

Drinking and its repercussions

17th century remedies from Gervase Markham's "The English Housewife" 1615

Firstly: A preventative

Against Drunkenness

If you would not be drunk, take the powder of betony and coleworts¹ mixed together; and eat it every morning fasting, as much as will lie upon a sixpence, and it will preserve a man from drunkenness.

In case too much was drunk for the preventative to be effective...

For the headache

For the headache, you shall take of rose-water, of the juice of camomile, or woman's milk, and of strong wine vinegar, of each two spoonful; mix them together well upon a chafing-dish of coals, then take of a piece of a dry rose cake and steep it therein, and as soon as it hath drunk up the liquor and is thoroughly hot, take a couple of sound nutmegs grated to power, and strew them upon the rose cake; then breaking it into two parts, bind it on each side upon the temples of the head, and so let the party lie down to rest, and the pain will in a short space be taken from him.

Another

The oil of lilies if the head be anointed therewith, is good for any pain therein.

Another

Take rue, and steep it in venigar a day and a night, the rue being first well bruised, then with the same anoint the head twice or thrice a day.

For the swimming of the head

For the swimming or dizzying in the head, you shall take of agnus castus, of broomwort, and of camomile dried, of each two drams, mix it with the juice of ivy, oil of roses and white wine, of each a like quantity, till it come to a thick salve: and then bind it to the temples of the head, and it will in short space take away the grief.

Finally: For those who suffer from longer term effects...

¹ any member of the cabbage family

A restorative for the liver

Take fennel roots, and parsley roots, of each a like, wash them clean, and peel off the upper bark and cast away the pith within, then mince them small, then put them to three pints of water, and set them over the fire; then take figs, and shred them small, liquorice and break it small, and put them to the herbs, and let all boil very well, then take sorrel and stamp it and put it to the rest, and let it boil till some part be wasted, then take a good quantity of honey and put to it and boil a while, then take it from the fire and clarify it through a strainer into a glass vessel and stop it very close, then give the sick to drink thereof morning and evening.

Gout

For the gout, take aristolochia rotunda, althea, betony, and the roots of wild nep², and the root of the wild dock cut into thin pieces after the upper rind is taken away, of each a like quantity, boil them all in running water till they be soft and thick: then stamp them in a mortar as small as may be, and put thereto a little quantity of chimney soot, and a pint or better of new milk of a cow which is all of one entire colour, and as much if the urine of a man that is fasting, and having stirred them all well together, boil them once again on the fire; then, as hot as the party can suffer it, apply it to the grieved place, and it will give him ease.

For the hot gout

For the hot gout (highly inflamed), take five or six spoonful of the juice of hemlock, and as much swine's grease finely clarified³, and beating them well together anoint the sort place with the same, and it will give sudden ease.

² Probably ground ivy

³ LARD!!!!