

**The Chinese Opium Smoker : twelve illustrations : facsimiles of native drawings with a translation of the original Chinese text accompanying them and appendixes.**

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THE  
CHINESE OPIUM SMOKER.

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TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS;

FACSIMILES OF NATIVE DRAWINGS.

WITH

A TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL CHINESE TEXT

ACCOMPANYING THEM, AND APPENDIXES.

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### IV.

GENERAL SUMMARY.



No. 1.

“THE FIRST DOWNWARD STEP.”

[The opium-smoker, just making his first essay in the vice, is seen reclining on a costly black wood couch inlaid with marble, while his companion is indulging in tobacco through the water-pipe common in China.]

---

“GENTEEL in dress and bearing as a citizen of  
Tai Yuen ;

Erect and stately in demeanour as a scion of the  
capital King Loh :

Why comes he into the enchanted land to seek  
the vapour of sorrow ?

Idly pillowing himself on the couch, he tries it  
for a pastime only.

But step by step he begins to lose himself on  
the evil way,

Advancing from bad to worse, till at last by  
degrees he has reached the nether-world.

Alas ! that with a nature answering to what is  
Divine,

He should now at length begin to change the  
whole bent of his affections.”



## PREFACE.

THE following engravings, intended to depict the course of thousands of opium-smokers in China, were originally published in the form of cartoons by the Chinese themselves. For years past they have been posted up in the wayside tea-houses, and on the walls of public places, and circulated far and wide amongst the Chinese people, at the expense of native gentlemen who have been alarmed at the spread of opium-smoking, or who have wished to store up merit for themselves by circulating tracts and leaflets exhorting men to virtue. These cartoons are issued to the British public with a translation of the accompanying text, because they give the best possible key to the Chinese estimate of the evil of opium-smoking, and it is by the Chinese estimate alone that the evil can be fairly gauged. Of course it is not intended to be understood that every opium-smoker meets with the fate depicted here ; but the fate is sufficiently common to make these delineations impressive to the average native mind. This, and many like tracts and pamph-



## PREFACE.

lets, were prepared by unofficial Chinese gentlemen, who were actuated by motives of simple philanthropy, and cannot be suspected of that interested misstatement so often charged against Chinese officials when it is wished to blunt the edge of their grievance. Experts in the service of the British Government may have proved to a demonstration that opium-smoking is innocuous, because most of the opium is volatilized in the process, but no answer has yet been attempted to the uniform testimony of Chinese experience. We are confident the day will yet come when our Government, which is so grandly tolerant of native religions, will be equally tolerant of native moralities, and especially of the Chinese moralities that concern this great opium question.







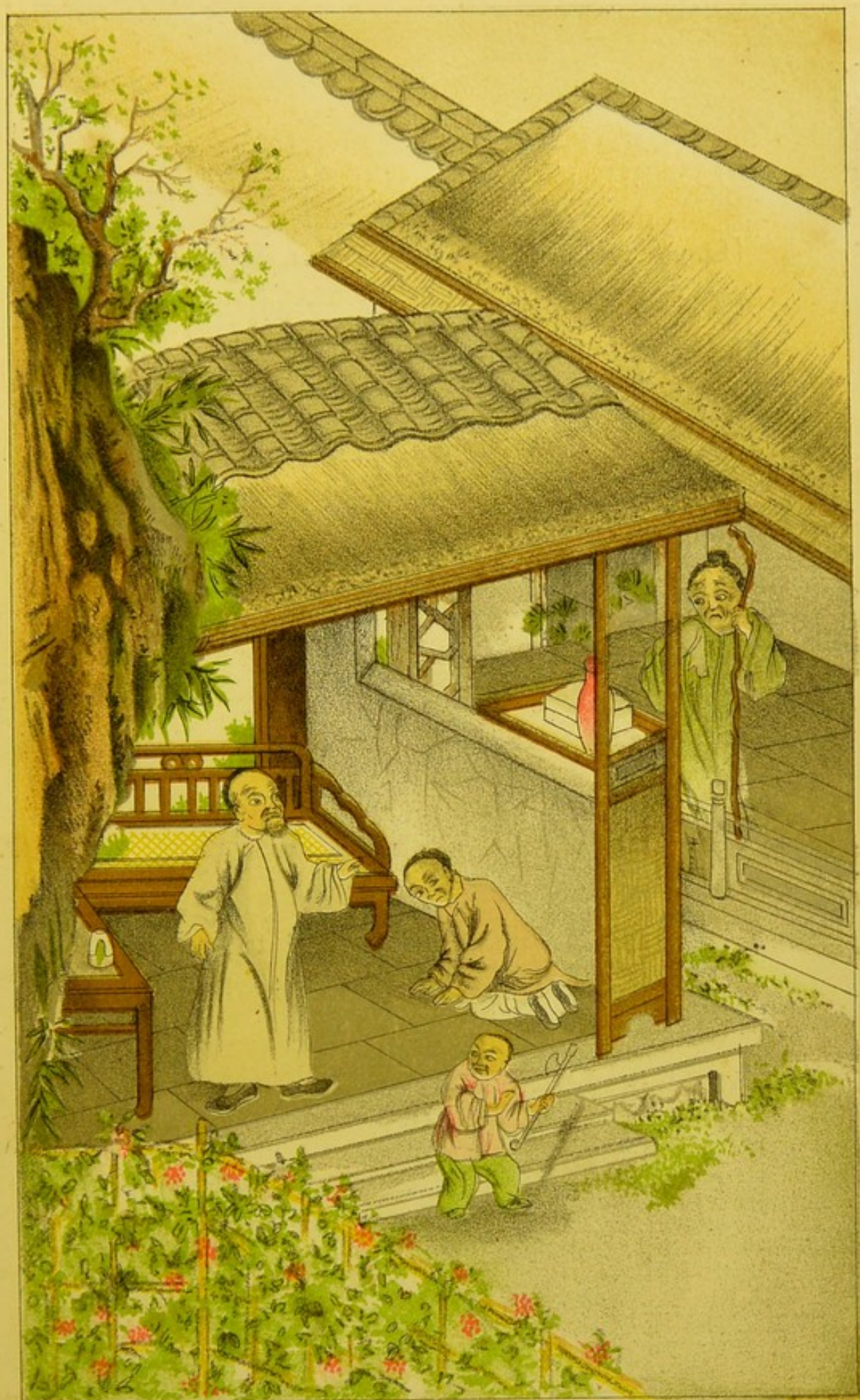
“ PARENTAL EXPOSTULATIONS.”

