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THE USE OF OPIUM
AND
ITS BEARING ON THE SPREAD
OF
CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA.

A PAPER

Read before the Shanghai Missionary Conference,
19th May, 1877.

BY

THE REV. A. E. MOULE,

OF THE

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

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DURING the month of May in the present year, a General Conference representing all the Protestant Missionaries in China, was held at Shanghai to deliberate upon various questions connected with the propagation of the Gospel in China. At that Conference, which lasted for fourteen days, a number of papers that had been specially prepared for the occasion were read and subsequently discussed. The following paper and a full account of the discussion upon it will be found in the official report of the entire proceedings of the Conference. It has been thought however, that considering the immense importance of the subject treated of in this essay, it would be well that the essay itself together with some of the speeches referring to it and the resolutions arrived at by the Conference, should be published in a separate form for circulation in England.

SHANGHAI, August, 1877.

“THE USE OF OPIUM
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CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA.”

“If looked at in all its difficulties and relations political, commercial, social, it is intricate enough to absorb the minds of the most profound statesmen; while on the other hand, viewed as an enormous wrong perpetrated by a professedly Christian nation it is transparent to the most ignorant.”

E. PEASE, Esq.

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IN the course of an article on the subject of Opium, printed in the Church Missionary Intelligencer for July 1876, the following words occur:—"It is right that those who are interested in Christian Missions should have their attention once more pointedly recalled to that which is the chief hindrance in the progress of the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and which bars against that Gospel the hearts of one third of the human race."

A Chinese Christian writer describing Chinese thought on this subject, remarks, "It is clear, say they,—the Chinese—that our country is being ruined. These Mission schools and hospitals are not really established with a good intention. Why do they not put an end to the sale of Opium? Would not this be better than ten thousand hospitals, and ten thousand preaching halls? The hindrance presented by Opium to the Missionaries, whether physicians or preachers, renders fruitless their efforts."

Unless these words are wholly overdrawn they contain ample justification for the introduction of the subject of Opium at this Conference. We are told and justly so, that "Opium has passed out of the sentimental into the practical stage." Now our desire is that real and practical benefit may accrue to our work as a consequence of our meeting. And here we are met by the statement that there is a thing which constitutes one of our greatest hindrances, and which shuts the brazen gates of Chinese hearts against our message more stiffly than anything else. Is this a mere night-

mare, the consequence of heated imagination, or is it a terrible reality? If it be a delusion, it is high time that we be wakened out of our sleep, and cease to inveigh against a fancied wrong. If it be a fact, no words can express the momentous character of that fact; and whether right or wrong, it is abundantly worth while thoroughly to discuss and ponder the question.

I must honestly confess that had I had the choosing of my own question, I should have worded it differently. It runs at present thus:—"The use of Opium and its bearing on the spread of Christianity in China." Now it is an undoubted fact that opium-smoking is a hindrance to our work. I agree with Mr. Stevenson, of the China Inland Mission, when in his address at Devonshire House in January 1875, he remarked that "this has always been the great difficulty with Missionaries, because the habitual use of opium deadens the moral sense." I suppose that any vice will in time produce this effect; and any vice is of course *per se* an enemy of the Religion of Him Who saves His people from their sins. And yet I cannot see that opium-smoking differs so far from other vices in moral nature and influence as to justify our spending time in the consideration of the mere use of the drug as a hindrance to Christianity. Just so much is certain, viz. that it is a *vice* and not a harmless indulgence in a healthful stimulant. Opium-smokers, perhaps more readily than other vicious persons, confess that they are wrong-doers.

To my own mind *the* great hindrance which opium as distinguished from other vices and evils presents to the Gospel, must be traced not so much to its *use*, as to the *history* of that use, and Mr. Stevenson in the course of his speech fully coincides with this view; and at the risk of appearing to force an opening for the subject, I must in adopting the wording of the question, "The use of Opium, and its bearing on the spread of Christianity in China" be permitted to ask, and to confine my remarks chiefly to the endeavour to answer, the question "How came the Chinese to use this drug as a stimulant and an article of excessive and baneful indulgence? and how far does the moral effect of this history bear upon our mission work?"

I must be permitted also in passing to notice the fallacy which somewhat persistently underlies the arguments of those who criticize the present Anti-opium agitation. It is assumed that our great object is to cure the Chinese of opium-smoking, and that one means to attain this most desirable end is the stoppage of the Indian supply. Surely this is a fallacy and a mistake. Our great object is to rid Christian England of the shame and wrong connected with her opium-selling, more than to cure Heathen China

of her vice of opium-smoking. So far as human agency is concerned, China must cure herself. Hospitals and Opium Refuges practically useful as they are, must yet ever be so few and feeble as to act the part of protest prompting and suggesting, never of universal efficacy.

