyd, to direct attention to the possibility of great results to be obtained from the study and proper cultivation of tea in India; but as this would have interfered with the China tea trade—the East India Company's monopoly—these efforts were discouraged by the authorities at home.

But, later on, the discovery of indigenous tea in the province of Assam, by Major R. Bruce, in 1823, brought

the matter again into prominence, and in 1825 the Society of Arts offered their gold medal "to the person who shall grow and prepare the greatest quantity of tea of good quality, not being less than twenty pounds weight, in the East Indies, or other British quality," which was ultimately gained by Mr. C. A. Bruce, brother of Major Bruce, who was present at the capture of Sudeya, in Upper Assam, and followed up his brother's investigations. In 1832 he laid the information he had obtained before Captain Jenkins, who had been sent to report on the resources of the country.

His report made a great impression on Lord William Bentick, the Governor-General, and at his instigation a committee was appointed to consider the feasibility of introducing the tea industry in the Company's territories.

The ideas of the committee were strongly in favour of introducing plants from China, instead of cultivating the native tea; and Mr. Gordon, their secretary, was despatched, in June, 1834, to Macao, with instructions to obtain a supply of tea plants and seeds; but by March, 1835, the committee, having meanwhile received the reports of scientists who had been sent into Assam to report on the tea growing there, decided that the importation of China plants was needless, and recalled

Mr. Gordon, but again despatched him in the autumn of the same year to obtain Chinamen able to superintend the cultivation and manufacture. In this he was successful, and in 1836 operations were commenced in earnest, under the direction of Mr. C. A. Bruce, who was appointed "superintendent of tea forests."

In 1838 the first consignment of twelve chests was sent home and favourably reported on, in consequence whereof Mr. Bruce was awarded the before-mentioned medal of the Society of Arts. Soon after, in 1840, the Assam Tea Company was formed, and took over the experimental gardens, and ten years later many gardens had been started in Assam, and the cultivation rapidly spread to Kumaon, Durrung, Cachar, Darjeeling, Neilgherries, Chittagong, and more recently to Chota, Nagpore, Ceylon, and Travancore.

The trade at home took kindly to the Indian produce, experts spoke highly of it, and good prices were obtained on the Mincing Lane Market. Under these circumstances there was a rush to form new companies and to open new gardens, and promoters were in many cases not above roughly clearing patches of waste land and planting tea-seed and selling them to new companies as established tea estates. Men ignorant of the work were put in as managers, and as their only object was

to show a large output, vast quantities of rubbish were shipped to England, and a disastrous fall in prices occurred. A collapse naturally followed, and the years 1865 to 1867 saw widespread ruin amongst the Indian tea concerns; but the disaster was retrieved, tea-growing became a science, and in the hands of men of experience and resource, the methods of cultivation, and consequently the quality of the product, have been steadily improving from that time forward.

A few figures will show how rapidly the consumption in this country has increased during the last twenty-five years :—

In 1864 the consumption of Indian Tea was			2,500,000 lbs.		or 2½ per Cent. of the total consumption.		
1867	"	"	6,000,000	"	" 6	"	"
1870	"	"	13,500,000	"	" 10	"	"
1874	"	"	21,000,000	"	" 15	"	"
1875	"	"	24,000,000	"	" 17½	"	"
1876	"	"	27,000,000	"	" 19	"	"
1877	"	"	29,000,000	"	" 19	"	"
1878	"	"	38,000,000	"	" 20	"	"
1879	"	"	56,000,000	"	" 19	"	"
1880	"	"	44,000,000	"	" 22	"	"
1881	"	"	49,000,000	"	" 23	"	"
1882	"	"	50,000,000	"	" 24	"	"
1883	"	"	59,000,000	"	" 28	"	"
1884	"	"	64,000,000	"	" 30	"	"
1885	"	"	69,600,000	"	" 38	"	"
1886	"	"	72,000,000	"	" 41	"	"
1887	"	"	84,000,000	"	" 46	"	"
1888	"	"	90,600,000	"	" 49	"	"
1889	"	"	96,000,000	"	" 59	"	"
1890	"	"	99,500,000	"	" 61	"	"
1891	"	"	97,000,000	"	" 55	"	"
1892	"	"	107,500,000	"	" 59	"	"

INDIAN TEA.

CULTIVATION AND MANUFACTURE.

In India, where the cultivation of tea has now been reduced to a science, several varieties of the plant are grown, consisting of the China plant, the indigenous Indian plant, and a series of hybrids. The indigenous plant, though somewhat less hardy than its Chinese rival, has many advantages—growing to a much greater height, producing larger and more frequent "flushes," and the teas made therefrom are more rasping and pungent. The leading characteristics of the two plants are thus summed up by Colonel Money :—

"The indigenous tree has a leaf of nine inches long and more. The leaf of the China bush never exceeds four inches. The indigenous leaf is a bright pale green, the China leaf a dull dark green colour. The indigenous 'flushes,' that is, produces new tender leaf much more copiously than the China, and this in two ways :

first, the leaves are larger, and thus, if only even in number exceed in bulk what the China has given ; and *secondly*, it flushes oftener. The infusion of tea made from the indigenous species is far more 'rasping' and 'pungent' than what the China plant can give, and the tea commands a much higher price. The young leaves, from which alone tea is made, are of a much finer and softer texture in the indigenous than in the China ; the former may be compared to satin, the latter to leather. The young leaves of the indigenous, moreover, do not harden so quickly as those of the China ; thus, if there is any unavoidable delay in picking a flush, the loss is less with the former. In the fact that unpruned or unpicked plants (for picking is a miniature pruning) give fewer and less succulent young leaves, which harden quicker than pruned ones, the two varieties would seem to be alike. The China variety is much more prolific of seed than the indigenous ; the former also gives it when younger, and, as seed checks leaf, the China is inferior in this as in other respects. The China is by far the hardier plant ; it is much easier to rear, and it will grow in widely differing climates, which the indigenous will not."

