

"During this part of the operation, the hands of the workmen were quite blue. I could not help thinking that, if any green-tea drinkers had been present during the operation, their taste would have been corrected, and, I may be allowed to add, improved. It seems perfectly ridiculous that a civilized people should prefer these dyed teas to those of a natural green. No wonder that the Chinese consider the natives of the west to be a race of 'barbarians.'

"One day, an English gentleman in Shanghai, being in conversation with some Chinese from the green-tea country, asked them what reasons they had for dying the tea, and whether it would not be better without undergoing this process. They acknowledged that tea was much better when prepared without having any such ingredients mixed with it, and that they never drank dyed teas themselves; but justly remarked that, as foreigners seemed to prefer having a mixture of Prussian blue and gypsum with their tea, to make it look uniform and pretty, and as these ingredients were cheap enough, the Chinese had no objection to apply them, especially as such teas always fetched a higher price.

"I took some trouble to ascertain precisely the quantity of colouring matter used in the process of dying green teas, not certainly with the view of assisting others, either at home or abroad, in the art of coloring, but simply to show green-tea drinkers in England, and more particularly in the United States of America, what quantity of Prussian blue and gypsum they imbibe in the course of one year. To 14½ lbs. of tea were applied 8 mace 2½ candareens of colouring matter, or rather more than an ounce. In every hundred pounds of coloured green tea consumed in England or America, the consumer actually drinks more than half a pound of Prussian blue and gypsum! And yet, tell the drinkers of this coloured tea that the Chinese eat cats, dogs, and rats, and they will hold up their hands in amazement, and pity the poor Celestials."—*Fortune's Tea Districts of China and India.*

[We know a gentleman who had been a number of years in China, as a missionary, and who assured us he had seen great quantities of tea made green for the American market, in the manner described above. Gypsum (Plaster of Paris) is certainly cheap; but we are not aware of any other recommendation it possesses as an adjunct for tea. Prussian blue, that occasionally used in medicine, as arsenic also is, is unquestionably of a deleterious nature. There is abundant evidence that a very weak solution of it will not immediately kill; but the continued use of it, doubtless, tends to impair health, and perhaps ultimately to shorten life. There must be no disputing about tastes; but of most Canadian tea-pots we may say, in the language of the sacred record read "There is death in the pot"; and, we hope, we may add, also in the words of the Scripture 'Do thyself no harm.']

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