This is the true issue. England has not only injured China by her share in the trade; she has through the moral effect of the history of that trade, crippled her power to apply the one remedy for all China's woes—the Gospel.

Now in approaching this melancholy and disastrous history, I do not forget that English guns opened China. I agree with the veteran Dr. Williams, when in his interesting narrative of the voyages of the *Himmaleh* in 1837, he remarks that "the agency adequate to open up China must be far more powerful and incisive than an unarmed brig. It demanded the power of a large fleet to break up the seclusiveness of her rulers, so that they could never restore it." The arrogance, conceit, and supercilious insolence with which forty years ago the Chinese treated foreigners can hardly be realized now; though indeed somewhat loud echoes of those old voices do sound occasionally in our ears. All who care to study the subject will find in Dr. Morrison's *Life*, as well as in the pages of the *Chinese Repository* and of contemporary histories, astonishing descriptions of Chinese exclusiveness and pride. Such must sooner or later have been brought down before the force of western intercourse. But it was a dire calamity that one chief agency which hastened the catastrophe was the Opium Trade; a thing immoral in Chinese eyes; and immoral, for it was then illegal as contraband, in English eyes. This surely was not only the match which fired the mine; may I not say that it supplied much of the powder which loaded the mine? And this at the time indefensible trade, gave a plausible colouring to the indefensible exclusive policy of China.

Now lest I be charged with giving my conclusions without my premises, let me observe in passing that the strongest words in condemnation of the trade are fully sanctioned by the utterances of public men at the present day. Mr. Beach during the Debate in July 1875—himself a member of the Indian Finance Committee, and speaking and voting against the motion for the abolition of the monopoly, calls it "*this immoral trade in opium.*"

Mr. C. B. Denison M.P. for Yorkshire, a man of large Indian experience, and yet an upholder on financial considerations of the present system, admitted that "if the consideration of the question could be based on moral grounds, there were few members who would not go into the lobby with

the honourable gentleman" (Sir Wilfrid Lawson—that is in his motion for the abolition of the trade).

Mr. Bourke, the present Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in opposing Mr. Richard's anti-opium resolution in July 1876, stated that "he had never heard any one say ought in the House of Commons in favour of the Opium Trade from a moral point of view."

Sir George Campbell, formerly Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, and an advocate also on financial grounds for the present system, admits that "as an Englishman he is very much troubled about it. We have, I believe, says he, forced opium upon China."

Yet surely Mr. Bourke is wrong in saying that the Opium Trade has never had a moral defender in the House of Commons. The trade as it now exists, has been defended of course on Free Trade principles; but the defence is feeble and tottering when we remember that on the seller's side it is not so much a matter of private enterprise as a Governmental monopoly; whilst on the buyer's side, the Government of China lose scarcely an opportunity of expressing their resolution, Treaty or no Treaty, to contemplate—and if possible to treat Opium, as different from other commodities. Moreover the late Prime Minister—Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Grant Duff late Under Secretary for India, and Lord Salisbury the present Indian Minister, have all defended the trade on the ground that opium-smoking is an ancient Chinese vice, and that England has but supplied an already open market, making the opium trade simply on a par with the spirit trade as to morality. Now supposing this view to be correct, I would remind you that in one hundred years the consumption of foreign opium has grown from 200 chests per annum to 80,000 chests; and that in eighty years England has drawn £184,000,000 sterling or some \$800,000,000 from China as the price of opium delivered in her ports; a tremendous responsibility this, for a Christian and philanthropic power to have fostered and developed, even if she did not introduce, so terrible a vice. This would have been a tremendous responsibility for England, I say, even had China been open for a hundred years, and had this drug been an article of commerce, willingly placed from the first by her authorities on an equality with other goods. But has this been so? Does this give a fair representation of the true state of the case? I must pause but a moment to remind you further, how sad is the mockery of the argument that opium-smoking in China is no worse than the use of alcoholic drinks in England. Sir Thomas Wade in his memorandum concerning the Revision of the Treaty of Tientsin speaks thus: "to me it is vain to think otherwise of the use of opium in China

than as a habit many times more pernicious nationally speaking than the gin and whisky drinking which we deplore at home." Suppose Sir Thomas to be wrong. Granted for the moment that the two vices are on a par. What then? Is not all England awakening now in alarm and earnest practical anxiety, desiring to grapple with this great shame and curse of a Christian country, intoxication?