[The opium-smoker, who has been detected in his secret indulgences, is now seen kneeling before his father to ask forgiveness and promise amendment. His mother leans on her staff in an adjoining room, and his child runs away with the dreaded pipe. The hold of the habit, however, is already established. The motives of interest, duty, affection, good name—all prove too feeble to arrest the downward career of the smoker.]

---

“ HE gives no heed to the grey hairs of his  
parents,  
Nor to their earnest hope that their darling  
child should follow in their steps.  
He cares not for father leaning on his staff,  
or mother wetting her robe with tears,  
And still does not throw away his vice when  
confronted with the couch.  
If even he kneels on the pavement to receive  
in humility the parental instructions,  
In the end he is still unable to eradicate the  
lingering habit.  
When mouth only is reformed into right  
and heart continues wrong, it is desperate  
indeed.  
As soon as he has gone forth again he drifts  
on wind and tide to haunts of vice else-  
where.”







No. 3.

“PLEASURE GOES: SORROW COMES.”

[One dissipation leads to another. Demoralized by opium-smoking, he now seeks the society of musicians and singing women, for whose particular companionship he has qualified himself by his vice.]

---

“He lies inhaling to the last whiff the fragrance  
of the poppy,  
A gaily-dressed courtesan keeping him company,  
Guitar and castanet giving forth a Babel of  
sound.  
After one pipe is done he must have yet  
another,  
Boon companions being invited to join him.  
Now he has become most terribly diligent in  
his vice day and night,  
How difficult it is to break it off or leave it  
for a moment!  
In the twinkling of an eye the money at the  
head of the bed is gone,  
And groanings and moanings are heard  
without ceasing.”







No. 4.

"HABIT FIXED: ESTATE RUINED."

[This picture represents the sale of family estates, in most of the Chinese series, with the figure of a silversmith in the foreground testing and melting the silver that is changing hands. The original from which the engraving in the present series, however, is copied, would seem to have represented the wife as painting scrolls for a livelihood, and a servant in the foreground preparing opium by the usual method of boiling for his master's use.]

---

"WHEN he comes to sell the last inch of the family land, he does not even then eradicate the habit.

Lives melt away under the signature of his pencil, and lives melt away under his pipe. The sorrow born of opium madness slays the members of his own family.

Outside his own circle who is there to take pity on them?

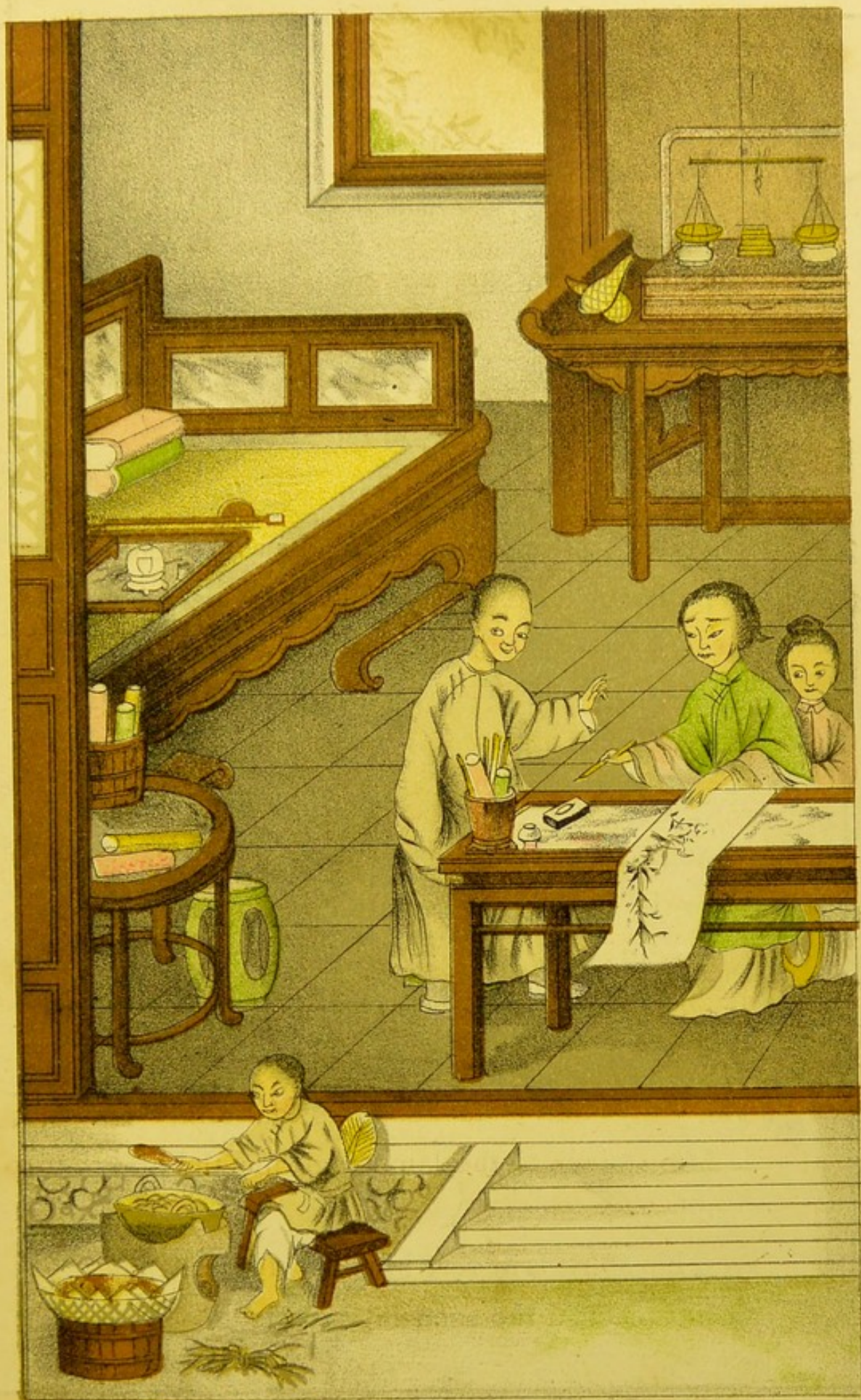
Everything changes to dust when passed through the red furnace fire.