It is, however, but rarely that a pure plant of either species is now seen in cultivation, planters having

adopted almost universally one or other of the various hybrids; and the first question a new planter has to decide, after he has cleared his land, is which variety he will select to stock his estate. Having made his selection, he will sow his seed either on the spot where his plantation is to be, or in a nursery, and transplant the young plants later. The plants should be in rows about four and a half feet apart. These have to be manured and pruned, and carefully attended to for three years, when the young plants begin to yield; and if the manager is skilful, and all go well, the yield may be large enough to cover expenses by about the fifth or sixth year.

The first operation in the manufacture of tea is naturally that of picking the leaf; only the young succulent leaves from fresh shoots are of use for the purpose, and from them the different grades are made according to their development—thus, on a shoot of six leaves, the two smallest and youngest will make Orange Pekoe, the next two Pekoe, and the two oldest and largest Pekoe Souchong or Souchong. It has, however, been found impracticable to keep the different sized leaves separate at the time of picking, and all are gathered at once and manufactured together, and afterwards sorted, as we shall describe later. When the

leaf is brought in by the pickers it is carefully weighed; if the weather is wet allowance is made for the moisture, and then spread out to wither in light bamboo trays, arranged one over the other in houses open to the air on all sides, but covered at the top to keep out rain; here it remains until on a handful being taken up and squeezed, it no longer makes a crackling noise when held to the ear or expands when released. The tea is then ready for the rolling process, and for this purpose the withered leaves are next spread out on a strong deal table covered with matting, and a line of men formed on each side, who roll the leaf with their hands, constantly passing it in handfuls from hand to hand until sufficiently rolled, when it is made into balls and placed on an adjacent stand to undergo the process of fermentation. The time occupied for this process varies from many causes, being quicker in warm than in cold weather; but it may generally be regarded as completed when the leaves composing the ball are half of them a rusty red and half of them green. The tea is then ready for sunning, and the ball should be immediately broken open and the tea spread out very thin on mats and exposed to the sun for about an hour; it is then ready for the final process of firing, and for that purpose it is placed in a series of drawers above a

clear charcoal fire, so arranged that they can be taken out from time to time during the process to shake up their contents ; this process is continued until the tea has become dry and crisp, and then the manufacture is complete. It only now remains to separate the different classes already noted, which is done by sifting through cane sieves with meshes of various sizes, the first allowing only the youngest and smallest leaves—with which there is usually a large proportion of tips—to pass through, which makes Orange Pekoe ; the next allows the Pekoe to pass through ; next the Pekoe Souchong, and then the Souchong is left. After that, to pack the tea as rapidly as possible, soldering down the lead so that it should be air-tight, and preserve the aroma and flavour of the tea during its voyage to England.

In most estates now, however, this old-fashioned method of manufacture by hand has been superseded by the introduction of most ingenious machinery, effecting a vast saving of time and labour. The following is a description of one of the most modern processes :—

"The tea, when gathered, is placed in what is called a 'cyclone withering and drying machine,' which consists of a rotating drum with an exhaust and force fan working in an opposite direction in the interior; it is ingeniously designed to supersede the slow process

of drying by spreading out in the heat of the sun or in a hot chamber. In the exterior of the drum are two doors and two steam passages. The tea having been placed in the interior, the door is fastened. As the leaf tosses about, the hot air from the fan plays upon it, exposing each separate leaf to equal heat. To avoid friction, and at the same time obviate the necessity of using lubricating oil, the fan revolves on a packing of asbestos and plumbago. When, in five minutes, the leaves are taken out, they have that kid-glove feeling which indicates that the withering process is completed. The leaves taken out of the bottom of the drum are conveyed to the 'green withered leaf cutting machine,' which possesses the great advantage over chopping with a knife, that not only is it much quicker but there is a saving of between 40 and 50 per cent. in the amount of loss through drying. The leaves fall from a hopper over a roller, and in between two more cylinders, which cut the leaves into the requisite size of square. The leaves gathered from underneath are placed in a canvas bag and fixed in what is designated 'the link and lever tea-rolling machine,' where the bag revolves between a ribbed central drum and sides.

"The exterior of the latter is composed of staves, which, by an ingenious and powerful application of the

lever principle, can be drawn tight or expanded, in order to produce the desired pressure. Eighty pounds of tea can be rolled at one time. Emptied out of the bag, the leaves are placed in zinc-bottomed drawers, which are fitted into tight-fitting grooves in a chamber exposed to hot air. The stove is of a novel design. Any kind of fuel can be burned, as the vapour arising therefrom does not penetrate to the interior. The atmospheric air entering from underneath, is conveyed through perpendicular pipes, which throughout their length are alternately contracted and expanded, giving them the appearance of a turned pillar. By the heat from the fire being directed so as to strike on the upper end of the pipes, a thorough draught is created, while by an economical arrangement the heat, after passing through the leaves, is conveyed in a pipe and serves as the hot-air supply of the withering machine.

"For the sorting of the dried leaves is provided a unique circular-motion sifting machine, which possesses the advantage of being self-delivering and of separating the tea into the various qualities. There are four sieves. The tea, after being rubbed over the upper sieve by hand, falls, by the action of the machine, into No. 2 sieve, where the Souchong is deposited, while on the lower sieves respectively, Pekoe, Pekoe Souchong and

Orange Pekoe remain, the dust falling through beneath. After having been again dried, the tea is packed for the market."

The following are the principal grades of Indian tea :—

FLOWERY PEKOE.	PEKOE SOUCHONG.
ORANGE PEKOE.	SOUCHONG.
PEKOE.	CONGOU.

The various broken kinds, viz. :—

BROKEN PEKOE.	BROKEN SOUCHONG.
PEKOE DUST.	FANNINGS.
BROKEN MIXED TEA.	DUST.

Flowery Pekoe is picked from the shrub entirely separate from the other descriptions of tea, only the buds and young leaves being taken. In the preparation it is not subjected so severely to the action of heat, and generally preserves a uniform silvery grey tint. It usually possesses intense strength and pungency, with exquisite penetrating flavour.

