



Temperance Department.

THE A B C OF THE OPIUM TRADE.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN MR. ANDREW ALWORTHY, OF ALBANY, NEW YORK; CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BROADFOOT, OF BRISTOL, ENGLAND; AND MR. CHONG CHING CHEW, OF CANTON, CHINA.

(From the Family Friend, English.)

(Concluded.)

Mr. Alworthy had caught a Tartar. He knew something about the history of the opium trade, and he wished particularly to gain information about its present state. Only the day before, his missionary friend in taking him round Singapore had shown him an opium-smoking den. The close atmosphere, the wretched aspect of the victims, had nearly sickened him; and now when this was cast in his teeth by a Chinese, as the work of Christians, he was fairly non-plussed. The discussion seemed to have broken down, and the two regarded each other in silence, when an unexpected ally appeared on the scene, and a bluff voice called out—

"Hallo! John. What's that you are saying about my cargo? I daresay you own a few chests yourself now; like a pipe besides."

The disputants turned their heads, and there stood the tall, broad-shouldered, genial Captain Broadfoot, who, having come out of his cabin to have a look at the weather and the ship's course, had been quietly listening to the latter part of their conversation. Now Captain Broadfoot had in his time carried many thousands of opium chests to China. The opium trade was a familiar topic of conversation among his passengers—Indian officials, Calcutta and China merchants, and others—as they sat over their wine in the saloon, or smoked their cigars on deck. Captain Broadfoot knew all the ins and outs of the subject, and in his inmost heart had a secret conviction that it was a bad business altogether; but he was not going to confess that to a Chinaman, and he thought the best plan would be to "chaff" him a little and then change the subject. But John Chinaman was too much for him.

"I do nothing in opium myself, captain," he replied. "Nor am I a smoker; though I won't say I have never taken a whiff with a friend out of politeness. But what I do, one way or the other, has no bearing on our argument. I am not a Christian. We were speaking about the excellent effects of Christianity upon nations; and one of these is, I suppose, that you English are so philanthropic as to make and send opium to us; although you do not use it yourselves."

"Pooh! pooh!" said the captain bluntly, "you know that's all nonsense. It is purely a matter of commerce. India can produce it cheaply, and you pay a high price for it. It is the law of supply and demand. You can't alter that by your preaching."

"Just what I say," said the imperturbable Chinese; "we agree perfectly. I say Christian people and heathen people are all after money. Take care of Number One—that's the first command. Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest—that's the first law of nature. Everybody wants to get rich, and nobody can throw stones at another. But still I think you can hardly call it Christian to go to war with us because our emperor would not let you smuggle contraband opium into my country."

"That's an old tale; let bygones be bygones," said the captain, trying the identical parry which Mr. Alworthy had used. "Besides, you know we didn't go to war only about opium; there were lots of things besides. You Chinese were such a conceited, pig-headed set, we were obliged to knock some common-sense into you. You thought yourselves too good to be looked at, too clever to be spoken to. If your peacock mandarins, who are all a pack of liars and rascals, had only consented to admit Lord Napier to an audience, depend upon it there would have been no war at all. But they worried the poor fellow to death, and never would listen to his successors: so the two nations drifted into war for want of a little explanation—that's about the long and the short of it."

It was now Chong's turn to be embarrassed. He knew there was a measure of truth in the captain's vehement denunciation of the mandarins; but Mr. Alworthy came to the rescue by saying—

"Ah! captain, I see you are a true John Bull. Great Britain of course is never in the wrong. But a word with you about these irresistible laws of supply and demand you spoke of. We can't interfere, you say, to

alter the course of the natural laws of demand and supply. But what do you call it when the British Government absolutely prohibits the growth of the poppy throughout nine-tenths of her Indian territory? Is not that interference with the laws of supply and demand? What do you call it when the British Government usurps for itself the entire manufacture and sale of opium in Bengal? What do you call it when the Indian Treasury deals out scores of lacs of rupees to tempt the poor peasants to the cultivation? Is not that interference with the laws of supply and demand? I must say I have always thought the arguments in favor of your opium trade more ingenious than honest."

Captain B. winced at this. If there was anything he prided himself upon, it was upon a fearless, straightforward sincerity. He knew that at bottom he had more than a misgiving that the opium monopoly was a bad thing: only he did not like to confess it before an American and a Chinese. So he shifted his ground, and suggested—

"After all I suppose opium suits the Chinese constitution, or they would not buy it. The universality of the use of stimulants shows it to be natural. One nation likes one, another another. I enjoy a glass of bitter ale myself, though I'm almost a teetotaler, and never touch a drop of spirits while I'm at sea. I don't suppose that opium does any more harm to the Chinese than gin does in England."

"That is an excellent argument for closing your ginshops," retorted Alworthy, "but I can't see it is any excuse for forcing opium upon China."

"Forcing it indeed! Where's the forcing? They are only too glad to get it. You should have seen how they crowded round the opium receiving ships in the old days before the last war."

"I daresay," returned the other, "that the opium-dealers were eager enough for their profits, as the opium-sots were for their quantum of the drug. But the trade was illegal. You smuggled the drug into the country against the decree of the emperor, and the wishes of all but the worst classes of the people. And you are forcing it still; for your boasted Elgin Treaty is simply upheld by your gunboats and ironclads."

