

Tea Time Talks

The Healthfulness of Tea



Physicians who often forbid the use of Coffee and Cocoa to the well, prescribe tea for the sick. Of the three, tea is the only beverage that can be drunk for a lifetime without injurious effects. It is a harmless tonic—a gentle stimulant without reaction.

As tea is the most desirable beverage, so "Salada" is tea in its most desirable form.

"Salada" Ceylon Tea comes from tea plant to tea pot untouched by human hands, from the time the leaves fall into the picker's baskets. Its delicate aroma and delicious flavor are perfectly preserved in sealed, air-tight packages.



Ask your grocer for "Salada" Tea or send for a free trial package which makes 25 cups of delicious tea. We will mail it to you without charge. Say whether you use Black, Mixed or Green Tea and the price you pay per pound.

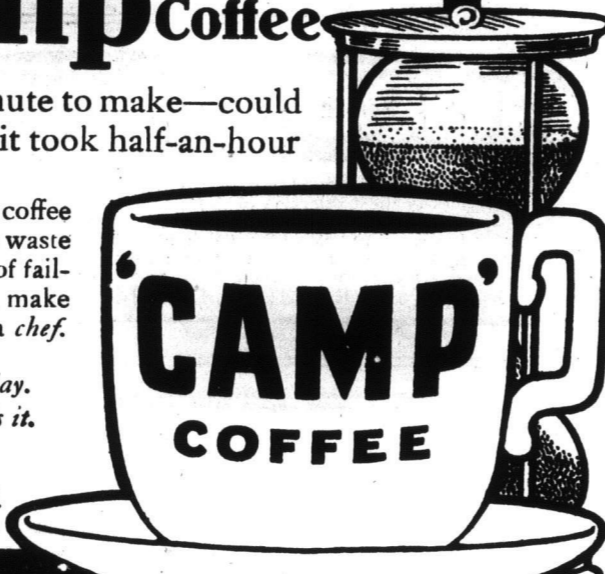
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"Aho! In the direction of a man, of course?"

"Certainly."

"Who is he?"

"Will you pardon me if I decline to answer you at the present moment?"

"That means that you are not sure?"

"It may mean, Mr Dacre, that I am employed by Mr. Gibbes, and do not feel at liberty to disclose to another the results of my quest without his permission."

"But Mr. Bentham Gibbes and I are entirely at one in this matter. Perhaps you are aware that I am the only person with whom he discussed the case besides yourself."

"That is undoubtedly true, Mr. Dacre; still, you see the difficulty of my position."

"Yes, I do, and so shall not press you further. But I also have been interesting myself—in a purely amateurish way, of course. You would, perhaps, have no disinclination to learn whether my deductions agree with yours."

"Not in the least. I should be very glad to know the conclusion at which you have arrived. May I ask if you suspect anyone in particular?"

"Yes, I do."

"Will you name him?"

"No I shall copy the admirable reticence you yourself have shown. And now let us attack this mystery in a sane and business-like manner. You have already examined the room. Well, here is a rough sketch of it. There is the table; in this corner the chair on which the coat was flung. Here sat Gibbes at the head of the table. Those on the left-hand side had their backs to the chair. I, being in the centre to the right, saw the chair, the coat, and the notes, and called attention to them. Now, our first duty is to find a motive. If it were a murder, our motive might be hatred, revenge, robbery, what you like. As it is simply the stealing of money, the man must have been either a born thief or else some hitherto innocent person pressed to the crime by great necessity. Do you agree with me, Monsieur Valmont?"

"Perfectly. You follow exactly the line of my own reasoning."

