

Chinaman never exports his best tea—he keeps it for *himself*—for his mandarins and long-tailed celestial aristocracy generally; anything seems to him good enough to send out of the country for sale to foreigners, with whom he has no sympathy whatever, except to rake in their cash in the greatest quantities he can.

What John Chinaman cannot and does not keep for himself of the best quality or first growth of genuine tea is sent overland to Russia, where it commands a very high price, frequently ten times what it would average if sold in a Canadian or American city.

The second growth of Chinese tea, mixed with inferior and refuse leaves of various kinds, is that which is prepared for export; the mixture, composed of a miscellaneous assortment of trash, dried or crisped, and then coloured with acids and dyes of noxious and often poisonous qualities, is that which the cunning Oriental prepares to send away, and laughs in his sleeve as he boxes up the stuff, the steaming decoctions from which are to be swallowed with gusto by the “outside barbarian.”

The price at which stuff called *tea* can now be bought, should alone convince any one who at all reflects on the subjects that it cannot possibly be the genuine article. The price would never pay its freight and other expenses across the ocean; thousands of pounds of a *compound* under the name of “tea” is now daily consumed in America, which has been manufactured or manipulated here.

Almost any leaf of tree or shrub, when placed on a pan and dried or roasted, will curl up sufficiently to resemble genuine “tea,” and the quantities of spurious leaves so used are incredible to the great majority of consumers. The colourings afterwards

used to complete the deception, are in most cases decidedly injurious to health and many of them rankly poisonous; moreover the pans or utensils used in the process of coloring are frequently of a nature to generate poisons, as has been recently proved by cases of fatal termination.

The rapid decline in the price of tea of late years may well excite well-founded suspicions as to its genuine character; it seems but a few years since the lowest price paid for tea of fair quality was about 3s. 6d. in the old currency, and it was considered cheap at that: for on its first introduction into Britain it was then much less free from adulteration than it is at present. It was generally of comparatively fair and genuine quality and considered a great and rare luxury, although it met considerable opposition in many quarters, where it was regarded with dislike and suspicion as a French or foreign innovation of vicious and pernicious character. It would frequently bring as high as 10s. to 45s. per lb., often higher for brands supposed to be of extra quality, and the occasion of first opening a newly-arrived caddy, was made an event celebrated by a numerous assemblage of intimate friends or relatives to meet in social conclave and discuss its merits. The social character of these gatherings has remained to this day, but oh! “what a fall my countrymen” has there been in the composition of the beverage which has so frequently played a prominent and important part in similar meetings.

Temperance orators never tire in their praise of tea. It is the universal panacea for every ailment, and no oration is complete unless it is rounded off with an allusion to the “cup that cheers but not inebriates.”

One grave objection to the use of tea,