

terms of morality compared with those of Ireland, who have been well secured from all such malignant influence? Mr. Martin, however, is not satisfied with this negative argument, but enters into an elaborate citation of authorities to show, that the evils attendant on the execution of the poor-laws in this country do not naturally follow from the principle of securing a wholesome provision for the destitute poor, but are altogether the result of mal-administration and perversion of the facilities afforded by them.

#### COMMERCIAL RESOURCES OF CHINA.

The first English ships reached China in the year 1634; and at length in 1834, the trade will be thrown open. The commerce of the most numerous, the most industrious, and the richest people in Asia, will therefore have been bound in the fetters of monopoly for exactly two centuries, in so far as England is concerned. How singular, that the greatest commercial nation in the world, and the nation which, after all, best understands the true principles of commercial policy, should be the last to abandon so prodigious a nuisance as the China monopoly. It would be impossible to form an exact estimate of the evils and losses which the country has sustained, from our perseverance in this folly; but the reader may arrive at a tolerable notion of it, by considering that in the fifty years which have elapsed since the consummation act, the people of this country will have paid to the East India Company, for the single article of tea, beyond what the tea might have been had for in a free market, a sum equal, with simple interest, to at least a hundred millions sterling,—or what would have paid one eighth part of the national debt. During the same time, without reckoning interest, the people have paid as taxes to the crown, on this department of commerce, about 120 millions sterling.

China Proper, exclusive of its colonies, conquests, and tributaries, contains an area of 1,372,450 miles, and embraces a territory extending from the 20th to the 40th degree; the great commercial emporium of Canton being in the same climate as Calcutta, and the capital, Pekin, in the same as Madrid.—China contains two great rivers, nearly equal to some of the most magnificent rivers of the new world; and ten not inferior in magnitude to the Loire, the Rhine, and the Elbe. Most of these rivers are connected by numerous artificial navigable canals; among which the most remarkable is the great Imperial Canal, which has a course of 600 leagues, and very nearly connects Canton in the 23d degree of latitude with Pekin in the 40th.

The number of the Chinese has long been a subject of doubtful speculation. The question may now be considered as set at rest, by the publication, in 1825, of a census taken by imperial authority in 1813. The practice of numbering the people was always obtained in China, either for fiscal or police purposes; but in consequence of a capitation-tax, previous to the year 1709, the people were tempted to withhold their names; and hence the small numbers exhibited in all our earlier statements. By a census taken in 1792, the population was found to amount to 307,467,200; and by the census of 1813, to 367,821,647; showing an increase in twenty years of about 20 per cent.

The population of China Proper, or the population consisting of the proper Chinese race, amounted, then, twenty years ago, to 367,821,647; which, enormous as it appears, gives for the area of the country no more than 268 to the square mile,—a density not equal to that of our own country, or of several other countries of Europe.

But the population of the Chinese empire now given is that of China Proper only. In Tartary and other dependencies, there is a further population, which is estimated at 2,203,654; making the total, in round numbers, 370,000,000.

The vast country occupied by the Chinese race has been subject to a single government for a period probably not short of thirty ages; in itself an evidence of early civilization, for none but a people to some extent civilized could, considering the vast numbers, have been so long held together. In this long period they have been only twice conquered by strangers, once in the thirteenth century, and once in the sixteenth.—But the Tartar invasions amounted rather to changes of dynasty than conquests such as the northern nations made in other parts of Asia and in Europe. The invaders yielded to the laws and language of the conquered, and became amalgamated with them. The government and civil institutions generally of the Chinese, have, in point of skill and practical utility, a vast superiority over those of all other countries in the east. They are by far the best agriculturists, the best mechanics, and the best merchants in the east. Even in physical strength they have a superiority: a Chinese mechanic has twice the strength and ten times the ingenuity of a Hindoo; and in the native country of the latter, in fair competition with him, he will earn four times the wages.