But the question before us now, is—where does opium come from, and how far is England guiltily responsible for its evil effects? Now we are met with two arguments on this subject; firstly, by the direct assertion that the Chinese have always known and always smoked the drug; and secondly, by the indirect argument that it stands to reason that such must have been the case, since the trade could not otherwise have sprung so rapidly into existence, neither would the Indian Government have sent their opium blindly to a doubtful or non-existent market. Now with reference to the first point, the following is all the direct evidence which I have been able to collect. In a geography published 26 years ago by Sen, formerly Lieut.-Governor of Fuh-kien, speaking of imports from India, he says "formerly Chinese cloth was all woven of hemp, but in the reign of T'ae-tsoo of the Yuen dynasty (A.D. 1280-1295) the invasion of India led to the the acquisition of the cotton plant, which has now spread through the central domain (*i.e.* China). The poisonous drug opium, however, also came from India. Note that Sze-chuen in its southern districts and Yün-nan in the western being conterminous with India also plant the poppy. A strange portent it is that this worthless and mischievous vapour should be produced of all places in the world precisely in the original realm of Buddha." "It is by no means certain that the author asserts that opium was introduced with cotton 600 years ago, but merely that it was derived at some period like cotton from India."* Mr. Cooper in his evidence before the House of Commons remarks that the habit of smoking opium on the western borders of China, has existed for a great many years, probably, he might say, for two centuries. Sir R. Alcock refers to a Chinese historical work dated A.D. 1736, which notices the culture of the poppy in Yung-cheng foo. Opium is mentioned also in the Pên-ts'ao or Chinese Herbal, published about 200 years ago, and 300 years ago in the Ming dynasty it was known. Dr. Macgowan has started the interesting question whether the Mings did not suppress the use of opium which had come into vogue during the Yuen dynasty. Marco Polo makes no allusion to the poppy in his account of the productions of China 600 years ago; a fact surely not without significance.

* Quoted from a letter in the "Globe," Sept. 1, 1876, by the Rev. G. E. Moule.

I am informed, however, that testimony has recently been extracted from native books, which tends to establish the fact that the culture of the poppy existed in some parts of China, so far back as the year A.D. 732. But none of these authorities cited above countervail the allegation that the opium-smoking mania in China is comparatively recent and has been fostered if not created, by the action of the Indian Government. Mr. T. T. Cooper in his "Pioneer of Commerce" informs us that Father Deschamps who had been upwards of 30 years in Sze-chuen *had seen the growth of opium introduced*; for when as a young priest he first entered the province, its culture was scarcely known. Indeed Sir George Balfour, one of the founders of Shanghai, in his speech two years ago in the Opium Monopoly Debate remarked, however rashly, and I fear erroneously, "as to the cultivation of opium by the Chinese themselves; he did not believe it"!

I believe that all the direct evidence of which we are possessed goes to prove that the existence of the vice of opium-smoking in China prior to the advent of the Opium Trade proper, was so infinitesimal as compared with its after development, that it may almost be said not to have existed. Certainly the utmost which can be sustained by this evidence is that the habit was indulged in by the Chinese people; that the Chinese authorities had succeeded in controlling and suppressing the vice, when the advent of foreign opium revived and reinvigorated the plague.

The second argument, of a deductive nature, to the effect that proof apart, it *must* have been so in the nature of things—that the Chinese *must* have been fond of opium or the Indian Government would never have supplied the drug nor the Chinese have so greedily consumed it, this argument leading to the very heart of the question, need not in itself detain us long. Is it sound? Would commercial men recognize it? Is it not a well known and legitimate occupation to *seek* markets for goods? Is it not a well-known device in mercantile operations to advertise—puff, if you please—goods, and to create a liking for them? Sir Walter Raleigh would be astonished to hear that because he introduced tobacco-smoking into England, it is supposed on this account to have been an ancient vice—shall I say?—in England. Or the great ancestor of the Shaftesbury family, Sir Anthony Ashley, Queen Elizabeth's Secretary at War, who first grew cabbages in England would demur to the fact that because men in merry England do now largely consume cabbages, therefore they were in existence before he tried the experiment.

And that I am not making a grim joke, but am pointing to a sad and possible fact; listen to the following account of doings elsewhere. In Aracan prior to British rule, the punishment for using opium was death.

Opium was legalized however, when England assumed the Government, and organized efforts were made by Bengal agents to introduce the use of the drug, and to create a taste for it amongst the rising generation, by opening shops, inviting the young men, and at first distributing it gratis. Is it a great stretch of the imagination to suppose that on the coast of China seventy or eighty years ago, the British smuggler found equally enterprising agents amongst the Chinese to create a taste and force a market for the drug?