Not a trace of either opium or estate is left behind by the process;

All because he used the pipe for a genteel pastime,

He has now reached that extreme stage of baseness and degradation."







No. 5.

“DEAF TO ENTREATY.”

[Wife and child are now seen weeping at the side of the couch. The house is no longer thronged with attendants, and the aged mother brings him tea, leaning on her staff.]

---

“HE now thinks no longer of either wife or child,  
Who both find it heart-breaking to part from  
him for life or death.

Their piercing entreaties alternate with loud-  
voiced lamentations.

By the couch their fast-flowing tears blend  
together.

How is it that his infatuation approaches  
madness?

They are sad at heart, but he heeds not : they  
wail aloud, but he heeds not :

The only thing he heeds is dandling his  
lamp : it is to the lamp that his thoughts  
cling.

And his spirit is at rest in spite of all when he  
has reached the semi-intoxication.”







“RESENTMENTS SOWN.”

[The wife in her indignation dashes the opium utensils to the ground, and prepares to split up the pipe. The husband, outraged by this interference with his pleasures, seizes a bamboo stick and beats her. He is restrained from violence only by some friend or attendant.]

---

“RAGE now makes itself heard, and her bosom is full of grief:

She angrily seizes the steel knife to split up her husband's pipe.

Alas! as she grasped the handle, he at the same time thought of the rod.

What did he care that he heaped to overflowing the resentments of the sorrowful creature?

What heed did he pay to the gossip of friends and the jeers of companions?

The lamp shade is fractured and the opium needle broken,

The jade-lamp and the opium-pot shattered into powder;

But it is to be feared you have not changed his mind, and stopped the crave for opium.”







No. 7.

“THE OPIUM APPETITE KEENER  
THAN THAT FOR FOOD.”

[Some old friend or attendant is offering him charity in his retirement. He has lost all appetite, however, for ordinary food.]

---

“IF he has not been able to avoid a deficiency  
in his dose,  
It is impossible for him to repress his dull-  
ness and languor of spirit.  
He gathers up his miserable bones, for he  
has still left three and a half grains,  
And hastens to place the flickering lamp  
before his deluded eyes.  
His very vitals are crying out in pain for  
his repentance,  
Because the system has been injured by the  
hunger and thirst he has endured.  
He has lost all power over the secretions of  
the mouth.  
He desires only the smoke by his pillow, and  
has no leisure for the smoke of the kitchen.  
He is as happy as a fairy in the shadows cast  
by the opium-lamp.  
And this is the fashion in which a fast  
gentility comes to be displayed.”







No. 8.

“ WEEPING OF WIFE AND CHILD.”

[Wife and child look with hopeless sorrow on the living half-naked skeleton of the once portly and well-dressed gentleman.]

---

“ HE remembers that once there were padded quilts and pillows.

Now he is sad and cold, almost lodging on a strip of bare ground.

Hard it is for his wife and child to stand before him and gaze,

Such a skeleton spectacle has he made of himself.

The pair weep in chorus for hunger.

Weeping and cursing from wife and child follow each other.

Are his innocent wife and child willing to die and be buried together?

There is no help for it but to leave him :

Their two spirits can but quit the flesh in company.”







No. 9.

“THE EMPTY HOUSE.”

[The comfort and shelter of the paternal home are things of the past. His present home is a partially roofed shed, his cook-house a makeshift arrangement of mats. All the furniture is gone, and he now smokes on the floor.]

---

“AFTER several days’ sickness he has become too languid to cook his meals.

At night he never lies down for continuous rest.