In China, the principle on which the taxes are imposed is fixed—determined—well-

known. The land, of course, is private property. The amount of the taxes levied in money, is ten millions sterling, and the value of those levied in kind, is about two millions; making the whole about twelve millions sterling, which is under eightpence per head. This is not the whole amount of Chinese taxation; it is only what is remitted to the imperial treasury, after deducting many local and provincial charges. There is no question, however, but that the rate of taxation is small; and this fact, together with its defined character, will go far to account for the wealth and prosperity of the Chinese in comparison with other Asiatics.

Of the products of agriculture, the most remarkable are, wheat for the northern provinces, rice for the southern, with maize and millets for the hills, cotton and silk for the rich plains of the eastern provinces, and tea for the hilly portions of almost every province in China, but particularly for the maritime provinces lying between the 25th and 35th degrees of north latitude. The price of corn in China is twice as great as in the under-peopled countries to the west of it, including even British India. The Chinese have no corn-laws: on the contrary, they welcome every one who brings corn to their ports, as friends, and there is neither duty on the cargo nor port-charges on the ship.—As to tea, every province in China produces it for its own local consumption, as every country of the south of Europe produces a *vin du pays* for its own use; but it is only in three or four provinces,—and the parallel holds true with the vine,—that tea of a superior quality is produced, fit for exportation. Twenty years ago, the tea exported from China was confined to two provinces. As the demand has been increased, it has now extended to four; and should that demand rise still further, it may be extended to a dozen provinces. The soil and industry of China, then, produce fifty millions of pounds weight of tea which had no existence one hundred and thirty years ago. This quantity is worth, to the Chinese, three millions sterling! and the facts show how valuable the commerce of the European nations must already be to a portion of the Chinese people; and how readily such a country would meet the demand were our consumption of tea even as much as five pounds weight a head, instead of being, as it is, short of twenty ounces.

The Chinese have been misrepresented as hating commerce and holding it in contempt. This was the romancing of the East India Directors: and the silly people of this country were so credulous as to believe them for whole centuries together. The Chinese government, jealous of strangers, because essentially a weak one, was necessarily distrustful of foreign commerce. But the Chinese people themselves are eminently a commercial people; and, indeed, to argue that one of the most industrious nations in the world should hold the exchange of commodities in contempt, would be a contradiction in terms. The modest company has insisted, in the same strain of logic which they used twenty years ago in respect to India, that it was impossible to augment the commerce of England with China. If, indeed, they had said—"We, the monopolists, not only cannot increase our commerce with China, but we cannot even prevent it from retrograding," they would have announced a truth worthy of all acceptance. In 1813-14, the export and import trade of the East India Company with China, both in its Indian and European branches, amounted to upwards of thirteen millions and a half of dollars; in 1830-31, it had fallen off to twelve millions of dollars. The trade of British India with China, in the first-named of these years, was considerably short of ten millions of dollars; in the last-named, it considerably exceeded twenty-one millions of dollars,—an increase of about 250 per cent. in sixteen years! This was the damning fact with which Mr. Grant very skillfully and fairly knocked on the head the sophistry of the East India Directors.

Formerly there used to be a constant export of silver bullion to China, but within the last few years it has been constantly exported thence. In the two years ending in March 1831, the gold and silver bullion exported from China amounted to 11,425,496 Spanish dollars, or nearly two millions and a half sterling.

The most remarkable proof of the passion of the Chinese for trade, and of the skill of Englishmen in gratifying it, is afforded by the history and progress of the trade in opium. This indeed is one of the most remarkable circumstances in the general history of commerce itself. Opium is a monopoly under the government of the East India Company, and a prohibited article in China.—The entire commerce, in so far as the Chinese are concerned, is an affair of smuggling. The English free traders and the subjects of the Emperor of China have succeeded completely in baffling the great man of Pekin and the great men of Leadenhall-street. The monopoly has been broken down in Hindustan, and the celestial laws have been put to utter defiance even within the very precincts of the Imperial Palace. Opium has fallen to one half, nay to one third of the price which it bore fifteen or twenty years ago.—