But the British Opium Trade is not a mere private enterprise, it is a Governmental affair. Why descend to such devices? Why—in the words of Sir W. Muir—has the Indian Government since 1821 at all events acted “not as a revenue collector merely, but as a trader, pushing ably and vigorously their interests in the trade, anxious to trim the market, growing, manufacturing, selling, overstimulating the production, overstocking the market, and flooding China with opium”? Why? Simply for that reason, which stands out in clear solitude when all the mists and dust of subterfuge and by-arguments are blown away, money, the necessity for money—this is the real support of the opium trade now, this *was* its origin. Not so much Chinese need of opium, as English greed of money, and it will be supported I fear, by Chinese cupidity, and refusal to abandon the opium revenue. The story is in brief as follows: Clive’s victory at Plassy on the 23rd June 1757, virtually transferred to England the sceptre of India; and in 1765, when the Dewanni (or supreme power) passed into the hands of the British, the old monopolies held by the native rulers of the land passed also into the possession of the conquerors. Three of these monopolies, opium, salt, and saltpetre, were taken over by the Court of Directors of the East India Company into their own hands. In 1775, Warren Hastings during the stormier days of his rule, wishing to win the favour of Mr. Sullivan, the Chairman of the Company, presented this monopoly to his son, Mr. Stephen Sullivan, a young man, just arrived in India. Opium however, (mark this fact) was reported to be no longer saleable in Bengal, and the Supreme Council in order to make the monopoly lucrative for the present and future incumbents, entered on the daring speculation of sending it tentatively to Canton. Previous to this date, the Portuguese importing 200 chests annually were the only foreign traders in the drug, they procuring it from the Danes in India, and the Danes in their turn from the English.

The first venture in this now vast and lucrative trade started as if it were a piratical enterprise, armed to the teeth. “It was—said Mr. Fitzhugh a hundred years ago—a business of difficulty and disgrace, and a

deviation from the plain road of an honourable trade to pursue the crooked path of smuggling." For already the Chinese authorities had taken alarm, and had forbidden the importation of opium on very severe penalties; the opium on seizure was burnt; the vessel in which it was brought into port was confiscated, and the Chinese in whose possession it was found were put to death."

This state of things was well known in Calcutta; and accordingly the "Nonsuch" and "Patna" laden with opium dropped down the Hooghly on their voyage to Canton, armed also, the one with thirty-six twelve-pounders, and the other with twelve two-pounders and two twelve-pounders, "to ensure the safety" as it was announced, "of the Company's property."

The intention of Colonel Watson, the Company's engineer, as stated by himself, was to erect in China an opium monopoly, and by means of it to open trade with the Northern and Eastern districts of China. The plan succeeded, but a brand of shame has been inflicted on the fair fame of our country which probably will never be effaced.* I need not detain you long with the after steps of the sad dark history. How the trade after some unsuccessful ventures struck root and grew; how in 1797, the Chinese authorities again formally prohibited importation; how in 1800, so strong was the protest and so heavy the penalty denounced, that for a few years the Court of Directors actually interdicted the conveyance of opium in the Company's ships; how the prohibition was removed and the trade steadily increased; how in 1809, and in subsequent years, bonds were required from the Hong merchants at Canton that ships on their arrival at Whampoa had no opium on board; how in 1821, the year when the East India Company more formally adopted and worked the monopoly as their own enterprise, specially stringent measures were adopted at Canton to suppress the traffic; how foreigners were branded with the disgrace and responsibility of so pernicious a practice, and were reminded (Oh! terrible irony of this heathen exhortation to a Christian power) that "the gods will carry fair traders over the ocean in safety, but over contraband smugglers the wrath of men and gods is suspended"; how the Court of Directors, whilst expressing "their utter repugnance to the trade, and longing to abolish its consumption, yet as the Chinese would have it," continued deliberately to grow and prepare the drug expressly for the Chinese market, and to ship it under England's lion flag, though contraband in Chinese law, detested in Chinese morality, and denounced by Chinese statesmen; how for sixty long years this smuggling continued; how the Emperor Tao-kwang himself a reclaimed opium-smoker, roused himself to save his country, and sent the energetic but in-

* See C. M. S. Intelligencer for July, and Christian Observer for August 1876.