"I grant you that. They hate us like poison," said the captain; "they would cut all our throats to-morrow and fling us into the sea if they could. Wouldn't they, John?"

Chong, thus appealed to, was compelled to speak, and he tried to moderate the captain's notion of the hostility of his countrymen.

"The people in the interior are very ignorant," he said, "and hardly know whether foreigners are men or demons. The trading classes have no wish to lose such good customers. But I grant you that the mandarins and literati hate all foreigners, and would gladly exclude them if they could. And really I do not see they are much to be blamed. China has been sinking lower and lower, until now she has been obliged to *kowtow* to Japan. And it is opium which in no small degree helps to drag her down."

Captain Broadfoot felt that the day was going against him, and so called upon his reserve to make the last charge. "Look here, John!" he exclaimed. "It's all very well for your hypocritical mandarins to pretend to be so virtuous, when three-fourths of them are guilty themselves of the very vice they condemn. Besides, every one knows that you are now growing the poppy all over China. You manufacture at home almost or quite as much as you get from abroad. The only difference is that you make a bad article and we sell you a good one."

"I don't know what you mean by bad and good," answered Chong; "but if you mean that Indian opium is about twice as poisonous as our inferior Chinese article, I grant you are right. But I confess with sorrow that the cultivation of the poppy has spread alarmingly during the last ten years. If there should come a famine in China, such as you recently had in Bengal, the poor will die by millions. But there is this excuse for our Government. While they are compelled to admit it from abroad, they cannot consistently chop off people's heads for growing it at home."

"Yes," struck in Mr. Alworthy—"you read the letter which Prince Kung and Wenseang sent to Sir Rutherford Alcock. Captain! if that does not make the blood come into your face, Englishmen are colder-hearted and thicker-skinned than I take them to be. But I know you better. I know you are not sincere in defending this odious traffic. It's only that you don't like to lower your flag before a Yankee and a Chinaman. Come, now, be honest."

Captain Broadfoot pished and pshawed—fidgeted about—shouted to the man at the wheel, "How's her head?" "East by half Nor," replied the steersman. "Keep her so," said the captain. He then took a turn or two upon the deck, felt for the wind, and gave orders that the jib should be set. At last he came back, made an effort—swallowed the bitter pill—and said in a frank tone, "I tell

you what; I don't like this opium trade one whit more than you do. But the fact is we can't do without the money. I have discussed the matter with lots of Indian officers in my time. Bless you, I once was yard-arm to yard-arm with the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal himself. I fired into him every one of the arguments you have been pelting me with. And what do you think was his final reply? Every pound weight of opium introduced into China represents a pound sterling to the Indian Treasury. Six millions a year! Think of that. Why, we hold India with those six millions. Just suppose our fifty millions of revenue cut down to near forty, how could we maintain our fifty thousand bayonets in India? It was the money he contended for—nothing else. 'Show me,' said he, 'any feasible way of raising six millions without opium, and Indian officials with all be as glad as you to get rid of it.' For my own part I cannot stomach that argument. I say if we cannot hold India without degrading ourselves to be panderers to Chinese vice, the sooner we pack up and take ourselves out of India the better. But I don't believe a word of it. India can well afford to pay for her own government, if only it be economically administered."

"True," replied Alworthy. "Govern India wisely and righteously, and you can easily manage to do without some of those fifty thousand bayonets you spoke of. I have just been spending several months in India. It is a splendid empire, and England may well be proud of it. The Englishmen I met there, civilians and military officers, are a noble set of fellows, with some exceptions of course. But you must do your work cheaper there, captain. You must employ natives at 50 rupees a month where you now employ Englishmen at 500. You must accustom yourself to the inevitable displacement of English officials by native; until all but the very highest grade are men of the land. Trust the Hindoos, and they will trust you. No fear of that. And as for this lamentable opium business, remember we have the highest authority for saying 'Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to'—Clang, clang, clang, clang—the vociferous dinner-bell here interrupted Mr. Alworthy's oration. Captain Broadfoot was glad of the excuse for hurrying into his cabin to touch up his hair before descending to the saloon. Alworthy and his Chinese friend made their way downstairs together—and every turn of the screw carried the eleven hundred and thirty chests of opium which lay in the dark hold below their feet some yards nearer to China. F. S. T.

WHAT TO DO WITH THE HABITUAL DRUNKARD.

It is surely more than time that the humane agitation on behalf of the dipsomaniac, so prematurely interrupted by political changes, and especially by the lamented death of its greatest promoter, Dr. Dalrymple, were energetically resumed. The article in the last *Quarterly* is at once an occasion and a favorable omen for resuming the problem.

It is well known that Dr. Dalrymple, at his own expense, paid a visit to America, and personally visited nine institutions of the kind still desiderated on this side of the water. By a happy thought he secured the consent of two of the foremost medical heads of these sanatoria to cross the Atlantic and give their evidence to the Select Committee he had obtained, and which sat shortly after his return. That entire body of evidence is of the most varied and valuable character. It sweeps the entire field, and converges, as we shall directly see, to a plain practical point.