Pekoe is a tea of blackish or greyish blackish appearance, dotted over with greyish or yellowish tips which, on close inspection, will be found to possess the downy appearance which gives the name to Pekoe. In general, we do not find the whole leaf covered with down, but only the ends. Pekoes should be of good to fine flavour and of great strength.

When the Pekoe tips are very numerous and of golden orange hue, and the leaf is very small and even, the tea is called Orange Pekoe. In flavour it is much the same as the finest Pekoes, and many growers do not separate the two varieties.

The term Pekoe Souchong is applied to that large and serviceable class of tea intermediate with Pekoe and Souchong, and sometimes to a Pekoe that is deficient in Pekoe tips, or to a bold Souchong-class leaf, with a few ends mixed. In liquor they are generally stronger but coarser than Pekoes.

The name of Broken Pekoe indicates at once what the tea is, namely, Pekoe which has been broken in the manipulation or otherwise. It possesses more strength than the full leaf of Pekoe, and is often of finer quality. Owing to the brittleness of the tender Pekoe ends, they are sometimes broken off in very large quantity, thus adding to the value of the broken Pekoe, though at the same time deteriorating the Pekoe.

Pekoe dust is still smaller broken, so small, in fact, as actually to resemble dust. It is of great strength.

Souchongs should have a bold, even, straight, or slightly curved leaf, in length varying say from half-an-inch to one-and-a-half inches. They have not the quality of Pekoe, but are generally of good strength.

Congou may be either a leaf of Souchong kind, but too large to come under that class, or a smaller leaf, too unevenly made or too much curled (so as to resemble little balls) to be so classified. The flavour is much the same as that of Souchong, but the tea usually has not so much strength.

We now come to the broken descriptions of these middle and lower classes of tea.

Broken Mixed Tea is, as its name imports, a mixture of the various kinds of tea broken. It may have a very wide range, include some of the lower classes, or approach Broken Pekoe in character and value.

The term Broken Souchong is commonly applied to a tea which, though broken, has some approach to a full leaf of the Souchong or Pekoe Souchong character.

Fannings is a term of great comprehensiveness. It may be of a brownish, brownish-blackish, or blackish colour. Its strength is seldom great, but its flavour may be fair or good, but in the lower qualities it is generally poor, thin, or coarse.

Dust is usually of intense strength, but often very coarse or "earthy" in flavour, owing, perhaps, to sweepings and dust having become mixed with it.

Another class of Indian Tea, not mentioned in the foregoing list, is known as the "Namuna" kind. All readers of these pages who have been connected with India at any time will recognise the word, meaning a "sample" in Hindustani, though they may not quite see how it comes to occupy the position in which we consider it. It is said that its first application in this manner arose from a planter having sent to England some sample boxes of tea with the ticket "Namuna" on them. These teas happened to be of the peculiar description which now goes by that name. The London brokers being unacquainted with the signification of the word, have always since then applied the name "Namuna" to this class of tea. These teas are made from unfermented leaf, as is the case with China Oolongs and Greens. The leaf is generally of a dark olive-green. In the pot it produces a very pale liquor, but its quality belies the poor, thin appearance of the infusion. It is very pungent and penetrating in flavour, possessing somewhat of the rasping catch of the Green Tea class with the flavour a little refined. The outturn is generally green, sometimes with some brownish leaves mixed. Any of the black-leaf teas may be of this class, from the Pekoe to the lowest dust. These teas are often called "Indian Oolongs," or "Indian Mandarin Pekoes."

INDIAN TEA DISTRICTS.

THE principal Tea-growing districts of India are as follows :—

1. Assam.
2. The Dehra Dhoon.
3. Kumaon (Himalayas).
4. Darjeeling (Himalayas).
5. Cachar and Sylhet.
6. Kangra (Himalayas).
7. Hazareebaugh.
8. Chittagong.
9. Terai (below Darjeeling).
10. Neilgherries (Madras Hills).
11. Western Dooars.

These are enumerated in the order in which they became Tea districts, and in that order we shall now proceed to glance at them *seriatim*, and note the leading characteristics of the produce of each.

ASSAM.—This is the principal home of the indigenous Indian Plant ; it has the advantages of good soil and good climate, and the vast river Burhampootra, which runs through Assam from end to end, gives an easy mode of export for the Tea. The supply of labour is the chief

difficulty with which Assam planters have to contend, as they are almost entirely dependent on imported coolies.

The principal estates in this district are—

Amgoorie Estate, 1,100 acres ... ... Mark A B & D

The Assam Tea Co.'s Estates, 7,517 acres „ Am. Co.

Buchanan & Co.'s Estates ... ... „ B&CO

Bishnath Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,491 acres „ B T C L

Brahmapootra Tea Co.'s Estates, 2,082 acres ... ... Mark S or S B

Doom Dooma Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,527 acres ... ... Mark D D C

Jorehaut Tea Co.'s Estates, 3,860 acres „ J T C L

Land Mortgage Bk. Estates, 1,000 acres „ L M B

Mungledye Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,500 acres „ M D T C

Noahacharee Tea Co.'s Estates, 2,000 acres.

Marks— { "Kakajan," "Rajoi," "Lahing," "Debrapar," "Teok."

Scottish Assam Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,000 acres ... ... Mark

Singlo Estate, 1,000 acres... ... „ Singlo.

R. Gordon, Shaw & Co.'s Estates, 2,573 acres ... ... „

Upper Assam Tea Co.'s Estates, 2,155 acres ... ... „

The principal general characteristics of the Assam Teas are strength, body and grip.

Dehra Dhoon.—The Climate of this district is most unfavourable, and the great distance from the coast renders transport difficult and expensive; labour, however, is cheap and plentiful.

The principal estates in the district are—

The Dehra Dhoon Tea Company's Estates, 1,000 acres ... ... Mark D D T Co.

Kawlaghir Estate, 500 acres „ An Elephant.

Dehra Dhoon Teas are usually very undesirable, being thin and baky.

KUMAON.—The soil of this hilly district is remarkably rich, but the climate is too bracing for the growth of good teas ; labour is plentiful, but transport is very expensive. The China plant is chiefly cultivated in this locality.

