

favourable to colonization. The exceeding richness of the soil of extensive plains and the comparative healthiness of mountain ranges that skirt or enclose well-watered valleys, invite the hand of industry, and promise to reward capital and skill with abundance of the most valuable tropical products. In these districts cotton is not only grown, but spun and wove. He has also discovered a new lake compared with which Lake Ngami is "a mere pond." These important geographical discoveries will excite intense interest amongst the friends of Africa, and will, we hope, pave the way for the abolition of the slave-trade. The indefatigable explorer appears to have sustained no losses in his party from the climate and many other dangers supposed to be formidable in hot and savage lands. He writes, apparently, in perfect health, and closes his last letter with the expression of a hope that, after surmounting some thirty more miles, they will be on the lakes of Eastern Africa, "and then we go to the Makololo country either afloat or afoot."

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We have more than once spoken freely about the Opium trade. We have expressed our conviction that it is the root of all the differences between England and China, and that it is in truth the curse of the Chinese. It is only right that the other side of the question should be heard. We therefore clip the following from the Report of the last meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science :

SIR JOHN BOWRING.—said he went to China impregnated with the feelings which are found to exist largely in this country. It had been constantly affirmed that the Chinese felt the introduction of opium to their country to be a great grievance. Now, in all his intercourse with the Mandarins the opium question was never introduced except by himself, though all questions connected with free trade were discussed; he never heard it used as a reproach; he never heard that we were violating their laws, or poisoning their people.

No doubt the introduction of opium had produced a great change in the habits of the people. He was the last man to justify excess, and he would be the first to acknowledge that the use of opium was most deleterious; but compared with the social evils, and the crimes resulting from intoxicating liquors in this country, the results even of the abuse of opium in China are as nothing. There is not the slightest impediment to any one there consuming opium, if he pleases. Some use it in excess, all consume it, yet the number of deaths—and he had taken some trouble to collect statistics—was only four per annum out of ninety thousand. The proportion of deaths from *Delirium tremens* alone in this country, then, was three or four times as great. It would be a very great calamity to China itself if the importation of opium were stopped, because if opium were successfully shut out, land now devoted to the growth of rice would be used for the cultivation of the poppy. It is very extraordinary how completely the habit of intoxication has been extirpated in China. He had scarcely ever seen a drunken Chinaman, yet the edicts of the Emperors a hundred years ago were filled with all sorts of threats of punishment, in consequence of the numerous crimes arising from intoxication. Certainly the effects of opium are very pernicious; but it does not lead to crime or to acts of violence. The opium smoker dreams, and fancies delightful visions; but the man who is intoxicated with drink often becomes a perfect ruffian. The introduction of opium has undoubtedly produced a moral change among the Chinese people, and although he agreed that opium in excess is most deleterious, he had come to the conclusion that its moderate use is scarcely pernicious.

We do not desire to comment on this, further than to say that it is very pleasant to think that what benefits ourselves benefits others also; that if we did not give them a drug the use of which, "short of death," was most deleterious, they would be drunkards; and, worse still, if we did not cultivate the drug for them (and make a handsome profit out of it), they would cultivate it themselves!