"Very well. It is unlikely that a born thief was one of Mr. Gibbes' guests. Therefore we are reduced to look for a man under the spur of necessity: a man who has no money of his own, but who must raise a certain amount, let us say by a certain date; if we can find such a man in that company, do you not agree with me that he is likely to be the thief?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then let us start our process of elimination. Out goes Viscount Stern, a man with 20,000 acres of land, and no one knows what income. I mark off the name of Lord Templemere, one of her Majesty's judges, entirely above suspicion. Next Sir John Sanchere; he, also, is rich, but Vincent Innes is still richer, so the pencil obliterates his name. Now we have Angus McKeller, an author of some note, as you are well aware, deriving a good income from his books and a better one from his plays; a canny Scot, so we may rub his name from our paper and our memory. How do my erasures correspond with yours, Monsieur Valmont?"

"They correspond exactly, Mr Dacre."

"I am flattered to hear it. There remains one name untouched: Mr. Lionel Dacre, the descendant, as I have said, of robbers."

"I have not said so, Mr. Dacre."

"Ah! my dear Valmont, the politeness of your country asserts itself. Let us not be deluded, but follow our inquiry wherever it leads. I suspect Lionel Dacre. What do you know of his circumstances before the dinner?"

"As I made no reply he looked up at me with his frank, boyish face illumined by a winning smile."

"You know nothing of his circumstances?" he asked.

"It grieves me to state that I do, Mr. Lionel Dacre was penniless on the night of the dinner on the twenty-third."

"Oh, don't exaggerate, Monsieur Valmont," cried Dacre, with a laugh. "He had one sixpence, two pennies and a halfpenny. How did you know he was penniless?"

"I knew he owned a case of champagne from the London representative of Camelot Freres, and was refused unless he paid the money down."

"Quite right; and then when you were talking to Hopper you saw that case of champagne delivered. Excellent, excellent, Monsieur Valmont. But will a man steal, think you, to supply himself with even so delicious a wine as this we have been tasting—and, by the way, forgive my neglect. Allow me to fill your glass, Monsieur Valmont."

"Not another drop, if you will excuse me, Mr. Dacre."

"Ah, yes, champagne should not be mixed with evidence. When we have finished, perhaps. What further proof have you?"

"I have proof that Mr. Dacre was threatened with bankruptcy if on the twenty-fourth he did not pay a bill of seventy-eight pounds that had been long outstanding. I have proof that this was paid, not on the twenty-fourth, but on the twenty-sixth. Mr. Dacre had gone to the solicitor and had assured him he would have the money on that date, whereupon he was given two days' grace."

"Ah, well, he was entitled to three, you know, in law. Yes, there, Monsieur Valmont, you touch the fatal point. The threat of bankruptcy will drive a man in Dacre's position to almost any crime. Bankruptcy to a barrister spells ruin. It means a career blighted; it means a life buried with little chance of resurrection. I see you grasp the supreme importance of that bit of evidence. The case of champagne is as nothing com-



Under the influence of the black coffee I reasoned it out.

pared with it, and this reminds me that in the crisis I shall take another sip, with your permission. Sure you won't join me?"

"Not at this juncture, Mr. Dacre."

"I envy your moderation. Here's to the success of our search, Monsieur Valmont."

I felt sorry for the gay young fellow as with smiling face he drank the champagne.

"Now, Monsieur," he went on, "I am amazed to learn how much you have found out. Really, I think tradespeople, solicitors and all such should keep better guard on their tongues than they do. Nevertheless, these documents I have at my elbow, and which I expected would surprise you, are merely the letters and receipts. Here is the letter from the solicitor threatening me with bankruptcy; here is his receipt dated the twenty-sixth; here is the refusal of the wine merchant, and here is his receipt for the money. Here are smaller bills liquidated. With my pencil we will add them up. Seventy-eight pounds bulks large. We add the smaller items, and it totals ninety-three pounds, seven shillings and fourpence. Let us now examine my purse. Here is a five pound note; there is a minted sovereign. Here is twelve and sixpence in silver; here is twopenny in coppers. Now the purse is empty. Let us add this to the amount on the paper. Do my eyes deceive me, or is the total exactly a hundred pounds? Thus is the stolen money accounted for."

"Pardon me, Mr. Dacre," I said, "but there is still a sovereign on the mantelpiece."

Dacre threw back his head and laughed with greater heartiness than I had yet