The estates in the district are mostly small (under 100 acres) ; the largest are—

Mulla Kuthyoor Estate, 500 acres ... Mark

Kousanie Tea Company's Estates, 350 acres ,, K T Co.

Kumaon Teas, as a rule, draw light, brisk, pungent liquors.

DARJEELING.—This is another hill district, the elevation of the station being 6,900 feet ; the climate is better than Kumaon, there being more rain in spring. Transport to Calcutta by rail is easy ; the plants, with few exceptions, are grown from Chinese seed.

The gardens are numerous, but many of them are very small. Amongst the principal estates are—

The Darjeeling Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,600 acres ... ... Mark

Gen. Fyers & Dr. Brougham's Estates, 900 acres... ... ... Mark

AND

AND

Kurseong and Darjeeling Tea Co.'s Estates, 800 acres ... ... } Mark { K A

Land Mortgage Bank of India Estates, 1,720 acres ... ... ,,

Lebong Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,000 acres... ,,

Sungma Tea Co.'s Estates, 600 acres ... ,, Sungma

Testa Valley Tea Co.'s Estates, 600 acres ,,

Tuckvar Co.'s Estates, 850 acres ... ,,

Darjeeling Teas are noted for their aroma and flavour.

CACHAR AND SYLHET.—These districts are virtually but one, and the climate differs but little from that of Assam ; there is more rain in the spring, but the soil is poorer. Water transport to Calcutta is good.

British Indian Tea Co.'s Estates, 650 acres...	Mark	B I T CO.
Buchanan & Co.'s & Chargola Tea Co.'s Estates, 8,500 acres	„	B CO
Central Cachar Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,200 acres	„	C.C. Tea Co. Ld.
Chandypore Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,000 acres...	„	Chandypore Tea Co., Ld. C. & B.
Cherra Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,500 acres...	„	Pathecherra Anchor
Eastern Cachar Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,500 acres	„	E CTCLD.
Endogram Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,000 acres...	„	Endogram
Land Mortgage Bank Estates, 1,700 acres...	„	L M B
Loobah Tea Co.'s Estates, 1,500 acres	„	Loobah L
Scotpore Tea Co.'s Estates, 2,200 acres	„	S. T. Co.

Silcoorie Tea Garden, 2,000 acres ... Mark CCL

South Sylhet Tea Co.'s Estates, 2,000 acres ... ... ,, SCCI

Tarrapore Tea Co.'s Estates, 2,000 acres ... ... ,,

Cachar Teas, as a rule, are very similar to the Assam kinds, but usually have less body, but more point.

KANGRA.—This is a charming valley, but too dry and cold for a perfect tea climate. The soil is fairly good, and local labour plentiful. Transport to Calcutta is difficult, but much of the tea grown here finds a market amongst the tribes of Central Asia.

The gardens in the Kangra Valley are all small, the principal being—

The Kangra Valley Tea Co.'s Estates, 300 acres ... ... Mark

The Holta Tea Co.'s Estates, 500 acres Mark H. T. Co., LD.

The fine teas of this district have a peculiarly delicate flavour, and are much esteemed by some tasters.

HAZAREEBAUGH.—The climate of this district is too dry to be favourable for tea growing, the soil is poor and transport is difficult; labour, however, is very abundant and economical.

There are but few estates, the principal being—

Ihoomra Estates, 200 acres ... Mark J T C

Mowdie Hill Co.'s Estates, 172 acres ,, M. H. Co.

Rambugh Tea Co.'s Estates, 350 acres ... ... ,, R T CO LD.

CHITTAGONG.—This district has for the most part good soil, some tracts being exceedingly rich; there is a plentiful supply of local labour and great advantages for transport.

The principal estates are—

Chandpore Estate, 500 acres ... Mark Tea Chandpore M.M. & CO Estate Chittagong.

Futticherri Tea Estate, 353 acres Mark W. L. M. C.

Kornafuli Association's Estates, 1,100 acres ... ... ,, Kornafuli.

Sungoo River Tea Co.'s Estates, 450 acres ... ... Mark

Chittagong Teas, as a rule, possess great body and strength.

TERAI.—Soil and climate are good for tea, but unhealthy; labour is a difficulty.

The principal estates are—

Central Terai Tea Co.'s Estates, 350 acres ... ...Mark Central Terai.

Indian Terai Tea Co.'s Estates, 300 acres ... ... ,,

Naxalbarrie Estate, 220 acres ... ... ,,

Ord Terai Tea Estate, 220 acres ... ... Mark

TERAI Tea Estate, 200 acres ... Mark M. & M. Terai.

Terai Teas are usually on Darjeeling in character.

NEILGHERRIES.—The climate of this district is too temperate for large produce, but the soil is excellent.

The marks of the principal estates are :—

B. & D.	K. T. E.
W. L. K. In a Pineapple.	Nagamally Travancore Estate.
Seaforth.	Nonsuch Estate.

Many of the best estates now turn out teas resembling Ceylons in character.

WESTERN DOOARS.—The soil and climate of this new district are both excellent, and there are great facilities for railway transport.

The principal estates are :—

Bagracote Tea Co.'s Estates, 800 acres	Mark	Bagracote.
Dooars Tea Co.'s Estates, 600 acres	,,	Bamandanga.
Leesh River Co.'s Estates, 400 acres	,,	LEESH.
Phoolbarrie Tea Co.'s Estates, 650 acres	,,	PHOOL.

CEYLON TEA.

THE development of Ceylon as a tea-producing country has been almost sensational in its suddenness. It had long been known that the tea plant grew wild in the island, and at the beginning of the present century Percival, in his "Account of Ceylon," refers to it as follows:—"The tea-plant has been discovered native in the forests of Ceylon. It grows spontaneously in the neighbourhood of Trincomalee and other northern parts of Ceylon. I have in my possession a letter from an officer of the 80th Regiment, in which he states that he found the real tea plant in the woods of Ceylon of a quality equal to any that ever grew in China."