When his foreign opium is exhausted, he boils the dross over again.

Alas ! not a single article is left in the house.

The four walls are of grass-matting only,

And this because he has been thinking altogether of his opium money.

Thus indulging, it has come to pass that this year food and clothing are both wanting,

And he is embarrassed with debt on every hand ;

And now, gazing at his own shadow in the midst of starvation,

He sorrows in silence, and the silent meditation begets lament.”







“SELF-INDUCED WRETCHEDNESS.”

[Crime too often follows the destitution caused by opium-smoking, for at all costs opium must be had. Possibly the bucket in which the wanderer carries his pipe, and the labourer's hat slung behind him, are both stolen. The lee-side of a rock, or some cave amongst the hills, must shelter him from the cutting wind. The very dogs, recognising him for a loafer, give chase.]

---

“His former happiness in vice is utterly changed.

To get his spot of opium on a leaf, he has now to use deceitful expedients.

He looks at it again and again, and proceeds to sigh ;

But because of his self-indulgence he is unworthy of pity.

He recalls the past, and summons back the bygone years.

Food and drink were abundant, and he had his thousands and tens of thousands ;

But from the time he had debauched himself, his patrimony wasted away,

And for how many years, alas ! must he be without a plan for turning round.”







No. 11.

“HOMELESSNESS.”

[The downward course of the opium-smoker is now very rapid. Exposure to the weather and want of food accelerate the injurious effects of the opium. No one would think of giving a night's shelter to a man whose imperious craving for opium would compel him to rob his benefactor before morning.]

---

“SIGHING and groaning are of no avail: ask yourself how it came to pass.

Once there was the family home; now it has vanished into space. Why speak of it?

On whom shall he trust, and where shall he find refuge?

He laments that because of the itching mouth he became so utterly stupid.

He has nothing left for either food or clothing.

There is no comparison between his present and past estates.

His basket is empty, his house occupied by another;

He is shamed by the loss of his fields and orchards,

And on some flat rock he puts up his wretched hut.”







No. 12.

“THE END.”

[Winter comes on apace. With trembling steps and a shivering frame, he seeks the shelter of a cave among the rocks, in which he will lie down and die. Nor is he alone in his misery. Thousands of such victims are living, dying, dead. They are to be found everywhere.]

---

“THE north-west wind whirls along its drifting  
snows.

With body all but naked he stands like a  
solitary ghost.

His complexion is as black as that of a  
baboon,

His limbs withered away below the joints by  
sickness.

He seeks to hold together his wretched frame  
for a short time longer.

There he dies a premature death, forsaken by  
his friends.

Remembering to what rank he belonged at  
the outset,

Does he now say he is as merry as a ‘fairy’?

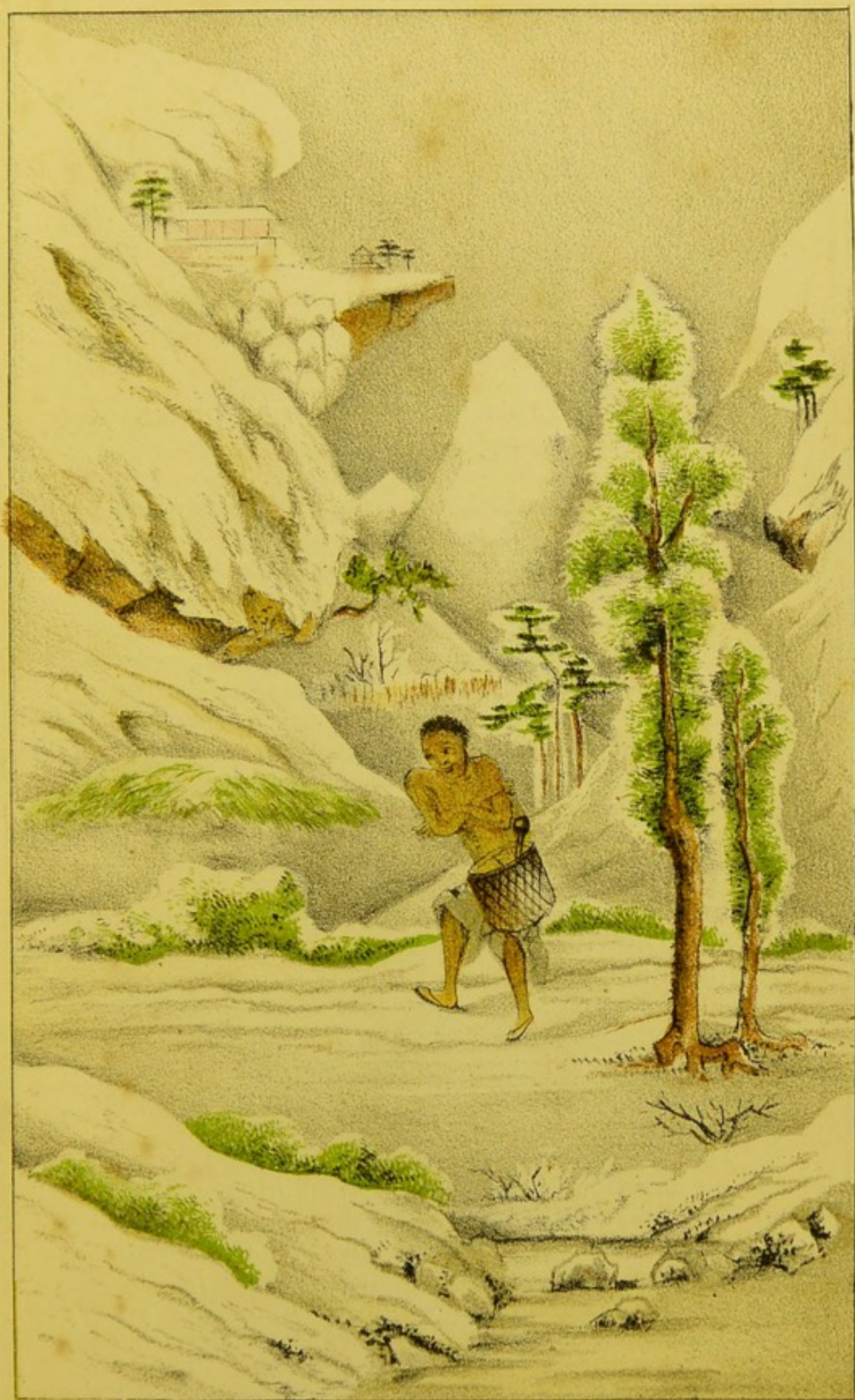
If a man arouse not himself whilst in life,