solent Lin to exterminate the plague ; how the destruction of 20,283 chests of surrendered opium, and the concomitants of needless insolence to Lord Napier, Captain Eliot, and the Canton residents, led to the war of 1841 ; how the Chinese beaten and humbled would surrender Hongkong and open their ports and pay for the confiscated opium, but would not legalize the detested drug ; how for fourteen years more though still contraband, the trade, with the five new ports for its ingress, rapidly increased ; how the lorcha *Arrow* on the 8th October 1856 was seized—illegally indeed, but that seizure prompted, it would seem, by irritation on account of continuous and daring smuggling ; how this seizure led to the war of 1856, and to the Treaty of Tientsin and Convention of Peking, by the 26th and 28th Articles of which signed finally on the 24th October 1860, the struggle of a century closed, and opium was admitted on the tariff rules ; admitted, but with repugnance, shame, and undying hostility ; how now for seventeen years England has been—not a smuggler indeed, but a poisoner ; how amidst the gorgeous Imperial pageant at Delhi, with famine desolating South India from the W. Ghauts to the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Government so far from renouncing their own share in the Opium Trade, actually recognized with public approval Holkar's share in the Malwa growth, by presenting to him a banner with this strange device, three poppy heads ; and how in China not all the force of Treaty rights, not all the fair show of Custom's tariff, not all the prestige of the great and just Government of British India, not all the arguments of anxious financiers, nor the protests of philosophical speculators, have deprived the drug of its pernicious effects, or the trade of its evil name ! All these are—are they not?—matters of history. Are you aware of them ? Have you studied them ? Have you pondered them ? Christianity is our common religion, our common glory and our hope ; and the disgrace brought to one Christian power by a trade which with the utmost reluctance and the profoundest sorrow, I yet denounce as immoral in its origin, and as most injurious in its long life and present existence—its present existence being connected without a break with the past—this disgrace cannot but affect us all, and hinder the progress of our common work. I might pause here, simply leaving these facts before you ; but as we are supposed to be practical in this opium question, I offer before I close, four subjects for consideration ; firstly, an incentive to prompt and immediate action ; secondly, the probable results to China and thirdly to India, of any great revolution in the Opium Trade ; and lastly, a thought as to our own practical duty in this matter.

The Chinese Minister to England has stated in reply to a deputation from the Society for the suppression of the Opium Trade, that China is

anxious to abolish the trade, but that other countries besides England must co-operate in order to make the abolition possible. This is a piece of information surely well known to all who have studied the subject, and need not detain us now, for most certainly the initiative must be taken by England. England alone supporting the trade, could prevent the action of all other Treaty powers; England alone repenting and reforming, would in all probability enlist the support and countenance of other countries.

1.—It is impossible to look with anything but the gravest concern and alarm on the rapid increase in the growth of native opium. In the year 1875, from Chefoo, Hankow, Newchwang, Ningpo, and Tientsin, (the only reports I have seen) the account is the same, the production is steadily on the increase. Mr. Grosvenor reports one-third of the land in Yün-nan as occupied with the culture of the poppy. Mr. Gubbay reports 50,000 piculs as produced annually in Sze-chuen, and as much if not more in Shen-si. Mr. Taintor reports it as spreading rapidly in Mongolia and Manchuria. This cannot fail ere long to affect seriously the Indian trade, and possibly in the long run it will drive the Indian drug altogether from the market. It is by no means certain (as is often confidently asserted) that Chinese opium can never equal Bengal opium. Indian-grown tea was at first far inferior to Chinese. But by care and pains it has been so improved that 20,000,000 lbs. of Indian tea are equal in tea-making power to 25,000,000 lbs. of average Chinese tea, and the Chinese are said to be now imitating Indian tea. Now it may be said that this prospect of the Indian drug being turned out of the Chinese market is not much to be regretted. I think on the contrary, that it is a prospect of the utmost danger. I do not refer now to the loss which the Indian revenue will sustain. I do not dwell even on what the *North China Daily News* calls the consequent “*demoralization of the entire country by the home growth.*”* I refer to the then *irreparable* stain on the English name, and by implication on Christianity. And as this ousting of the Indian drug—defeated, disgraced, banished, is not a mere dream, but a possibility, it behoves us as Christian Missionaries to seek promptly, at once, ere it be for ever too late, some way of honourable retreat, some plan for straightforward confession of wrong, and some practical reparation for this long evil.

* Dr. Galt gathers from the record of the opium patients received into his Hospital at Hangchow that opium-smoking has a very prejudicial influence on the increase of the population. To 154 married patients of the average age of 33 years, during an average period of 7.9 years, only 146 children were born. Opium is sometimes said to have an anti-periodic action over ague; but this is not the case, several patients having had that disease for years while smoking. The paroxysm, however, may in some cases be mitigated, by taking the pipe when the fit is coming on.