The attention of the Ceylon planters was, however, devoted almost exclusively to the growing of coffee, and no attempt was made to turn tea to profitable account until the outbreak of the leaf disease amongst the coffee plants caused widespread ruin throughout the island. Then certain enterprising spirits made experiments as to whether tea could not be made a

profitable alternative crop to coffee, and undreamt-of success resulted; the shrubs produced larger and more frequent flushes than could be obtained in Indian gardens; and the teas, produced at a very low cost, sold in London at prices that showed handsome profits to the growers. Naturally, tea-growing was taken up on every hand everywhere in the island; on the hills as well as in the low country. Fresh estates are still being cleared and planted with tea, and old coffee estates which have ceased to be remunerative are having the coffee plants rooted up to make room for its more profitable new rival; and on the virgin soil of the island the plants not only produce teas of the highest quality, but are prolific to an unprecedented extent, the out-turn per acre in some special cases being put down at no less than 1,500 lbs. per acre.

The following figures, giving the exports of tea from Colombo during the last nineteen years, show the marvellous expansion of the Ceylon tea trade in that short period:—

Tea Exported from Oct. 1st,	1874,	to Sept. 30th,	1875..			*nil*
"	"	"	1875	"	1876..	282 lbs.
"	"	"	1876	"	1877..	1,775 "
"	"	"	1877	"	1878..	3,515 "
"	"	"	1878	"	1879..	81,595 "
"	"	"	1879	"	1880..	103,624 "

Tea Exported from Oct. 1st, 1880, to Sept. 30th, 1881..						277,590 lbs.
"	"	"	1881	"	1882..	623,292 "
"	"	"	1882	"	1883..	1,522,882 "
"	"	"	1883	"	1884..	2,262,539 "
"	"	"	1884	"	1885..	3,796,684 "
"	"	"	1885	"	1886..	7,170,329 "
"	"	"	1886	"	1887..	12,013,686 "
"	"	"	1887	"	1888..	20,755,779 "
"	"	"	1888	"	1889..	32,516,682 "
"	"	"	1889	"	1890..	43,800,000 "
"	"	"	1890	"	1891..	60,300,000 "
"	"	"	1891	"	1892..	66,100,000 "
"	"	"	1892	"	1893..	71,200,000 "

The plants, or "Jât," from which the crop is raised, differ in the various estates. There are three main varieties of plants, viz., the Chinese, the Indian indigenous, and a hybrid obtained by crossing the two.

To the variety of the plants and to the difference in soil and elevation, and to the system of plucking adopted, whether fine, medium, or coarse, the distinguishing characteristics of the product of the various estates are mainly due, as the method of manufacture by machinery is now almost universally adopted.

The teas from most of the estates are divided, in a similar manner to Indian varieties, into the following grades :—

ORANGE PEKOE .. .. .. BROKEN ORANGE PEKOE ..	the youngest and smallest leaves, with golden orange tip.
PEKOE .. .. BROKEN PEKOE	young leaf, closely rolled, usually well tipped.

PEKOE SOUCHONG	the more mature leaves, carefully made.
BROKEN PEKOE SOUCHONG	
SOUCHONG	mature leaves, more roughly made.
BROKEN TEA	

And sometimes—

CONGOU	oldest, roughest leaf.
PEKOE FANNINGS and PEKOE DUST	names sufficiently descriptive.

The prices obtained for these various qualities vary greatly according to the characteristics of each particular parcel. The teas from the more celebrated estates, such as Hoolankande, Loolcondura, Blackstone, etc., command very extreme rates, but an expert taster may often find teas of equal quality from less known estates at much lower prices than the crack marks are fetching.

As regards the value of Ceylons for blending purposes, we may say that, as a rule, they are matchless for fullness of body and richness of flavour, but they lack the strength and grip of many Indian varieties. Their qualities render them more valuable for drinking unmixed than for blending, and those retailers who are doing the largest trade in Ceylon teas are selling them unmixed as a speciality, and find their superb quality thoroughly appreciated by the consumer.

The following is a list of the principal estates on

the island. It includes all from which we received one hundred thousand pounds of tea and upwards during 1888 :—

L. (low) represents from sea-level up to 1,000 feet.
M. (medium) 1,000 to 2,500 feet.
H.M. (high medium) 2,500 to 3,500 feet.
H. (high) 3,500 to 5,000 feet.
And HH. (highest) above 5,000 feet.

K. A. W.	H.M.	about	510,000	lbs.
Mariawatte	M.	"	302,000	"
Vellai-Oya (E. P. & E. C.)	H.M.	"	233,000	"
Tillyrie	H.	"	220,000	"
Wallaha	H.	"	219,000	"
Imboolpittia	M.	"	185,000	"
Waltrim	H.	"	180,000	"
Darrawella (O. B. E. C.)	H.	"	179,000	"
Gallamudena	M.	"	170,000	"
Kandaloya	M.	"	163,000	"
Lebanon, Middleton and Leangolla	H.M.	"	160,000	"
Pambagama	L.	"	155,000	"
Gallebodde	M.	"	150,000	"
Westhall	H.M.	"	150,000	"
Fordyce	H.	"	145,000	"
Blackwater	M.	"	143,000	"
Hope (E. P. & E. C.)	H.	"	141,000	"
Elbedde	H.	"	141,000	"
Rookwood	HH.	"	137,000	"
Dunedin	L.	"	134,000	"
Abbotsford	H.	"	134,000	"
Elston	L.	"	128,000	"
Great Western	H.	"	125,000	"
Meddecombra (E. P. & E. C.)	H.	"	119,000	"
Sogama (E. P. & E. C.)	H.M.	"	117,000	"

W. A.	—	about	111,000 lbs.
Labukelle (E. P. & E. C.)	H.	"	111,000 "
Penylan	M.	"	109,000 "
Yuillefield	H.	"	108,000 "
Campion	H.	"	107,500 "
Windsor Forest	M.	"	106,000 "
Mipitiakande	L.	"	103,000 "
Adam's Peak	H.	"	103,000 "
Dewalakanda	L.	"	101,000 "
Chapelton	H.	"	100,000 "

The following five-and-twenty estates had the honour of securing the highest average prices for their teas during 1888 :—

Hoolookande ..	H.	Deyanella	H.
Charley Valley ..	H.	Rahatunagoda ..	H.
Alnwick	H.	Tasmania	H.
Blackstone	M.	Wallakelly ..	H.
Loolecondera ..	H.	Albion	H.
Portswood	HH.	Goatfell	H.
Sheen	H.	Soguma	H.M.
Glendoven	H.	Waverley	H.
Bogawantalawa ..	H.	Agrakande	H.
Glenngie	H.	Craigre Lee ..	H.
Hope	H.	Errol	H.
Hurdagalla	M.	Gorthie	H.
Chapelton	H.		