The consumption of this article, which the Chinese use, as we use wine and brandy,—and, in moderation, as innocuously,—spreads every year from district to district, and from province to province; until at last it has begun to find its way into Tartary, along with our calicoes and broad-cloths. In 1816-17, the total quantity of Indian opium consumed by the Chinese was 3,210 chests, equal to 468,660 pounds weight; and the value was 3,657,000 Spanish dollars, or £731,400. In 1830-31, the quantity had increased to 18,760 chests, or 2,626,000 pounds weight; and the value to 12,900,031 dollars, or £2,580,006. The quantity, therefore, had increased in a sixfold proportion, and the value in nearly a fourfold proportion, in fourteen years. The mode in which the contraband trade in opium is conducted, is briefly this. One Portuguese, two Danish, one American, and two British ships, making in all seven vessels, of the united burden of two thousand tons, under the name of "receiving ships," constantly lie at anchor off the little island of Lintin, about fifty-six miles from Canton. To these vessels—unarmed, and, with the exception of officers, manned by the timid natives of India—the smugglers repair at night, and through the joint effects of bribery and intimidation, smuggle into China three millions worth of forbidden drug, in defiance of Chinese police, the Chinese navy, and imperial and provincial periodical edicts and proclamations innumerable.

Two questions of considerable interest remain to be noticed: 1st, Is there any danger of our intercourse with China being interrupted? and 2d, Is there any chance of our being able to extend our trade to other ports than Canton? With respect to the first—we think there is neither risk nor chance of our intercourse being interrupted.

The emperor himself derives from the foreign trade a yearly revenue, which, as the duties on imports alone amount to £300,000 per annum, we suppose cannot be short of half a million, or one twenty-fourth of the revenue of the empire. To part with such a source of income, would be the same thing as parting in this country with a couple of millions a year; and we see that the good Lord Althorp, with all his eagerness to lower the taxes and please the people, finds a reduction of two millions a year impossible.

With respect to the second question—the probability of extending our commerce to other ports than Canton—we think it very considerable. The feeble Tartar dynasty which first excluded Europeans from a general intercourse with the ports of China, is tottering to its fall. During the last seven years, a number of English ships have visited the northern parts of China, and traded with them to some extent. In the last summer, one of these vessels posted a Chinese placard in the streets of Ningpo, a port in the great silk province of Chekian, which was headed "A brief Account of the English Character," and was signed "A Friend to China and England." Placards of a similar character, inviting to trade, it appears, have been posted as far north as the maritime and rich province of Shantung, in the 28th degree of latitude. In reference to this particular ship, one of the Canton journals (for there are two English newspapers, and about 140 British residents at the place) observes—"The merchants were found every where eager to purchase British manufactures; but, owing to the opposition of the Mandarins, we believe that sales were effected only at the port of Fuh-chow-foo, the capital of Fokien, and even there to a limited extent." We have great hopes; British enterprise, British calico, British cotton twist, British broad-cloth, and Indian opium, are doing wonders,—especially the last named, which, according to a complaint made to the Emperor last year, is to be found "in all places, cities, villages, market-towns, camps, and stations."

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

FRANCE.—M. LIONNE, the responsible editor of an obscure Paris paper, called the *Tribune*, has been found guilty of libelling the French Chamber of Deputies, by a majority of 256 members of that chamber against 50. By a majority of 204 against 103, he has been sentenced to an imprisonment of three years, and a fine of 10,000 francs—about £400. The punishment is the heaviest which the law empowers the chamber to inflict for a libellous offence. A subscription has been opened at the office of the *National* to pay the fine. The editor's offence consisted in terming the chamber "prostituted." If the use of the terms "corrupt" or "prostituted," rendered the London journalists liable to fine and imprisonment, of which them would now be at large? M. Lionne was arrested immediately. He was taken to the Prefecture of Police, where he passed the night, and the next day was removed to St. Pelagie.

CHINA.—Accounts from Canton state, that Governor Le had not been executed by order of the Emperor, but had died by his own hand. News of a rebellion on the borders of Honan and Shantung provinces having broken out had reached Pekin. It was also

reported that a dreadful famine prevailed in the province of Fokien. The Leen Chou Highlanders had again broken out in rebellion, had laid the government fort in ruins, and murdered the builders and the commanding officer. The weather at Canton was unseasonable, being close and highly oppressive. The thermometer during the heat of the day was at 80.