2.—But it is objected that any great revolution in the Indian Trade such as its gradual suppression or immediate abolition, will produce these two injurious results; China will grow a far inferior drug and in ever increasing quantities, and India will lose her revenue and have to tax heavily her own subjects. I reply very briefly that we possibly underrate the far reaching repressive power of the Chinese Government. The *North-China Daily News* in a leader of the 24th April 1874, remarks that “*the question remains whether the Chinese Government if left to itself might not even yet succeed in repressing the use of a drug which is so gravely deleterious to its people.*” It may be true that Pao Yuen-shen, the Governor of Shan-si, finds the enforcing of edicts against opium growing simply a braving of unpopularity. The Chinese may fairly be expected to grumble against the prohibition of native growth, when the doors of the Empire are opened to the foreign drug. But what if the foreign drug were shut out once more? What if as the *North-China Herald* somewhat naively suggests “*the clause legalising the import of the drug be elided from the Treaty, and the responsibility of preventing its ingress be thrown on to the Chinese authorities*”? Would not the deep and strong moral feeling of the people, which execrates the drug and the habit as a plague and a vice, support then the Government in their restrictive measures? The *Celestial Empire* informs us that on the 17th June 1876, from 1,200 to 3,000 opium dens were simultaneously closed in Soochow, and this without riot or serious resistance. In the provincial capitals of Nanking and Hangchow, opium dens are also being closed by the officials. During the paper-man excitement last autumn, every gong in the city of Hangchow was bought up and vigorously clanged by the people as a charm against the sprites. But at the Tao-tai’s word in his quieting proclamation, however unwillingly, every gong was silenced and the excitement died away. Cannot the authorities in China prohibit mining, when the poor people know well that gold, iron, and coal, are lying in lazy profusion side by side in their hills? And could China, think you, do nothing to eradicate or to blight this plague, were her hands set free, and were she placed on her trial to make good her virtuous protestations of a hundred years?

3.—Am I asked what India is to do for her revenue? I might reply generally that India the pride and glory of the British Crown, can receive nothing but harm from such a source of revenue. But this is sentimental. It has been suggested as a practical measure by a retired Indian civilian that the exports may be reduced one-tenth annually, leading thus to higher prices, and so not at first decreasing the revenue. In the year 1868-69, the number of chests was 74,949 and the revenue therefrom £6,700,000. In

the year 1867-68, the number of chests was 88,428 and the revenue £6,100,000. The number of chests—that is, were more by 13,500, and the revenue was less by £600,000. Again in 1848-49, from 33,563 chests they realised £2,780,000, and in 1853-54, from 53,321 chests they realised only £2,500,000,—an increase of 20,000 chests (as many as Lin destroyed), and a decrease of £280,000. The great difficulty will be, doubtless, with the opium grown in the dominions of Holkar and Scindia. But the same policy of gradual repression without the alarm of sudden decrease of revenue might be adopted by an advance in the transit dues which have been similarly increased more than once in former years. It has been suggested also that India's resources, but for the soporific ease produced by this source of revenue, might be developed far more rapidly than at present. Why! in six years' time, the export of Indian tea to Great Britain has risen from fifteen to twenty-nine million pounds; and the export of grain is very rapidly on the increase. The curtailing of expenditure on public works (save in such times of distress as the present great famine) and on the military and civil establishments has also been recommended, and the reimposition of the income tax in the more popular form of the Madras Veesabudda tax which affects those classes alone which pay no other tax. All these suggestions have been made, and it is further to be observed that the result to England would probably be very great. Mr. Alderman McArthur informs us that China with four hundred million inhabitants, takes only six million pounds' worth of British products, whilst the Australian colonies with four millions of people, take fourteen million pounds' worth of goods annually.

Now these plans may be more or less open to objection; and some of these comparative estimates may be somewhat fallacious, but can it be asserted that financial difficulties may condone for immoral practices, and money conquer Christianity? *

Anti-opium agitators neither forget nor ignore the tremendous difficulties entailed by the long continuance and wide ramifications of the trade—the ruinous consequences, not to the Government of India alone, though this is the loudest protester, but to those whose vested interests more or less connected with the trade would be injured by its abolition; nor again, do they forget or ignore the point noticed in the *North-China Daily News* of the 14th May, viz. the serious results of the large importation of bullion which the disappearance of opium would necessitate; nor, further, the serious difficulty the Chinese would experience in grappling alone with the smuggling trade which would again revive along the coast. But on the other hand we cannot forget or ignore the fact that present circumstances cannot alter

history, or this other fact that upas tree levellers though looking with a kindly eye on vested interests, are not wont to allow such interests to hamper for ever the march of justice and humanity.

4.—And now finally, what is to be done by ourselves? I may remind you in passing that some signs of a change are visible. Lord Salisbury has given a distinct pledge that henceforth efforts shall not be used to increase the production of opium for export to China by extending the monopoly system. Moreover by the Convention of Chefoo, under the third head of the section on trade, it is enacted that “On Opium, Sir T. Wade shall move his Government to sanction an arrangement differing from that affecting other imports.” The precise meaning and effect of this arrangement, not yet however ratified, I am not wise enough to understand or predict; but it seems designed to enable the Chinese to repress consumption and restrict importation.