JAPAN AND JAVA TEAS, &c.

JAPAN TEAS.—The principal produce of Japan is unfermented natural leaf tea of the Oolong character, chiefly for the American market. These teas draw a pale, fine liquor with point, but lack strength and colour; small quantities of black tea are also prepared, which sometimes show fine quality, but on account of their peculiar aroma and flavour they find little favour with blenders in this country; the finer kinds are usually marked "Japan Pekoe," and the lower kinds, "Japan Congou."

JAVA TEAS.—The aim of the tea-planters of Java has been almost exclusively to secure a large out-turn per acre and a beautiful leaf: in both these they have succeeded, the produce per acre being nearly double that of the Indian gardens, and their finest teas being the most beautiful the world produces; unfortunately, however, quality in the cup has been almost entirely neglected, consequently their teas enjoy an evil

reputation with blenders, the general run being thin, baky and earthy, and some of the lowest kinds are so sour and nasty as to ruin any blend, however sparingly introduced. Of late years, however, some estate managers appear to have realised the wisdom of aiming at a higher standard of quality; seed has been imported from India, and improvements in cultivation and manufacture have been introduced with most beneficial results; but, for some years to come, Java teas will have to be very cautiously handled by blenders, and probably the wiser and safer course is to let them entirely alone, as the common grades are worse than useless, and, as a rule, even the better kinds rapidly "go off" if kept.

The classes of Java tea are as follows:—

Whole-Leaf Kinds.	Broken Kinds.
Flowery Pekoe.	Broken Flowery Pekoe.
Pekoe.	Broken Pekoe.
Pekoe Souchong.	Pekoe Dust.
Souchong.	Fannings.
Congou.	Broken Tea.
Bohea.	Dust.

The chests used to be papered in a somewhat similar manner to Chinese packages, but on many estates they are now being made plain, resembling Indian chests.

Small consignments of tea from the Straits Settlements and from North Borneo have recently been placed on the market; they resemble a low grade of Indian tea, and are of little importance at present.

Tea is also being grown experimentally in Natal—the first consignment of some 500 lbs. reaching London in May, 1886—in South Russia, Italy, and other countries, but at present these are mere experiments, and have no effect commercially. Should any of them eventually take a place amongst the ingredients from which the tea-blender has to make his selection, it will be our duty to deal with them in a future edition of this work.

For the present, however, we have completed the first portion of our task, and have set forth the produce of the various countries from which our tea-blender has to make his selection, and having noted the characteristics of the leading varieties, we shall now proceed to lay down the general principles by which the composition of a successful blend must be guided.

TEA BLENDING.

TEA BLENDING.

It has now become so entirely a matter of course with the trade to blend several kinds of tea together, before offering them to consumers, that it is somewhat astonishing to reflect how recent is the growth of this practice. When tea was first introduced, the kinds were few, and it found its way to the public in leaf or in infusion through the coffee-houses, duty being levied on the infusion at the rate of 8d. per gallon; and from Garway's time till within the last forty or fifty years the bulk of the imports found its way into the housewife's tea-pot unmixed, or, if mixing were done, it was done by the good lady herself, who would have by her some fine Flowery Pekoe or choice Gunpowder to add to her Bohea or Souchong on great occasions.

It was not, indeed, until Indian teas came fully on to the market that the practice of blending became universal. Their great strength was a valuable quality,

which would not allow them to be ignored; while, on the other hand, their harshness made them unacceptable to the public by themselves; hence they were mixed with China teas, at first in small proportions, but, as the production increased, and improved cultivation and manufacture removed many of the objectionable qualities possessed by some of the earlier imports, the proportion of Indian tea used became larger and larger, until to-day more than half of the total of tea consumed in this country is supplied by India, and in many districts China teas have virtually gone out of consumption.

As tea-blending became more and more general, the producers, especially in India, gradually ceased to aim at turning out teas which should possess a combination of qualities rendering them suitable for drinking by themselves, and became specialists aiming to secure for their teas some one striking and distinctive quality; thus one strove to produce tea which should draw liquor of very dark colour; another, to secure a delicately fine aroma and flavour; a third, to secure intense pungency, and so on, leaving the skilled blender at home to select and combine the various growths in a manner best calculated to suit the water of his district and the taste of his customers.

The cause of the failure of many retailers to work up a successful and profitable tea trade lies, beyond doubt, in the fact that their blends are unskilfully compounded, many of them undertaking the composition of blends without possessing the requisite knowledge of the properties of the various classes of tea, or the lines on which they should be combined; and thus through the neglect of many, even of the biggest buyers, to go into the matter scientifically, immense quantities of good teas are annually spoilt, and men are heard complaining that although they cut their teas desperately close they cannot keep their trade together.

The chief objects to keep in view in making up a blend are that it shall come out well in the water in which it is to be infused, and that it shall possess a flavour which shall please the taste of your customers, and at the same time be sufficiently distinctive to make the blend your own speciality, and he who secures these objects at the least cost will be the most successful blender.

The first consideration, then, is the nature of the water-supply of your district; if it contains lime and other minerals in solution it is termed "hard," and such water fails to draw out the characteristics of fine

teas, and strong, rough kinds have to be employed. In "soft" water, however, all that is in the tea comes out, and the strong, rough kinds, suitable for hard water, taste coarse and rank, and the fine flavoury kinds are more suitable.