EXTRAORDINARY INVESTIGATION.—Lately an adjourned inquest was held at the Christchurch Work-house, Boundary Row, Blackfriar's road, London, on the body of Eliza Baker, aged 17, who was found drowned at the steps of Blackfriar's bridge by a police constable. Mr. Peter Wood, an eating-house keeper, in the Bermondsey New Road, near the Bricklayers' Arms, having seen a paragraph in one of the Sunday newspapers, that the body of a female had been taken out of the Thames on the previous day, and carried to the Work-house to be owned, and from the description given, suspecting that it was the body of a young female who had lived in his service, but who had been discharged by his wife on account of jealousy, went to the work-house and recognised the body of the unfortunate girl. He was very much agitated, and cut off a lock of her hair, and kissed the corpse. He immediately went to an undertaker, and gave orders for the funeral. He then went to the deceased's parents, who reside in Adelaide-street, Whitecross-street, Cripplegate, and informed them of the melancholy fate of their daughter. They also went to the work-house, and, on being shown the body, were loud in their lamentations. The jury, on the following day, proceeded to view the body of the deceased, and, on their return, a number of witnesses were examined, mostly relations, who swore positively to the body. It appeared that the deceased had lived with Mr. Wood as a servant, for four months, but, his wife being jealous, she was discharged about a month ago, since which time Mr. Wood had secretly supplied her with money, to keep her from want. Mrs. Baker, the mother of the deceased, and other relations, spoke in severe terms of the conduct of Mr. Wood, and said that they had no doubt but that he had seduced the unfortunate girl, which had caused her to commit suicide. The jury appeared to be very indignant, and, after five hours' deliberation, it was agreed to adjourn the case until the next day. Mr. Wood the alleged seducer, was now present, but he was so overcome by his feelings at the melancholy occurrence, that nothing could be made of him; in fact he was like a man in a state of stupefaction. Mrs. Wood, the wife, was called in; she is 28 years older than her husband, and shook her head at him, but nothing was elicited from her, her passion completely overcame her reason. A jurymen—The more we dive into this affair the more mysterious it appears against Mr. Wood. This remark was occasioned on account of some marks of violence on the body: there had been a violent blow on the nose, a black mark on the forehead, and a severe wound on the thigh. The jury were commencing to deliberate on their verdict, when a drayman in the employ of Messrs. Whitbread and Co. brewers, walked into the jury-room and said he wished to speak to the coroner and jury. Mr. Carter—What is it you want? Drayman—I come to say, gentlemen, that Mrs. Baker's daughter, you are now holding an inquest on, is now alive and in good health. The coroner and jury, (in astonishment)—What do you say? Drayman—I'll swear that I met her to-day in the streets and spoke to her. The coroner, witnesses, and jury were all struck with amazement, and asked the drayman if he could bring Eliza Baker forward, which he undertook to do in a short time. In the interim the jury and witnesses went again to view the body of the deceased. Mr. Wood shed tears over the corpse, and was greatly affected, as well as all her relations; the drayman's story was treated as nonsense, but the jury, although of the same opinion, were determined to await his return. In about a quarter of an hour the drayman returned, and introduced the real Eliza Baker, a fine looking young woman, and in good health. To depict the astonishment of the relations, and of Mr. Wood, is totally impossible, and, at first, they were afraid to touch her. She, at last, went forward and took Mr. Wood (who stood motionless) by the hand, and exclaimed, "How could you make such a mistake as to take another body for mine?—Do you really think I would commit such an act?" Mr. Wood could not reply, but fell senseless in a fit, and it was with great difficulty that seven men could hold him. After some time he recovered, and walked away, to the astonishment of every one, with Eliza Baker, leaving his wife in the jury-room. Several of the jurors remarked, that they never saw such a strong likeness in their lives as there was between Eliza Baker and the deceased, which fully accounted for the mistake the witnesses had made. The whole scene was most extraordinary, and the countenances of the witnesses and jurymen it is impossible to describe. There was no evidence to prove who the deceased was; and the jury, after about eleven hours' investigation, returned a verdict of found drowned, but by what means the deceased came into the water there is no evidence to prove.