

the prohibitionist is not a new creation. The controversy was fierce and prolonged, and rumblings of it were heard nearly a century later. An amusing episode in this connection is the passage-at-arms between Samuel Johnson and Jonas Hanway. Hanway was a rich and pompous merchant in London, a man who "rather fancied" himself, as we would say. He has a better title to fame, however, than that he tilted with the master-mind of his age and was worsted; he introduced the umbrella into England, thus earning the gratitude of posterity.

In the year 1757 Hanway wrote his celebrated essay on tea, in which he asks:—"How many thousands in this country are annually poisoned by tea, gin and wine?" He also states that the physicians of his time "very seriously declare that they are more obliged to tea for the gains arising from their practice than to all other debaucheries." This effusion was published in the *Gazetteer* for May 26th, 1757. Johnson was moved to reply, but did so courteously. Hanway took refuge in injured pride, and advanced the argument that he had two horses to his chariot, expressing the view that tea was responsible for the moral, economic and political woes of the country. Moreover, he was insulting. Johnson, who declared himself "a hardened sinner in the use of the infusion of this plant, whose tea-pot had no time to cool, who with tea solaced the incidence of night and with tea welcomed the morning," was provoked for the first and only time in his life to defend himself, and unlimbered his heavy artillery. "Of tea what have I said? That I have drunk it twenty years without hurt, and, therefore, believe it not to be poison; that if it dries the fibres, it cannot soften them; that if it constricts, it cannot relax. I have modestly doubted whether it has diminished the strength of our men or the beauty of our women; and whether it much hinders the progress of our woollen and iron manufactures; but I allowed to be a barren superfluity, that neither supplied strength nor cheerfulness, neither relieved weariness nor exhilarated sorrow." One wonders why, in the face of all this, Johnson drank so much tea, for it is told of him that he drank twelve cupfuls at each meal, and we have his own confession. In respect of wine, the use of which he eventually gave up, he himself said that he could practise abstinence but not moderation. In respect of tea he might have said the same, but, clearly, he regarded its use as innocuous. Johnson died in 1784 and must, therefore, have been addicted to the immoderate use of tea for at least forty-five years. One wonders, again, recalling that he died of heart failure and dropsy, whether the taking into his system of such an inordinate amount of fluid, together with an excessive daily dose of a powerful alkaloid, caffeine,