

"Why not master that appetite?—You have the power. Thousands have proved it."

"Sir, I believe it. I have seen others as far reduced as myself, restored and made happy; but you are the first who has ever spoken to me upon the subject, and I had too strong a passion for liquor to think of a reformation myself."

"Well, will you not now make the effort?"

"I will. It has occupied my thoughts during the whole morning; and now, in the presence of Almighty God, I swear never again to touch the accursed thing which has ruined me and made beggars of my family."

Happy enough to hear this manly resolution, we returned to the house with him, in due time we made the fact known to the wife—and producing a pledge, *the whole family signed it upon the table which held the body of their dead child!*

The scene was an affecting one. • • Two years had passed, when the incident was recalled to our mind by a shake of the hand from a gentleman who was returning west with a stock of dry goods which he had just purchased in New York. *It was the man who signed the temperance pledge by the body of his dead child.*

STATE OF THE OPIUM TRADE IN CHINA PREVIOUS TO THE LATE WAR.

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It has been observed, that wherever Europeans come in contact with their less skillful neighbours, and bring superior intelligence, enterprise, and, we may add, cupidity, to bear on the tawny nations of the globe; the result has been the gradual decline and disappearance of the one before the other, till the hardy and energetic white has taken the place of his colored brother. In some places this has amounted to complete extermination, and in others the process is rapidly going forward, with the same gloomy prospect. Not one of the race formerly inhabiting Newfoundland is now in existence. The same may be said of the Caribs; while the Indians of North America, and the aborigines of New Holland, will soon be in the condition of those unhappy races. But was it intelligence alone which enabled the tutored tribes to prevail over the untaught? Were not other means employed, and did they not prove most lamentably successful? Was not the rum cask called in to the aid of the scheming colonists, and did not the red man fall but too easy a prey to the insidious allurements? Did not ardent spirits prove the ruin of the Indians, undermining their energies, shortening their lives, and decreasing their numbers? All this is well known fact, and will soon become matter of history. In China, territory is not sought, nor lands coveted; there Europeans do not aim at conquest or colonization; they have no need, therefore, to use an intoxicating medium, in order to subvert their designs of political influence, and territorial enlargement. The only inducement, that English merchants can have to lead them to carry on the opium trade in China, is the desire of gain; and yet that gain is so considerable as to draw them on with increasing eagerness in its pursuit. It is with them not a means to an end, but the end itself; they do not contemplate the wasting away of the population in consequence of the traffic, and yet the terrible effects of the traffic may be the same as though they did contemplate it. Facts induce us to believe that it is so. Those who grow and sell the drug, while they profit by the speculation, would do well to follow the consumer into the haunts of vice, and mark the wretchedness, poverty, disease, and death which follow the indulgence; for did they but know the thousandth part of the evils resulting from it, they would not, they could not, continue to engage in the transaction. Previous to the year 1795, opium was admitted into China on the payment of a duty, when a few hundred chests annually were imported. Since that time, the drug has been openly interdicted, and yet clandestinely introduced, at the rate of 20,000 chests annually, which costs the Chinese four millions of pounds str. every year. This quantity, at 20 grains per day for each individual, would be sufficient to demoralize nearly three millions of persons. When the habit is once formed, it grows till it becomes inveterate; discontinuance is more

and more difficult, until at length, the sudden deprivation of the accustomed indulgence produces certain death. In proportion as the wretched victim comes under the power of the insatiable drug, so is his ability to resist temptation less strong; and debilitated in body as well as mind, he is unable to earn his usual pittance, and not infrequently sinks under the cravings of an appetite which he is unable to gratify. Thus they may be seen, hanging their heads by the doors of the opium shops, which the hard-hearted keepers, having fleeced them of their all, will not permit them to enter; and shut out from their own dwellings, either by angry relatives or ruthless creditors, they die in the streets unpitied and despised. It would be well if the rich opium merchant were sometimes present to witness such scenes as these, that he might be aware how his wretched customers terminate their course, and see where his speculations, in thousands of instances, end. When the issue of this pernicious habit is not fatal, its tendencies are to weaken the strength, and to undermine the constitution; while the time and property spent in this voluptuous indulgence, constitute so much detracted from the wealth and industry of the country, and tend to plunge into deeper distress those weak and dependent members of society, who are already scarcely able to subsist at all. In fact, every opium smoker may calculate upon shortening his life ten years from the time when he commences the practice; one-half of his physical energies are soon gone; one third of his scanty earnings are absorbed; and feeling strength and income both diminishing, while the demands upon his resources are increased, he seeks to obtain by duplicity what he cannot earn by labour, and thus his moral sense becomes blunted and his heart hardened, while he plunges into the vortex of ruin, dragging with him his dependent relatives, and all within the sphere of his influence. Calculating, therefore, the shortened lives, the frequent diseases, and the actual starvation, which are the result of opium smoking in China, we may venture to assert, that this pernicious drug annually destroys myriads of individuals. No man of feeling can contemplate this fearful amount of misery and mortality, as resulting from the opium trade, without an instinctive shudder.—But the most appalling fact of all is, that the trade is constantly increasing.

But is there no remedy? The Emperors of China have wisely and patriotically determined, from the very moment they spied the onward march of the threatened evil, to denounce and resist it: and instead of admitting it, on the payment of a duty, have, as rulers, resolutely refused to derive any profit from the vices of the people. In the first year of the late Emperor, Kea-king, 1795, the introduction of opium was interdicted by law; those who were found guilty of smoking it, were pilloried and bamboozed; and the vendors and smugglers made liable to the severer penalties of banishment and death.

Thus, as far as law goes, the government of China has, ostensibly, done every thing in its power to check the growing evil; and one would imagine that these regulations were sufficiently severe to ensure the entire exclusion of the article from the empire. Yet, in the year 1836, a Chinese officer, high in rank, presented a memorial to the Emperor, in which he tells him,

"That, recently, the number of chests imported has exceeded 20,000, and that the sum paid, annually, exceeds eleven millions of dollars. Within the last few years, he adds, foreign ships have visited all the ports along the coast, from Canton, as far as Chinese Tartary, for the purpose of disposing of their opium, and though the local authorities immediately expelled them, yet the quantity clandestinely sold, is by no means small. The foreigners have, besides, a depot for opium at Lintin, in the entrance of the Canton river, where they have seven or eight large vessels, called receiving ships, anchored all the year round. In Canton, the native brokers pay the price of the opium to the foreign merchants, when they obtain orders for the drug from the receiving ships. They have also convoys, plying up and down the river, which are called fast-crabs, and scrambling-dragons. These are well-armed, with guns and pikes, and manned with desperate fellows, who go, as if they had wings. All the custom-houses and military stations which they pass, are literally stopped with bribes; and if they chance to meet any of the armed cruisers, the smugglers do not scruple to come to an engagement, and bloodshed and slaughter ensue. The governor of Canton lately sent a naval officer, with a sufficient force, and captured a boat laden with opium, seized