I see from the latest papers that Sir T. Wade whilst admitting to the full the dire evil wrought by opium, yet thinks that nothing can be done by political agitation in England, and that the Chinese Government is unable even if willing, to act in the matter. I fear that Sir T. Wade may be right; but it is a case in which an experiment cannot injure even if it fail to relieve.

As to our own duty I would suggest (1)—that all who have not yet done so, join by subscription and by active help, the Anglo-Oriental Society for the suppression of the Opium Trade. Its object is “*to urge the British Government entirely to disconnect itself from, and discourage the opium traffic, at the same time restoring to the Chinese Government perfect independence of action to deal with opium in any way it may please.*” Such a Society obviously requires liberal pecuniary support if it is to do the necessary preliminary work of enlightening the public at home who are strangely ignorant on the subject, and of stirring the warm and generous sympathies of Englishmen for the suppression of a wrong which though less sensational and less startling than the Bulgarian atrocities, is surely infinitely wider and deeper in its destructive results than they. The monthly magazine the *Friend of China*, has been criticized, as containing some unwise articles, some doubtful statistics, some unnecessary rhapsody. Let us then supply its indefatigable editor with sober fact and reliable information. (2)—Shall we as a Missionary Conclave—or if our American and German friends from chivalrous feelings decline to join in such a document, shall English Missionaries alone—memorialize the Empress of India, our ever-beloved Queen, to remove if it may be, this dark stain from the lustre of her glittering crown?

It has been suggested that it may be possible by a public manifesto to separate Christianity from policy in this question. Such a document requiring however great care in wording, should state the fact that foreigners as Christians have never ceased to deplore the trade, and that they are at present urging their own Government to restrict, and if possible abolish, the trade; expressing at the same time the hope that the Chinese Government will act promptly and cordially in concert with the English Government should such measures be adopted by the latter.

Shall I be considered presumptuous if in conclusion I suggest that perhaps very few of us have ever earnestly and definitely carried this difficult and disastrous subject to God in prayer? In the tradition to which Dr. Macgowan has drawn attention, it is stated that the founder of the Ming dynasty for three days in succession implored Divine aid for suppressing the use of opium. And in a placard now widely posted, and quoted by the learned doctor, it is stated that "during a former dynasty Heaven prohibited opium; during this dynasty it can be interdicted only by Heaven." And we who believe in that all prevailing Name which moves the hand that moves the world may learn—not the *mode* indeed, but the *duty* of prayer even from the Chinese.

Oh! how freely we should breathe were this great incubus removed. We could be almost content then to be disliked as men as much as opium, even as Prince Kung in a peevish mood assured Sir R. Alcock to be the case. If but the Christian name, if but Christianity be set free from the long shame, we poor ignorant and infatuated missionaries might afford to live still under a cloud.

Indeed were it possible to say that Christian England regrets the injuries of the past and brings opium no more, Christianity I believe could afford—not to laugh at, but to meet with serene courage and confident hope all other obstacles in her way. I do not underrate them. I should have lived and worked in China to very little purpose if I knew nothing from experience of their power.

Ancestral worship with its moral semblance, ancient sanctions and lucrative advantages; Confucian morality with its pride of learning and high sounding verbiage; Taoism and Buddhism satisfying in a way the straining gaze of the human soul into the unseen world which is its true home, and supplying prescriptions for present religious wants and future immortal hopes; covetousness, licentiousness, materialism, worldliness—in all the breadth of that term, self-righteousness, the pride also of semi-civilization less teachable than barbarism and without the humility of true culture; the incrustations caused by centuries of isolation, superstition, ignorance

and sin ; all these are tremendous foes. But they are *heathen* systems and *heathen* sins ; the natural foes of Christ's Church.

This Opium Trade is a Christian's monopoly. Its history is a Christian sin, a Christian shame. Take away this abnormal, this unnatural ally of heathenism, and we can meet the enemy without doubt of the final issue.



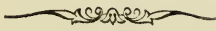
APPENDIX.

I.

SPEECHES DELIVERED UPON THE OPIUM QUESTION AT
THE SHANGHAI MISSIONARY CONFERENCE,
19TH MAY, 1877.

II.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CONFERENCE.



I

The Rev. Alex. Williamson LL.D. of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, Chefoo, said that the Opium question was undoubtedly one of the most serious questions which had come before the Conference. Its gravity could not be over-rated; but the practical bearing of the subject on the members of the Conference was that it should lead them to enquire how they might best meet this gigantic obstacle to the spread of the Kingdom of God in China.

