

man who lived for several years in an inland city of a quarter of a million inhabitants. The local Anti-opium League had 750 members, he said and he believed that about every other man in the city was a smoker. "It is practically a case of everybody smoking," he concluded.

Twenty-five years ago, when the consumption of opium in China could hardly have been more than half what it is to-day, a British consul estimated the proportion of smokers in the region he had visited as follows: "Labourers and small farmers, ten per cent.; small shopkeepers, twenty per cent.; soldiers, thirty per cent.; merchants, eighty per cent.; officials and their staff, ninety per cent.; actors, prostitutes, vagrants, thieves, ninety-five per cent." The labourers and farmers, the real strength of China, as of every other land, had not yet been overwhelmed—but they were going under, even then. The most startling news to-day is from these lower classes, even from the country villages, the last to give way. Dr. Parker, the American Methodist missionary at Shanghai, informed me that reports to this effect were coming in steadily from up country; and during my own journey I heard the same bad news almost everywhere along a route which