

# The Church Guardian,

A Weekly Newspaper published in the interests of the  
Church of England.

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR:

REV. JOHN D. H. BROWNE, Lock Drawer 29, Halifax, N.S.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR:

REV. EDWYN S. W. PENTREATH, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

LOCAL EDITOR FOR NEW BRUNSWICK

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The Associate Editor can be found daily between 9 a.m. and 12, at  
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## THE OPIUM TRADE.

Although the evils attending the use of this narcotic are not altogether unknown in England, it is its growth in India as a Government monopoly and its importation into China by an enforced treaty, that have made it a national offence, and have caused the English people to be identified in an unhappy manner with the train of terrible evils which have followed its use in that land.

A few years ago a truly agonizing appeal went up from the Christian Missionaries in China and from native Chinamen converts, as well as from others deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of that country, praying Her Majesty's Government to take such steps as would speedily stop the trade; but it seems as if British love of wealth—British cupidity and covetousness—had hitherto overpowered the higher feelings of British fair play and love of justice, and the Christian morality of England had shut its eyes to the terrible aggravation of the evil which the continuance of the trade is developing.

The Church in England has been slow, in this matter as in that of alcoholic drinks, to arouse herself to action, but she is beginning to awaken to a sense of the shame and disgrace which attach themselves to any complicity with the vile trade, and signs are not wanting of a growing feeling among Churchmen as a body to interfere in favor of prohibiting, so far as English possessions are concerned, the growth and exportation of the drug.

At the meeting of the Convocation of York some little time ago, Canon Jackson delivered his testimony with forcible earnestness, as one who from time to time had remonstrated with her Majesty's Government for the time being as to the great enormity of the evil and the terrible responsibility which it brought on the country. He said:

"Nothing could exaggerate the enormity of the evil. People were not at all aware of the extent of the opium trade with China. It was a fact that half a million human beings perished prematurely year by year from the horrible use of this noxious drug. Then the question came as to how far we were implicated in the highest degree. Some people asked whether the Chinese were really anxious to prevent the importation of the drug. It was true they derived an income of about a million and

a half per annum from the importation of the opium from India, but we must remember that we got from it seven or eight millions a year. China had offered to surrender that import tax if England would consent to stop the importation.

"That was surely a great proof of their sincerity. In the first place, we waged war against the Chinese to compel them to have the opium, and the aged Emperor, they were told, wept like a child because he saw his people suffering from the terrible danger which the English were forcing upon them. All the better class of society in China were of one mind on the question, and that was that they would make any sacrifice to stop the spread of the terrible drug among the people. They were willing to lose the income and prohibit the growth of the drug in China if the English would only stop the growth of it in India and the importation of it.

"Were the eight millions a year so important to us that we could not afford to give it up? Was it necessary for the finances of India that we must force this trade upon China? It was well known that the Indian grower would rather grow something else, but he was compelled to grow the opium in order to produce it for the Government revenue. We were not only doing a fearful evil to China, but to India also, in compelling the Hindoos to grow the drug, because they became demoralized by having to grow it. Under the treaty of Chefoo Sir Thomas Wade negotiated that we should have four additional docks in China for the admission of European goods, in return for which the Chinese were to be allowed to tax the opium a great deal more than it was taxed before. Would it be believed that that treaty had never been ratified by the home Government? The opium trade greatly interfered with missionary work, it injuriously affected the character of England abroad, and brought a stigma upon our religion."

As a part of the British empire—as a branch of the English Church—as a Christian people—we should feel a deep interest in this subject; and it only requires a knowledge of the facts to make us see that a bondage worse than African slavery has been inflicted upon China, and that our motherland is responsible for the destruction of more than half a million of immortal souls who annually die, and for the three or four millions more whose lives are made most degraded, wretched and useless, from the terrible habits of opium eating and smoking. And if we cannot help our brethren in England who are striving to bring about a reformation in this matter by our words let us not forget them in our prayers, nor the poor deluded people who are the sufferers from the use of the drug.

## SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

### No. VI.

Let it be now supposed that the Sunday Schools Committee of Synod has been appointed; that Sunday School Associations have been formed in connection with it in each Deanery; that each School in the Diocese is thus in communication with the Central Legislative and Executive Body of the Church; that a uniform scheme of Diocesan or general lessons has been authorized and adopted; that Teachers are examined under the regulations of the Sunday School Institute; that Teachers' meetings and bright and attractive Children's Services are regularly held. There are still one or two points which require consideration.

1. The question of prizes, tickets, and rewards of whatever kind, is one which is somewhat difficult of solution. There are schools seldom, of the

Church of England, which have a regular system of bribes to induce children to attend; and the highest prize, that of actual coin, is frequently given to the child who brings the largest number of other children to the Sunday School. No matter where the new comers may be brought from, the child is taught that its greatest merit is to bring others with it. And thus with many of the poorest children, those who need the most careful training, from the entire absence of good influences at home, it becomes a matter of speculation, a regular business operation, which school shall be favoured with their presence; the standard being the amount of material benefit they are likely to gain. The effect of this must be bad. And it is doubtful whether prizes should ever be given for any thing but attendance. There is clearly no room for difference of opinion or variety of standard, as to the punctual attendance or otherwise of the child, while the standard of correctness of lessons, or of good or bad conduct will necessarily vary in each class. There are schools in which no prizes whatever are given which are successfully conducted even in the close neighbourhood of others where the utmost profusion of rewards is exhibited. But that school was one exceptionally happy in its superintendent and its teachers, who were able, earnest, and took a great personal interest in each scholar. There was a peculiar and indescribable attraction in the whole school, which drew the children with cords of love. This should be seen in every school, but it is rare. There is perhaps one exception which might be made to the rule of giving no rewards for lessons or conduct. The best and quickest and most diligent scholars might be allowed the first place in the classes, and to these might be given each Sunday a set of questions to be answered in writing by the following Sunday. To the best papers of answers might be assigned marks, and the highest number secure a prize such as a volume of the Leisure Hour or Sunday Magazine, at the end of the year. But the Sunday School is above all things an institution of a spiritual nature; and low motives for attendance or its privileges should not be encouraged.

2. A very great deal will necessarily depend on the interest aroused in the teachers themselves. Unless they are painstaking and punctual, they cannot expect their pupils to be so. Few things have such a prejudicial effect on the morals of the Sunday School as the occasional or frequent absence of a teacher from his class. His going away on the slightest pretext and leaving the class unprovided for, argues a very low standard of duty in himself, embarrasses the superintendent, and throws the whole work of the school out of gear for the day. It is in addition to its inconvenience a piece of selfishness which cannot be too strongly reprobated. It should be remembered that the whole secret of an effective and happy Sunday School is the personal influence of the teachers on the taught. Where this is energetic and healthy, the School will prosper. The teachers must shew in every way that they love their work, and that nothing short of absolute necessity shall be allowed to interrupt it.

But the influence of the teachers should follow the children beyond the walls of the school. They should regularly visit them in their homes, and no absence from the school on Sunday should be passed over by the teacher without a personal endeavour to find out its cause. As a rule the Sunday Schools of the Non-conformists are more zealous and warm than our own. And the reason of it is, the affectionate care exercised by the