

The infusion of tea is the drink that everybody knows, and is commonly called "tea". The method of preparing tea, as recommended by De Blegny, will pass muster to-day. Boil some water and put in a sufficiency of the leaves, and let it stand five minutes (as De Blegny quaintly puts it, a third part of a quarter of an hour). For four large cupfuls of water use about a drachm of tea, and sweeten with sugar or syrup. Tea should be drunk while still hot, for if reheated it is as disagreeable as useless. For cups porcelain is preferred to metal, as with them the fingers are not burned. The pictures of the mandarin show that teacups had no handles in those days, as, indeed, they had not until much later. After infusing the tea long enough one will find that the leaves impart to the water a clear greenish yellow colour, and a taste and odour so agreeable that the violet and amber seem to have some part of it.

Other methods, not mentioned by De Blegny, of preparing tea may perhaps be mentioned in passing. In certain parts of Russia it is sweetened with jam. In northern Africa, and especially in Morocco, green tea is widely used, drunk hot out of glasses, almost saturated with sugar and flavoured with mint. In Austria rum is often put in tea instead of cream. Colonel Waddell, in his book *Lhasa and its Mysteries*, speaking of the Thibetan, says "As a beverage, he drinks all day long cupfuls of hot buttered tea, which is really a soup or broth made by boiling the leaves with rancid butter and balls of dough and adding a little salt, a decoction that was invariably nasty to our taste, though no doubt it is wholesome." We can agree that tea so made would be nasty, but can hardly endorse the Colonel's opinion as to its wholesomeness.

Returning to De Blegny, we note that tea can be used in forms other than the infusion, for example, as a distillate, in a syrup and extract, as salts, and even as a smoke. The devotees of tobacco should take warning, for we are told that, smoked in pipes, tea stimulates the brain, while tobacco weakens it.

Our author descants at some length on the medical aspects of the use of tea, though, in reading his treatise, we rather feel that he is at times prolix in the presentation of his thesis and uncritically enthusiastic as to the merits of tea. His physiology has a mediaeval ring, for the hand of Galen and Avicenna still lay heavy on medical thought, in spite of the fact that almost sixty years had passed since Harvey published his *De Motu Cordis*, the book that founded modern experimental medicine.

De Blegny enters upon a physiological disquisition upon sleep and wakefulness, in the old style. Tea can prevent sleep, but renders wakefulness supportable, and this is its chief and most