He will wail out in vain his remorse at death.

In passing his former dwelling-place

Let it be asked, ‘Who can endure a fate  
like this?’”







## APPENDIX I.

### COMMISSIONER LIN'S LETTER TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

"[The paper of which a translation is here given—purporting to be a letter addressed to the Queen of England—was permitted to obtain circulation among the people, in the same manner as many official documents commonly do, about three months since, when the Commissioner and Governor were about to leave Canton to receive the opium surrendered in the name of the British Crown. Presumptive evidence of its authenticity is afforded by the expression on the part of the Commissioner of an anxious desire to know how he should convey such a communication to the English Sovereign]."—Chinese Repository, vol. viii. p. 9, May, 1839.

"LIN, high Imperial Commissioner, a director of the Board of War, and Governor of the two Hoo; TANG, a director of the Board of War, and Governor of the two Kwang; and E, a vice-director of the Board of War, and Lieutenant-Governor of Kwang-tung, conjointly address this communication to the Sovereign of the English nation, for the purpose of requiring the interdiction of opium.

"That in the ways of heaven no partiality exists, and no sanction is allowed to the injuring of others for the advantage of one's self—that in men's natural desires there is not any great diversity (for where is he who does not abhor death and seek life?)—these are universally acknowledged principles. And your honourable nation, though beyond the wide ocean, at



a distance of twenty thousand miles, acknowledges the same ways of heaven, the same human nature, and has the like perceptions of the distinctions between life and death, benefit and injury.

"Our heavenly Court has for its family all that is within the four seas: the Great Emperor's heaven-like benevolence—there is none whom it does not overshadow. Even regions remote, desert, and disconnected, have a part in the general care of life and of well-being.

"In Kwang-tung since the removal of the interdicts upon maritime communication, there has been a constantly flowing stream of commercial intercourse. The people of the land, and those who come from abroad in foreign ships, have reposed together in the enjoyment of its advantages, for tens of years past, even until this time. And as regards the rhubarb, teas, raw silk, and similar rich and valuable products of China, should foreign nations be deprived of these, they would be without the means of continuing life. So that the heavenly Court by granting, in the oneness of its common benevolence, permission for the sale and exportation thereof—and that without stint or grudge—has indeed extended its favours to the utmost circuit (of the nations), making its heart one with the core of heaven and earth.

"But there is a tribe of depraved and barbarous people, who, having manufactured opium for smoking, bring it hither for sale, and seduce and lead astray the simple folk, to the destruction of their persons, and the draining of their resources. Formerly the smokers thereof were few, but of late, from each to other the practice has spread its contagion, and daily do its baneful effects more deeply pervade the central source, its rich fruitful and flourishing population. It is not to be denied that the simple folk, inasmuch as they indulge their appetite at the expense of their lives, are indeed themselves the authors of their miseries; and why then should they be pitied? Yet in the universal Empire under the sway of the great



pure dynasty, it is of essential import, for the right direction of men's minds, that their customs and manners should be formed to correctness. How can it be borne that the living souls that dwell within these seas, should be left wilfully to take a deadly poison! Hence it is that those who deal in opium, or who inhale its fumes, within this land, are all now to be subjected to severest punishment, and that a perpetual interdict is to be placed on the practice so extensively prevailing.

"We have reflected that this poisonous article is the clandestine manufacture of artful schemers, and depraved people of various tribes under the dominion of your honourable nation. Doubtless you, the honourable Sovereign of that nation, have not commanded the manufacture and sale of it. But amid the various nations there are a few only that make this opium: it is by no means the case that all the nations are herein alike. And we have heard that in your honourable nation too, the people are not permitted to inhale the drug, and that offenders in this particular expose themselves to sure punishment. It is clearly from a knowledge of its injurious effects on man, that you have directed severe prohibitions against it. But what is the prohibition of its use, in comparison with the prohibition of its being sold—of its being manufactured—as a means of thoroughly purifying the source?

"Though not making use of it oneself, to venture nevertheless on the manufacture and sale of it, and with it to seduce the simple folk of this land, is to seek one's own livelihood by the exposure of others to death, to seek one's own advantage by other men's injury. And such acts are bitterly abhorrent to the nature of man—are utterly opposed to the ways of heaven. To the vigorous sway exercised by the Celestial Court over both the civilized and the barbarous, what difficulty presents itself to hinder the immediate taking of life? But as we contemplate and give substantial being to the fulness and



vastness of the sacred intelligence it befits us to adopt first the course of admonition. And not having as yet sent any communication to your honourable sovereignty—should severest measures of interdiction be all at once enforced, it might be said in excuse that no previous knowledge thereof has been possessed.

