dependent on China for its tea supply, adulteration was rampant and multiform in the trade. Especially among green and fancy teas there was scarcely such a thing as an unsophisticated sample to be obtained. The Chinese were also expert in fabricating an artificial gunpowder—appropriately known as “lie tea,”—which consisted of the sweepings of tea warehouses artfully made up with a paste of rice water. Paddy husks and many kinds of leaves faced with China clay, soapstone, catechu, and black lead also found their way abundantly into tea. On the European side, exhausted leaves were again dried, impregnated with catechu and gum, and faced up to do duty as fresh tea, and the leaves of numerous plants —sloe-thorn, hawthorn, willow, beech, plane, *Epilobium angusti∙ folium,* &c*.—*were freely worked up as tea. Adulterated tea is now, however, comparatively rare, largely owing to the watchfulness of the customs authorities. Moreover, as it is nearly as cheap to make tea from the leaves of the tea-plant as from those of any other herb, there is not much incentive to substitute the false for the real.

At a very early period in the European history of tea the prob­able effects of its use on the health and morals of the population attracted jealous attention, and a great deal was written, mostly in a hostile sense, on the subject. In 1678 we find Mr Henry Savile writing to his uncle, Mr Secretary Coventry, in sharp reproof of certain friends of his “ who call for tea, instead of pipes and bottles after dinner,—a base unworthy Indian practice, which I must ever admire your most Christian family for not admitting.” And he adds, with an audible sigh, “ the truth is, all nations are growing so wicked as to have some of these filthy customs ! ” Some of the writers, however, although resolute for its banishment from the caddy, were willing to give it a place in the medicine chest. “Among many other novelties,” says a medical writer in 1722, “ there is one which seems to be particularly the cause of the hypochondriac disorders, and is generally known by the name of thea, or tea. It is a drug which of late years has very much insinuated itself, as well into our diet as regales and entertain­ments, though its occupation is not less destructive to the animal economy than opium, or some other drugs which we have at present learned to avoid.”@@1 Dr Lettsom was the first medical writer who gave the public a reasonable and scientific account of the plant ; but even he let the fear of its abuse run away with his judgment, asserting that “the first rise of this pernicious custom [that of drinking spirits to excess] is often owing to the weakness and debility of the system brought on by the daily habit of drinking tea ; the trembling hand seeks a temporary relief in some cordial, in order to refresh and excite again the enfeebled system, whereby such persons almost necessarily fall iuto a habit of intemperance.”@@2 Jonas Hanway (*Essay on Tea,* 1756) was among its most vigorous assailants. “ Men,” he says, “seem to have lost their stature and comeliness, and women their beauty What Shakespeare

ascribes to the concealment of love is in this age more frequently occasioned by the use of tea.” To these complaints echoes were not wanting, but after a while the tea-drinkers had it all their own way. In the meantime, however, tea was not without its apologists. To say nothing of our own familiar poets and essay­ists, its praises have been sung by Herrichen and by Franchis in Greek verses, by Pechlin in Latin epigrams, by Pierre Petit in a Latin poem of five hundred lines, and by a German versifier, who celebrates, in a fashion of his own, its “burial and happy resurrec­tion.”@@3 Huet, bishop of Avranches, has also paid his graceful tribute@@4 to a stimulant to which, probably, no scholar was ever more indebted, and which he continued to enjoy at the age of ninety. Dr Johnson draws his own portrait as “a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who for twenty years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant ; whose kettle had scarcely time to cool ; who with tea amused the evening, with tea solaced the midnight, and with tea welcomed the morning.”@@5

Authorities are not yet by any means agreed as to the exact physiological influence and value of tea. The very striking fact that theine is precisely the characteristic constituent of coffee, maté, guarana, and the kola nut, all substances eagerly sought after in different quarters of the globe, serves to show that the alkaloid satisfies some craving of the human system, although what its effect is has not yet been certainly determined. The quantity of theine consumed even by the most hardened tea-drinker is exceedingly minute, and there are not wanting authorities who assert that it is practically inert, an assertion surely contradicted by the general instinct of the race. What is indisputable about tea drinking is that it forms an agreeable means of imbibing the proportion of water necessary in human nutrition, which, being taken hot, com­

municates to the system a diffused warm glow. Further, as used by Western communities, it is a medium of taking, in the form of sugar and cream, no inconsiderable amount of real nutriment. The other effects of tea are more a matter of general impression than of ascertained scientific reality. Its virtues have nowhere been better summarized than by the earliest Chinese writer on the sub­ject, the above-mentioned Lo Yu, who says, “ It tempers the spirits and harmonizes the mind, dispels lassitude and relieves fatigue, awakens thought and prevents drowsiness, lightens or refreshes the body, and clears the perceptive faculties.” The gentle exhilaration which accompanies the moderate use of tea is not followed by the depression which succeeds the use of alcoholic stimuli. Experience has proved that it sustains the frame under severe muscular or mental exercise without causing subsequent exhaustion and collapse. Tea is frequently found to be beneficial to sufferers from nervous headache, and it counteracts to some extent the effects of alcohol and of opiates. Taken in excess it produces cerebral excitement, sleeplessness, and general nervous irritability. The tannin con­tained in its infusions also interferes with the flow of the saliva, diminishes the digestive activity of the stomach, and impedes the action of the bowels. In this view the large quantity of strong tea used by the poor—and especially by the sedentary poor,—while serving to blunt the keen tooth of hunger, must work incalculable havoc with the digestive and nervous systems of the consumers.

