

Then a great wave engulfed him, and the line slackened.

"Time it," shouted the men, for the line played out no more.

In silence they waited, the women's eyes growing moist, and the men's hearts failing. Three, four, six minutes passed, and the anxiety deepened—there was no pull on the life-line.

"Draw him in," shouted one man. "Wait," said the captain of the life-saving station. "He gave us ten minutes, and they are not up yet."

Another minute passed, and then there was a shout along the shore, the line began to play again. Out and out it ran, and now far across those waves the watchers could dimly discern the swimmer drawing nearer and nearer to that ill-fated ship.

Then they saw him reach it, and climb the side of the vessel; and they knew now that between that ship and the shore was the saving stretch of life-line, and that a way of escape had been made possible for all those despairing souls.

What was it that had caused such great anxiety to these men and women on the shore? Why, there was no pull on the life-line, and they knew that "no pull" meant the loss of that brave man, and untold anguish and suffering to those upon the sinking vessel.

It would be well for us to think of this in connection with our mission work. For we so often hear the complaint nowadays that there is "too much demand upon our sympathies and our purses." What! Too strong a pull on the life-line? Too much evidence that the heroic men and women over there in India are going ahead, battling with the great billows of sin and sorrow and despair, bringing close to needy souls the Divine Source of life and comfort?

Shame that we should ever complain of that "pull"; and by our withdrawal of gifts and our failures to meet existing emergencies, should even limit the length of the life-line.

IS CHINA IN EARNEST ON THE OPIUM QUESTION?

"The suppression of the opium curse has become a patriotic movement, and when the Government is backed up by all the better public opinion of the land, the ultimate result can hardly be in question.

"Of course there are difficulties. You have the vast body of those who are slaves to this vice, and to whom it means suffering to get rid of it. You have the merchants who trade in it, and who are still making fortunes. You have the officials who have made gains from the opium dens, and who are in other ways closely connected with the vice. You have the higher officials, to whom it means the dislocation of financial arrangements, deficits to be met from other funds, and no little trouble involved in carrying out the edict; you have the farmers who have made a good profit out of the growth of the poppy, and who care only for their own pockets. Where every second male adult is a victim to the opium or morphia curse, the difficulties of immediate suppression are great.

"In some of the large cities the opium dens have been closed, and closed in a single day, amidst the rejoicings of the inhabitants, despite the most strenuous efforts of the den-keepers to obtain an extension of time. Morphin has been destroyed by the Customs, in one instance at least, rather than sell it as has hitherto been done. As an aid to the settlement of business transactions the pipe has been practically