“We would now then concert with your honourable sovereignty means to bring to a perpetual end this opium, so hurtful to mankind: we in this land forbidding the use of it—and you, in the nations under your dominion, forbidding its manufacture. As regards what has been already made, we would have your honourable nation issue mandates for the collection thereof, that the whole may be cast into the depths of the sea. We would thus prevent the longer existence between these heavens and this earth of any portion of the hurtful thing. Not only then will the people of this land be relieved from its pernicious influence, but the people of your honourable nation too (for as they make, how know we that they do not also smoke it?) will, when the manufacture is indeed forbidden, be likewise relieved from the danger of its use. Will not the result of this be the enjoyment by each of a felicitous condition of peace? For your honourable nation’s sense of duty being thus devout, shows a clear apprehension of celestial principles, and the supreme heavens will ward off from you all calamities. It is also in perfect accordance with human nature, and must surely need the approbation of sages.

“Besides all this, the opium being so severely prohibited in this land, that there will be none found to smoke it, should your nation continue its manufacture, it will be discovered after all that no place will afford opportunity for selling it, that no profits will be attainable. Is it not far better to turn and seek other occupation than vainly to labour in the pursuit of a losing employment?

“And furthermore, whatever opium can be discovered in this land, is entirely committed to the flames and



consumed. If any be again introduced in foreign vessels, it too must be subjected to a like process of destruction. It may well be feared, lest other commodities imported in such vessels should meet a common fate—the gem and the pebble not being distinguished. Under these circumstances gain being no longer acquirable, and hurt having assumed a visible form, such as desire the injury of others will find that they themselves are the first to be injured.

“The powerful instrumentality whereby the Celestial Court holds in subjection all nations is truly divine and awe-inspiring beyond the power of computation. Let it not be said that early warning of this has not been given.

“When your Majesty receives this document, let us have a speedy communication in reply, advertising us of the measures you adopt for the entire cutting off of the opium in every seaport. Do not by any means by false embellishments evade or procrastinate. Earnestly reflect hereon. Earnestly observe these things.

“Taou Kwang, 19th year, 2nd month — day.

“Communication sent to the Sovereign of the English nation.”



## APPENDIX II.

### PRINCE KUNG'S LETTER TO SIR R. ALCOCK.

"From Tsungli Yamen to Sir R. Alcock, July, 1869.

"The writers have on several occasions, when conversing with His Excellency the British Minister, referred to the opium trade as being prejudicial to the general interests of commerce. The object of the treaties between our respective countries was to secure perpetual peace, *but if effective steps cannot be taken to remove an accumulating sense of injury from the minds of men, it is to be feared that no policy can obviate sources of future trouble.* Day and night the writers are considering the question, with a view to its solution, and the more they reflect upon it, the greater does their anxiety become, and hereon they cannot avoid addressing His Excellency very earnestly on the subject. That opium is like a deadly poison, that it is most injurious to mankind, and a most serious provocative of ill-feeling, is, the writers think, perfectly well known to His Excellency, and it is therefore needless for them to enlarge further on these points. The Prince" (the Prince of Kung is the president of the Board) "and his colleagues are quite aware that the opium trade has long been condemned by England as a nation, and that the right-minded merchant scorns to have to do with it. But the officials and people of this empire, who cannot be so completely informed on the subject, all say that England trades in opium because she desires to work China's ruin, for (say they) if the friendly feelings of England are genuine, since it is open to her to produce and trade



in everything else, would she still insist on spreading the poison of this hurtful thing through the empire? There are those who say stop the trade by enforcing a vigorous prohibition against the use of the drug. China has the right to do so, doubtless, and might be able to effect it; but a strict enforcement of the prohibition would necessitate the taking of many lives. Now, although the criminals' punishment would be of their own seeking, bystanders would not fail to say that it was the foreign merchant seduced them to their ruin by bringing the drug, and it would be hard to prevent general and deep-seated indignation; such a course indeed would tend to arouse popular anger against the foreigner. *There are others, again, who suggest the removal of the prohibitions against the growth of the poppy. They argue that, as there is no means of stopping the foreign (opium) trade, there can be no harm, as a temporary measure, in withdrawing the prohibition on its growth. We should thus not only deprive the foreign merchant of a main source of his profits, but should increase our revenue to boot. The sovereign rights of China are, indeed, competent to this. Such a course would be practicable; and, indeed, the writers cannot say that, as a last resource, it will not come to this; but they are most unwilling that such prohibition should be removed, holding as they do, that a right system of government should appreciate the beneficence of Heaven, and (seek to) remove any grievance which afflicts its people, while, to allow them to go on to destruction, though an increase of revenue may result, will provoke the judgment of Heaven and the condemnation of men. Neither of the above plans, indeed, is satisfactory. If it be desired to remove the very root, and to stop the evil at its source, nothing will be effective but a prohibition to be enforced alike by both parties. Again, the Chinese merchant supplies your country with its goodly tea and silk, conferring thereby a benefit upon her; but the English merchant empisons China with pestilent opium. Such conduct is unrighteous. Who can justify it?*



