

## CHINA AND ITS OPIUM CURSE.

Opium is made, as perhaps you know, from the juice of a poppy, which is grown chiefly in India; the juice is hardened and made into cakes, and then sent to China. Opium is not generally eaten, but smoked in a pipe. The only people who eat it (except in small doses, when there is not time for smoking), are those who want to kill themselves in the easiest way, for it only takes a very little to send a man so fast asleep that he will never wake again; so people generally take it at night, when they go to bed, and by the morning, even if they are not quite dead, it is too late to do anything for them.

If a man or woman once begins to smoke opium, it is almost impossible for them ever to give it up. None of them, when they begin, mean to smoke very much, any more than English men and women mean to be drunkards, when they drink their first glass of beer or wine, but the habit gets hold of them so quickly, and every day they want a little more; and with opium, even more than with beer and wine, it is the case, that the more people take, the more they want.

## HARD TO CURE.

Doctors and missionaries are getting to be less and less hopeful of curing those who have formed the habit of opium-smoking, and it is very difficult to know whether a man is cured or not. Sometimes men are sent out from a hospital, and everyone thinks they are cured, but in eight months' time, or sooner, they are brought back just as bad as ever. I believe none but Christians have ever been known really to give up opium, after they have once begun to smoke it. If a man uses it for a fortnight, the habit gains such power over him, that nothing less than the power of God can make it possible for him to give it up, for besides all the other harm it does, opium makes men so weak in body and mind that they cannot give it up.

## HOW TO CURE IT.

When a man really comes to Jesus and takes him as his own Saviour, then, be-

cause the power of Jesus is stronger than the power of habit, he is able to give up opium. There is no habit so strong that the power of God cannot conquer it; so if you are one of God's children, and you know of one bad habit, or two, or even three that you have, do not make up your mind that you must have them always, but go to God directly and tell Him all about them, one by one, and ask Him to conquer them altogether for you, and to be the Master of them and of you, and then just expect Him to do it, and I know He will.

• I must tell you a story about this that I heard a long while ago, if I can remember it, because it will explain one thing that I want to say about habits.

*It is no use asking God to cure us of bad habits, if we do not really want to give them up.*

## SUCKING HIS THUMB.

There was a little tiny boy who had a habit of sucking his thumb. Of course you are too big to suck your thumb, so first think what your bad habit is, and put that in the story instead. The little boy's papa talked to him about it, and told him it was not at all a nice thing to do; I think he told him to ask God to cure him of it. Anyhow, when the little boy prayed that night before going to bed, he said, "Please, God, make me a good boy, and don't let me suck my thumb any more;" but very soon after, his prayer was changed, and this was the new one—"Please, God, don't make me a good boy, for I must suck my thumb." You see, it is no use for you to ask God to cure you of a fault, if all the while you are thinking that you must keep on doing it, either because you like it too much, or because you are not quite sure that God can or will cure it for you.

## HOW OPIUM KILLS.

Years ago it was said that four hundred thousand people died every year in the Chinese empire from opium-smoking, that is, that out of every hundred who smoked opium, ninety were killed by it, most of them in less than twenty years after they had begun to smoke it. And it has not