

THE METHOD

OF MAKING

B L A C K T E A.

IN the first place the youngest and most tender leaves are gathered ; but when there are many hands and a great quantity of leaves to be collected, the people employed nip off with the forefinger and thumb the fine end of the branch with about four leaves on, and some times even more, if they look tender. These are all brought to the place where they are to be converted into Tea; they are then put into a large, circular, open-worked bamboo basket, having a rim all round, two fingers broad (see fig 1). The leaves are thinly scattered in these baskets, and then placed in a framework of bamboo, in all appearance like the side of an indian hut without grass, resting on posts, 2 feet from the ground, with an angle of about 25° (fig. 2). The baskets with leaves are put in this frame to dry in the sun, and are pushed up and brought down by a long bamboo with a circular piece of wood at the end (fig. 3). The leaves are permitted to dry about two hours, being occasionally turned ; but the time required for this process depends on the heat of the sun. When they begin to have a slightly withered appearance, they are taken down and brought into the house, where they are placed on a frame (fig. 4) to cool for half an hour.