What wonder if officials and people say that *England is wilfully working out China's ruin*, and has no real friendly feeling for her. The wealth and generosity of England is spoken of by all ; she is anxious to prevent and anticipate all injury to her commercial interest. How is it, then, she can hesitate to remove an acknowledged evil ? Indeed, it cannot be that England still holds to this evil business, earning the hatred of the officials and people of China, and making herself a reproach among the nations, because she would lose a little revenue were she to forfeit the cultivation of the poppy ! The writers hope that His Excellency will memorialize his Government to give orders in India and elsewhere to substitute the cultivation of cereals or cotton. Were both nations to rigorously prohibit the growth of the poppy, both the traffic in and the consumption of opium might alike be put an end to. To do away with so great an evil would be a great virtue on England's part ; she would strengthen friendly relations and make herself illustrious. How delightful to have so great an act transmitted to after ages ! This matter is injurious to commercial interests in no ordinary degree. If His Excellency the British Minister cannot, before it is too late, arrange a plan for a joint prohibition (of the traffic), then no matter with what devotedness the writers may plead, *they may be unable to cause the people to put aside ill-feeling, and so strengthen friendly relations as to place them for ever beyond fear of disturbance.* Day and night, therefore, the writers give to this matter most earnest thought, and overpowering is the distress which it occasions them. Having thus presumed to unbosom themselves, they would be honoured by His Excellency's reply."



### APPENDIX III.

#### LI HUNG CHANG ON THE OPIUM TRADE.

The following important letter from China's greatest living statesman, is of the highest interest and importance. We bespeak for it especial attention.

"Viceroy's Yamen, Tientsin, China, May 24, 1881.

"SIR,—It gave me great pleasure to receive your letter dated February 25, with its several enclosures, sent on behalf of the Anglo-Oriental Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.

"Your society has long been known to me and many of my countrymen, and I am sure that all—save victims to the opium habit and those who have not a spark of right feeling—would unite with me in expressing a sense of gratitude for the philanthropic motives and efforts of the society in behalf of China.

"To know that so many of your countrymen have united to continually protest against the evils of the opium traffic, and thus second the efforts China has long been making to free herself from this curse, is a source of great satisfaction to my government, to whom I have communicated a copy of your letter. The sense of injury which China has so long borne with reference to opium finds some relief in the sympathy which a society like yours existing in England bespeaks.

"Opium is a subject in the discussion of which England and China can never meet on common ground. China views the whole question from a moral standpoint; England from a fiscal. England would sustain



a source of revenue in India, while China contends for the lives and prosperity of her people. The ruling motive with China is to repress opium by heavy taxation everywhere; whereas with England the manifest object is to make opium cheaper, and thus increase and stimulate the demand in China.

"With motives and principles so radically opposite, it is not surprising that the discussion commenced at Chefoo in 1876 has up to the present time been fruitless of good results. The whole record of this discussion shows that inducement and persuasion have been used in behalf of England to prevent any additional taxation of opium in China, and objections made to China exercising her undoubted right to regulate her own taxes—at least, with regard to opium.

"I may take the opportunity to assert here, once for all, that the single aim of my government in taxing opium will be in the future, as it has always been in the past, to repress the traffic—never the desire to gain revenue from such a source. Having failed to kill a serpent, who would be so rash as to nurse it in his bosom? If it be thought that China countenances the import for the revenue it brings, it should be known that my government will gladly cut off all such revenue in order to stop the import of opium. My Sovereign has never desired his empire to thrive upon the lives or infirmities of his subjects.

"In discussing opium taxation a strange concern, approaching to alarm, has been shown in behalf of China, lest she should sacrifice her revenue; and yet objection and protest are made against rates which could be fixed for collection at the ports and in the interior. The Indian Government is in the background at every official discussion of the opium traffic, and every proposed arrangement must be forced into a shape acceptable to that government and harmless to its revenues. This is not as it should be. Each government should be left free to deal with opium according to its own lights. If China, out of compassion for her people, wishes to impose heavy taxes to discountenance



and repress the use of opium, the Indian Government should be equally free, if it see fit, to preserve its revenue by increasing the price of its opium as the demand for it diminishes in China.

"The poppy is certainly surreptitiously grown in some parts of China, notwithstanding the laws and frequent Imperial edicts prohibiting its cultivation. Yet this unlawful cultivation no more shows that the government approves of it than other crimes committed in the Empire by lawless subjects indicate approval by the government of such crimes. In like manner the present import duty on opium was established, not for choice, but because China submitted to the adverse decision of arms. The war must be considered as China's standing protest against legalizing such a revenue.

"My government is impressed with the necessity of making strenuous efforts to control this flood of opium before it overwhelms the whole country. The new treaty with the United States, containing the prohibitory clause against opium, encourages the belief that the broad principles of justice and feelings of humanity will prevail in future relations between China and Western nations. My government will take effective measures to enforce the laws against the cultivation of the poppy in China, and otherwise check the use of opium; and I earnestly hope that your society and all right-minded men of your country will support the efforts China is now making to escape from the thralldom of opium.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"LI HUNG CHANG.

"To F. Storrs Turner, Esq.,  
Secretary to the Anglo-Oriental Society for the Suppression of  
the Opium Trade, London."