It is a remarkable fact that no mention of tea is made by Marco Polo, and that no knowledge of the substance appears to have reached Europe till after the establishment of intercourse between Portugal and China in 1517. The Portuguese, however, did little towards the introduction of the herb into Europe, and it was not till the Dutch established themselves at Bantam early in the 17th century that these adventurers learned from the Chinese the habit of tea drinking and brought it to Europe.

The earliest mention of tea by an Englishman is probably that contained in a letter from Mr Wickham, an agent of the East India Company, written from Firando in Japan, on the 27th June 1615, to Mr Eaton, another officer of the company, resident at Macao, and asking for “ a pot of the best sort of *chaw.*” How the com­mission was executed does not appear, but in Mr Eaton’s subse­quent accounts of expenditure occurs this item—“three silver porringers to drink chaw in.”

It was not till the middle of the century that the English began to use tea, and they also received their supplies from Java till in 1686 they were driven out of the island by the Dutch. At first the price of tea in England ranged from £6 to £10 per lb. In the *Mercurius Politicus,* No. 435, of September 1658, the following advertisement occurs:—“That excellent and by all Physitians approved China Drink called by the Chineans *Tcha,* by other nations *Tay, alias Tee,* is sold at the Sultaness Head, a cophee-house in Sweetings Rents, by the Royal Exchange, London.” Thomas Garway, the first English tea dealer, and founder of the well-known coffee-house, “ Garraway’s,” in a curious broadsheet, *An Exact De­scription of the Growth, Quality, and Virtues of the Leaf Tea,* issued in 1659 or 1660, writes, “ in respect of its scarceness and dearness, it hath been only used as a regalia in high treatments and enter­tainments, and presents made thereof to princes and grandees.” In that year he purchased a quantity of the rare and much-prized com­modity, and offered it to the public, in the leaf, at fixed prices vary­ing from 15s. to 50s. the lb, according to quality, and also in the infusion, “made according to the directions of the most knowing merchants and travellers into those eastern countries.” In 1660 an Act of the first parliament of the Restoration imposed a tax on “every gallon of chocolate, sherbet, and tea, made and sold, to be paid by the maker thereof, eightpence” (12 Car. II. c. 23).

Pepys’s often-quoted mention of the fact that on the 25th September 1660, “ I did send for a cup of tee, a China drink, of which I never had drunk before,” proves the novelty of tea in England at that date. In 1664 we find that the East India Company presented the king with 2 lb and 2 oz. of “thea,” which cost 40s. per lb, and two years afterwards with another parcel con­taining 22¾ lb, for which the directors paid 50s. per lb. Both parcels appear to have been purchased on the Continent. Not until 1677 is the Company recorded to have taken any steps for the importa­tion of tea. The order then given to their agents was for “ teas of the best kind to the amount of 100 dollars.” But their instruc­tions were considerably exceeded, for the quantity imported in 1678 was 4713 lb, a quantity which seems to have glutted the market for several years. The annals of the Company record that, in February 1684, the directors wrote thus to Madras:—“In regard thea 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 to send us yearly five or six canisters of the very best and freshest thea.” Until the Revolution no duty was laid on tea other than that levied on the infusion as sold in the coffee-houses. By 1 William and Mary c. 6, a duty of 5s. per lb and 5 per cent. on the value was imposed. For several years the quantities im­ported were very small, and consisted exclusively of the finer sorts. The first direct purchase in China was made at Amoy, the teas

@@@1 *An Essay on the Nature, Use, and Abuse of Tea,* 14, 15.

@@@2 Lettsom, *Natural History of the Tea-Tree,* 78.

@@@3 *Der Thee Begräbniss und glückliche Wiederauferstehung* [1680?].

@@@4 In the verses beginning—

“ I, puer, i, Theam confestim in pocula misce ; Urget non solitus lumina nostra sopor; Mens stupet ; obtusæ languent in corpore vires ; Languorem solvet vivida Thea novum.”—

Huetti *Commentarius de rebus ad eum pertinentibus,* 304.

@@@5 *Literary Magazine,* vol. ii., No. 13 (1757).