The following is a list of some of the leading classes of tea most suitable for the different kinds of water:—

For "Hard" Water:—

Moning kinds	Oonfaa (*strong, tarry tea*).
Kaisow kinds	Saryune (*rich, brisk, strong, blood-red liquor*). Padrae (*strong, rough, high burnt*). Ankoi (*similar to Padrae, but not so desirable, as they often taste "bakey"*).
New District Teas ..	Hoyunes (*blood-red colour, intense strength, often tarry*).
Indian Teas	All strong, pungent, rasping kinds. Brokens especially useful.

For "Medium" Water:—

Moning kinds	Oonfaa (*strong, tarry tea*). Oopack (*strong, brisk*).
Kaisow kinds	Saryune (*rich, strong, blood-red liquor*). Soo Moo (*rich, Souchong flavoured*). Panyung or Ching Wo (*the finest of all red-leaf teas*).
New District Teas ..	Pekoe and Honeysuckle Congous.
Indian Teas	All strong, rich, pungent kinds.
Ceylon Teas	Nearly all kinds.

For "Soft" Water:—

Moning kinds	Kintuck Keemun Ning Chow	*Three most desirable kinds.* *Fine flavoury teas.*
Kaisow kinds	Panyong or Ching Wo (*the finest of all red-leaf teas*). Paklin (*in boxes, fresh and fine*).	
New District Teas ..	Honeysuckle Congous.	
Indian Teas	All fine flavoury kinds. Darjeeling and Kangra Valley growths, very useful.	
Ceylon Teas	All kinds.	

The next point to consider, after the nature of the water of your district, is the taste of the customers for whom you intend to cater. The taste of the consumer varies very considerably, according to the district, and to a great extent this taste must be followed by the man who intends to work up a big trade. Certain bold spirits, however, finding the taste of their district to be, in their opinion, vitiated by an excessive use of Scented Caper or other breach of the laws of good blending, have made it their study to educate and elevate the taste of their customers, and have achieved success; this is, however, an arduous and slow process, and most retailers of tea will probably prefer the simpler

method of falling in with the prevailing taste of their customers at first, and introducing improvements from time to time as they see their opportunity; but the danger in this course is that our blender may allow his teas to sink into a dead level with those of his neighbours, without distinctive character or quality; and this brings us to the third and, perhaps, most important essential of good blending, namely, the necessity of your blend being sufficiently distinctive to make it your own speciality. This can be always done, where necessary, within the lines of the taste prevailing in your district; but where there is a freer scope, by reason of more varied taste, as in London or other large centres, the blender has a much wider range from which to select his special flavour and style; and thus we find, on examining the teas of the leading London retail tea-men, hardly any two of them are composed upon the same lines, the aim of each being to make a blend differing from that which his customers would obtain from other sources, knowing that when once they had become used to his tea, provided it was really good, and pleased with its distinctive flavour, their custom would be assured to him. This is the secret of the success of most of the well-known blends and blenders, and it is a point too often utterly ignored

by grocers, but which must be most carefully attended to by them if they mean to retain and increase their tea trade.

Our readers may, perhaps, imagine, after all this caution and exhortation, that tea-blending is an art too complicated to be mastered by a man who has the details of a large and varied business on his hands, and that after all he may have to fall back either on the old haphazard system or lose the best of his profits and put his trade in the hands of others by having recourse to the system of buying blended tea; this, however, is not by any means the case. Put practically, the matter will appear very simple.

First ascertain the nature of your water-supply, next the composition of the blends which are most extensively going into consumption in your district, then experiment with the teas we have indicated as most suitable for your water to improve on the said blends, and finally introduce some ingredient into your blend that shall differentiate it from those of your neighbour. There are many ways of doing this; some particular mark of Assam, or some particular class of Assam, say an Autumnal or Namuna Tea, some particular Scented or Oolong Tea, or some combination of these or other flavours, make a practically endless

series of distinctive characteristics which may be imparted to your teas.

To make the matter still more simple, we shall lay before you particulars of several specimen blends, which are not intended so much to be exactly imitated as to indicate the lines upon which practical blending may be most advantageously carried on.

The various ingredients of your blend being selected, your next care must be to get them thoroughly assimilated; this is best effected, in the first place, by the use of a good tea mixer, which will distribute the leaves of the various teas in a fairly even proportion throughout the bulk; but so far the assimilation will be merely mechanical, and necessarily, to a great extent, imperfect. To render the assimilation thorough and complete, the blend must now be put in air-tight canisters and allowed to remain in a room with as even a temperature as is obtainable for at least a week; by this time the interchange and combination of the flavour of the various ingredients will usually be accomplished, but in some instances it will be found advantageous to allow the blend to mature for a longer period.

The question of the appearance of your tea is one that should not be neglected, as although the remark "that tea is not sold to look at" is true enough, yet it

is remarkable to what extent people are prejudiced for or against a tea by its appearance. It will, therefore, be found desirable in most cases, and especially where teas of irregular appearance are used, to sift them before putting them into the mixer, to remove the large leaves, which should be cut to gauge in a tea mill, and then placed in the mixer with the rest of the blend; in some cases it may also be necessary to sift out the dust, but this is not recommended, as it is the best liquoring part of the tea.

Your blends are now ready for sale, and, of course, after they leave your hands, you, to a great extent, have no control over their fate, and the result of all your skill may after all be well-nigh spoilt by careless or improper brewing; therefore it is well to print clearly on every tea wrapper brief hints as to how tea ought to be made, in which the following points should be insisted on:—First, and of greatest importance, that the water should not be put on the tea until it is boiling, and that it should be put on the tea the minute it boils; water not quite boiling, or water that has been boiled some time, will spoil any tea; next it should not be allowed to stand under a cosy for an indefinite period; indeed, it is a great and far too common mistake in brewing tea to allow it to stand too long,—the first

five minutes bring out the quality, the next five minutes add to the body, and after that the longer it stands the worse it gets. These are the two most important points. It should, however, be known that there is nothing so good as an old-fashioned brown earthenware pot for making tea; next to that is a silver tea-pot.

SPECIMEN BLENDS.

SPECIMEN BLENDS.