#### IV.

#### GENERAL SUMMARY.

THE foregoing pages may be accepted as a fair statement of the current Chinese opinion upon the use of opium, and the more than questionable morality of our trade in the drug. The text accompanying the cartoons, may be fairly claimed as representing unofficial, and the documents printed in the appendixes official views, maintained without a syllable of variation or discrepancy through two or three generations of Chinese statesmanship. The two sets of views sustain and strengthen each other by the completeness of their agreement, and are asserted in practical Chinese life, if not with absolute consistency, at least with as much consistency as seems possible to average human nature throughout the world.

It is sometimes argued by supporters of our present opium trade, that opium-smoking is not worse than spirit-drinking in England, and that till we suppress the latter at home, we cannot very well entertain the request of the Chinese to assist in the prohibition of the former abroad. Competent observers, however, seem agreed that though opium-smoking does not tend so directly as dram-drinking to crimes of violence, its physical, moral, and social consequences are equally, if not more, disastrous. Admitting for the sake of argument that the two are precisely parallel, are we prepared to maintain that we have reached such finality in our licensing and excise systems, that we are entitled to enforce the same systems as infallible models in all our international relations?



Should *we* sit down patiently under a state of things in which our licensing and excise systems were rigidly regulated by foreign treaties, pressed upon us after the humiliations of war? Granting the precise adaptation of our licensing and excise systems to the conditions of English life, are we prepared to say, in face of Chinese opinion to the contrary, that such systems possess the same precise adaptation to the conditions of Chinese life, and should be enforced at all costs under the form of an opium monopoly in India and a hard and fast minimum tariff determined by treaty in the open ports of China? Are we sure that under a patriarchal government utterly dissimilar from our own a strength of individualism has been developed, such as to make the legalization and public sale of opium as innocuous only as drink in England?

Various estimates have been given of the number of opium-smokers in China, estimates ranging from seventy or eighty per cent. of the adult male population to one or two per cent. only. A reliable estimate is perhaps almost impossible. The proportion varies greatly with different classes and in different parts of the country. Perhaps ten or twelve per cent. would be a reasonable average for the whole country. It is certainly higher in the sea-board cities and river ports that are supplied freely with Indian opium, as well as in the provinces where the native poppy is grown, whilst on the other hand it has been altogether excluded from many villages and rural districts by the regulations of the local elders and gentry. The very low average adopted by Sir Robert Hart, Inspector General of Chinese Customs, has been used to palliate our opium trade; but our moral right does not hinge for one moment upon the question of the ratio of the lives blighted by the use of Indian opium to the entire population. Is punishment for robbery in Europe adjusted upon some rule-of-three method of reckoning, in which the question is to determine the amount of punishment from the ratio of the value of the purloined articles to the prosecutor's personalty or to



the aggregate wealth of the nation to which he belongs? Do we fix the degree of murder by a calculation of the fractional proportion of the victim's entity to the sum total of the population? Should the lowest average given even be the correct average, we must remember that opium-smoking is practised almost exclusively by adult males, who are generally heads of families, and that the social disaster is therefore more widespread than the bare number of smokers might imply: and the lower, too, the average of opium-smokers, the more manifest will it be that the large majority of the population regard the practice with the utmost dread.

It is said by some that opium has been grown in China from time immemorial, and that Englishmen are in no way responsible for its first introduction. This much at least may be allowed, that opium was taken in small consignments to China by the Portuguese long before the days of the East India Company; but the traffic has certainly reached its present terrible dimensions under the East India Company regime, and the British rule by which the regime of the Company has been succeeded. Chinese popular opinion everywhere brands us as the responsible agents for all the social disaster growing up out of the consumption of opium within the last generation, and Chinese diplomacy will soon have recorded that opinion in as direct a form as it possibly can upon every new treaty negotiated. Whether the opinion is right or wrong, it discounts our influence at Peking and throughout the whole of the eighteen provinces in a way not yet realized by the British public. The last six years of her Britannic Majesty's Minister's life at Peking have been mainly spent in trying to beat down the high rates of taxation, which the Chinese Government proposed to place upon opium, not for income merely, but with the avowed object of reducing the consumption of the drug. When this has been the supreme object of British diplomacy, who can tell how many other interests have been sacrificed



by way of concession? A wonderful quickening of Chinese thought in both official and unofficial circles has taken place within the last ten years; but the pre-occupation of British diplomacy with the question of opium dues has disqualified it for helping on any of those new Chinese movements that have come to the birth.

OUR FIRST DUTY IN CONNECTION WITH THIS QUESTION IS TO CLAIM FOR CHINA THE RIGHT TO TAX OPIUM AT THE TREATY PORTS AT ITS OWN DISCRETION, OR EVEN TO RE-ENACT ITS OLD PROHIBITIONS AGAINST THE ENTRANCE OF THE DRUG ALTOGETHER.

AS TO INDIA, WE MUST INSIST THAT THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTING A QUEEN AND A NATION STILL STYLING THEMSELVES "CHRISTIAN," SHALL NO LONGER BE SUFFERED TO FOSTER EITHER VICE, OR THE SUPPLY OF A DRUG VICIOUSLY USED, FOR THE SAKE OF REVENUE. LET US ACKNOWLEDGE NO CANDIDATE FOR OUR POLITICAL SUFFRAGES WHO WILL NOT BE PREPARED TO CALL UPON THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE THE WHEREWITHAL FOR ITS ADMINISTRATION WITHOUT RELYING UPON AN ARTICLE DECLARED BY THE FOREGOING CONSENSUS OF CHINESE TESTIMONY TO BE PRODUCTIVE ONLY OF MISERY AND DEMORALIZATION.

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