Meanwhile let us recall the present state of the question, considered as a public movement. Dr. Dalrymple's bill had been read a first time, and was put down for a second reading early in 1873, when the resignation of Mr. Gladstone for the time led to an adjournment of the House of Commons. The result was the postponement of the measure till next year. In the interim Dr. Dalrymple died; then followed the political changes which led to a "publican's parliament," and brought the movement for a time to a condition of collapse. But its suspension could not be long. Last summer, in the month of July, a deputation, headed by Sir Thomas Watson, and consisting of the most eminent physicians of London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, waited on the Home Secretary with a memorial, urging the great need for legal control over habitual drunkards, both for their own protection and that of their families, and recalling the terms in which Parliament had already committed themselves to the principle. Mr. Cross could, of course, but hear, and say, in the circumstances, as little as he could. This, however, could only be a staving-off of the evil day; for the facts are now too well established, and set forth in too clear a light, to admit of much temporizing.

That article, said to be from the pen of Lady Eastlake, in the last number of the *Quarterly*, devotes large space to this question,

and is of a very exhaustive and earnest purport. Indeed, outside the Report itself to the Select Committee on Habitual Drunkards with its able, awful, and thrilling details of evidence, we cannot recall any presentation of the case and of the argument that is more complete, and put with more power and pathos, than it is in this article. Is it an indication to its Conservative readers that the time has arrived when something must be done? Is the Master of Phrases, and the Schoolmaster of his party, about to educate his followers up to "the height of this great argument," and introduce a measure of the kind desired? The Sphinx himself best knows. One thing we venture to predict, if he has not yet thought of the matter, it is time he were educating himself; for at no distant date the waves of agitation will be laying his feet.

The whole matter has now shaped itself to a clear and practical issue. The philosophy both of comparative failure here and of encouraging success in America lies in the universally admitted principle that prolonged and, therefore, compulsory detention at the sanataria, is absolutely indispensable in order to cure. This precisely is what America has, and what we still want. The *rationale* of the case is clear as the sun at noon. A morbid effect has been produced upon the brain which only time can remedy. A long continued physiological process of renewal and repair must take place before that demoniac craving for alcoholic stimulants which constitutes the peculiarity of dipsomania can be eradicated. So long as that vitiated condition of the cerebral substance remains, no influence whether of morality, fear, hope, or natural affection is of the least avail. All is dominated and tyrannized over by the one sovereign and imperious craving for strong drink. The delicate, well-born, well-educated, well-bred lady, who in her healthful intervals will be found as answerable to considerations of propriety and self-respect as her neighbors, will lie like a heathen when possessed by the dipsomaniac demon. "I have had the most solemn assurances," says Dr. Peddie, "that not a drop of liquor had crossed their lips, when they could not have walked across the floor—that not a drop was in their houses, when I could find bottles of liquor wrapped up in stockings, and in other articles of clothing; concealed in trunks and wardrobes; put up the chimneys, and under beds, and between mattresses; and on a late occasion, in the case of a lady, after all means had failed in discovering the cause of the continued intoxication, on making a strict personal investigation a bottle of brandy was found concealed in the arm-pit, hung round the neck with an elastic cord, so that she might help herself when she pleased." Need more be said in proof of the absolute necessity of legal powers to secure, under proper safeguards, the control of the helpless dipsomaniac, and to secure prolonged detention till there be time to effect a cure?

It is by virtue of these powers that the American institutions have achieved many and important cures. It is for the want of these that the drink maniac is sent, or voluntarily goes, to our British asylums, to leave them after a brief interval, and relapse into their old ways; so that the best intentions and ablest methods of the benevolent heads of these establishments are hopelessly baffled, and the still enthroned demon in the brain "grins horribly a ghastly smile," and condescends to play with his subject a game at hide and seek!—*League Journal*.

"THE DEVIL'S CHAIN."—A lady writing in the *Christian World* about "The Devil's Chain," says:—Almost any other abuse or social delinquency needs only to be demonstrated to receive universal execration, even if the idler portion of the community end their exertions with their talk and are not actively useful in reformatory movement. Intemperance stands alone in being a vice that is not unfrequently winked at and fostered by foolish arguments that no one really believes to be valid. The work of an M. P. will naturally attract attention; and from this point of view we rejoice to find a man of public position boldly stepping forward to raise a warning voice against an overt evil. The power such a writer may exercise is immense either for good or evil, and the people of this country may be thankful as they see one after another of its chosen leaders standing up manfully for the right, and denouncing the sin that is sheltered and abetted by all the influence and power of selfish interests vested in a traffic which becomes too often immoral and disastrous.

A DIFFICULT PROBLEM.—The *Church at Work*, Rev. Dr. Talmage, editor, in a recent rallying temperance article, declares: "It is high time that non-committal Christians get down off the fence." It also says: "What to do with the advocates of the liquor-traffic we know. We shall fight them to the bitter end. But what to do with those men who sit astraddle the fence on this subject we know not." What shall be done with the "astraddle" obstructionist? "Would thou wert cold or hot?"