The following specimen blends are of the simplest possible character, and are merely intended as a basis or guide for those commencing the work of scientific tea-blending. As the complexity of the blends increase, the possible variations become so numerous that it is obviously impracticable even to indicate them within the limits of such a work as the present, but to a practical man, keeping pace with the times, fresh developments and new combinations growing out of these foundations will constantly suggest themselves.

The lowest-priced teas usually sold by grocers to-day, ranging in price from 1s. to 1s. 4d., must be made up according to the fluctuations of the Mincing Lane Market from time to time; for the lowest, very decent Indians may sometimes be obtained at prices low enough to show a profit; at other times carefully selected Javas

must be substituted, and where admissible low price Scented Capers may be worked in to decrease the cost and increase pungency. A fraction of a penny in buying low-priced teas will often make all the difference between a good and a common tea; it is false economy to inflict nasty rubbish on your customers to save a farthing.

Specimen Blend No. 1.

Medium-priced tea. Principal ingredients:—

Flavoury Ceylon.

Rich Dooars.

Notes.—Above will make a strong, thick tea, will come out well in all waters.

Scented Orange Pekoe or Oolong can be used where desired.

Specimen Blend No. 2.

Medium-priced tea. Principal ingredients:—

Brisk Pungent Assam.

Rich Dooars.

Notes.—The above will, perhaps, be more taking than No. 1, in districts where the water is very hard.

Ouchaine-Scented tea, very useful for giving extra rasp and grip.

Specimen Blend No. 3.

Good medium tea (2s. canister). Principal ingredients :—

Flavoury Ceylon Pekoe.

Rich Dooars Pekoe.

Notes.—Well selected and carefully blended, the above should produce a rich, delicious tea.

May be flavoured with a dash of finest Oolong.

Specimen Blend No. 4.

Good medium tea (2s. canister). Principal ingredients :—

Fine Flavoury Pungent Assam Pekoe.

Rich Dooars Pekoe.

Note.—A grand liquoring tea for medium hard water, flavour with finest Oolong.

Specimen Blend No. 5.

Good medium tea (2s. canister). Principal ingredients :—

Hard Leaf Malty Strong Assam Pekoe (whole leaf or semi-broken).

Note.—Suitable for very hard water.

Scented Caper or Ouchaine Pekoe may be added.

Specimen Blend No. 6.

Fine to finest tea. Principal ingredients:—

Fine Ceylon Broken Pekoe.

Rich Dooars Pekoe.

Note.—Suitable for soft water.

Flavour with a very little of the finest Oolong.

Specimen Blend No. 7.

For fine to finest tea. Principal ingredients:—

Thick Ceylon Broken Pekoe.

Flavoury Assam Pekoe.

Note.—Suitable for medium water.

The character of this blend can be freely varied according to the class of Assam Pekoe used; if a very pungent kind is selected, no Scented tea should be used.

Specimen Blend No. 8.

For fine to finest tea. Ingredients:—

Assam Broken Pekoe (Jorehaut kind).

Ceylon Pekoe or Broken Pekoe (mountain grown tea).

Note.—For very hard water.

Oolong or Fine Namuna Pekoe may be used to give extra grip.

SUMMARY & CONCLUDING HINTS.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING HINTS.

The art of Tea-Blending is one which cannot be too thoroughly or too methodically studied by every Tea Dealer who wishes to make a position for himself in his trade.

The man who has really mastered it can defy all competition; by careful tasting he can buy as well as the large houses, and by making the characteristics of the water of his locality his special study, he can please his customers far better than any outsider can possibly do, however extensive his operations may be, and at the same time secure a good profit for himself.

The main principles of this art are easily laid down; their practical application must be a matter for the personal consideration of each blender, guided by the peculiar circumstances of each case.

It is of the utmost importance to select teas that will mix well; for instance, to put a fine flavoury tea to a coarse tea will deteriorate both, while to add it to a full, rich liquoring tea will improve both.

Desirable Indian Teas may be used very freely to give strength, point, and flavour, but sour or acrid Indians, or low Javas, should never under any circumstances be used.

Avoid unsound teas most rigorously; a tea with the least trace of mustiness or the least mousy flavour will spoil any blend.

Scented Teas are often used most unwisely; for ordinary purposes 1 lb. in 12, or even 1 lb. in 16, is quite sufficient to give the blend a distinctive flavour. Fine Oolong or Foo Chow Pekoe are the most desirable kinds.

Of course, this applies to ordinary trade; in the Caper districts people will sometimes drink a mixture of one part Caper, two parts pungent broken Assam, and appear to like it.

When the mixture is made up, it should be allowed to stand in air-tight canisters at least a week before it is sold, the flavour of the component parts thus assimilates. Remember—if your tea is allowed to stand near any strong smelling articles, it will absorb

their flavour; fine teas are often spoilt by contact with soap, cheese, or other items of a grocer's shop.

We would, in conclusion, repeat—be sure your blends have some distinctive flavour; let them always be the same style and always kept up to standard quality, so that people will learn to rely on them and come for them again and again; it is thus big businesses are built up.

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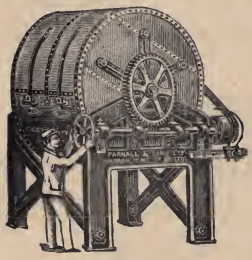

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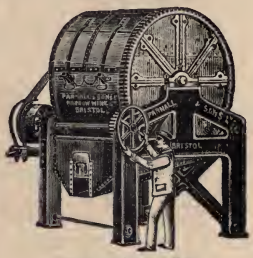

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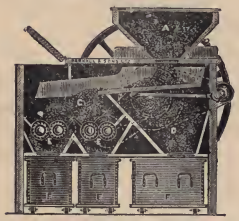

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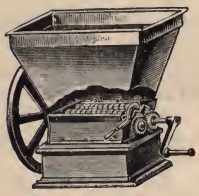

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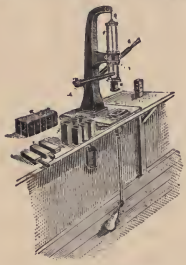

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