Mr. Moule's paper suggested that each missionary should at his own station at once set about the formation of an Anti-Opium Society amongst the natives, and the suggestion was a good one; but we could not ignore the fact that the evil had now become so great,—humanly speaking—so *irreparable*, that the remedy was out of our hands. God alone could save China from this awful curse. The British Government might stop the cultivation of the poppy in India, but the Chinese would only grow it more extensively. The Chinese Government might issue proclamations, and a few amongst the officials might enter vigorously into a project for suppressing the vice, but this would not go far to destroy it. There are millions in China to whom opium is dearer than houses, or children, or wives—dearer even than life itself. By such persons every device would be attempted and every risk run, in order to enable them to satisfy the craving which opium creates, and one of the saddest features of the whole subject is that this remark holds true not only of the people in general, but also of a very large proportion of those in authority—the officials of all ranks. It appeared to him therefore, that while every means should be prosecuted which would tend to originate and foster an anti-opium spirit amongst the young, as well as amongst those of the Chinese who are patriotic and opposed to the vice, our chief duty in the matter was the duty of prayer. Our only hope was in the power of the Holy Ghost acting on the minds of men. God alone Who can change and strengthen human nature can meet and overthrow the demon that has taken possession of so many even of the finest minds in China, exercising a fascination over them far worse than the fascination produced by the excessive use of alcohol.

The Rev. R. H. Graves M.D. of the Southern (American) Baptist Mission, Canton, said that an Anti-Opium Society had been formed by the native Christians in Canton. They published for general circulation amongst their countrymen, a translation into Chinese of an appeal written by Mr. Turner of the Anti-Opium Society in England, and also a hand-bill exhorting people to abstain from the use of opium. At first they seemed to be accomplishing but little practical good, and they therefore appointed a day for special prayer for God's guidance and blessing in their work. Before long they heard of a remarkable answer to their supplications. Several of the Chinese officials and gentry, in response to Mr. Turner's appeal, had themselves formed an Anti-Opium Association and they invited the Christians to attend their meetings and join them in their efforts to put down the evil. They offered good prizes for essays on the subject and have since published some twenty-five of these essays together with a translation of Mr. Turner's paper and a number of popular exhortations against opium-smoking. They submitted the essays to the Christians asking them to reject any that they thought objectionable and they have also proposed to the missionaries to co-operate with them in opening a shop for the sale of anti-opium publications and other books bearing on morality even though they should be Christian, they themselves offering to bear all the expenses of renting the shop, etc.

Dr. Graves thought it was important to urge the native Christians to form Anti-Opium Societies and believed that by so doing they would place themselves in sympathy with all the most moral of their fellow countrymen, while by thus arraying themselves actively against evil, they would give Christianity a higher position in the eyes of the more thoughtful amongst the heathen.

The Rev. D. Hill of the Wesleyan Mission, Wusueh, said that there appeared to be some doubt existing in certain quarters as to the evil effects of opium-smoking. This was a question however, on which no doubt existed in the minds of the Chinese themselves. Again and again he had heard Chinamen say "If you want to be revenged on your enemy, you need not strike him, you need not go to law with him or do anything of the kind, you have only to entice him into smoking opium. If you can give him a taste for opium, you will take the surest means in your power of ruining him utterly." A remark of this kind sufficiently indicates the view which the Chinese themselves hold of the tendency of opium-smoking. Another evidence of the immoral tendency of the practice is that opium-smoking is generally found to be closely associated with prostitution. A large number of opium dens are infested with prostitutes. Opium is also a com-

mon cause of suicide. Mr. Hill thought that as missionaries we should raise our protest against the conduct of the English Government in relation to the opium traffic, on moral grounds. It had been said that this traffic produced a revenue to India of eleven million pounds sterling per annum. It mattered not whether it were eleven million or eleven hundred million; if the *source* of revenue be immoral, the *amount* of it cannot justify its collection. He thought the English public were not at all acquainted with the real state of the case and that if it were plainly laid before them, we might hope to see the traffic suppressed.

The Rev. C. Douglas LL.D. of the English Presbyterian Mission, Amoy, supported a motion which had been proposed by the Rev. C. W. Mateer of Tungchow for a committee to draw up resolutions on the Opium Trade. He thought however, that great care should be taking in preparing such resolutions, and that no statements should be made which could not be fully proved. Some incautious statements made in connexion with the Anti-Opium Society of England had done harm. Any utterances made by this Conference should combine deep earnestness of feeling with great caution. As to the reality of the evil complained of, he said that the native churches in Amoy were unanimous in their rule against admitting opium-smokers to Church-membership. On this point the native Christians are quite as decided as the missionaries. A convert who smokes opium is at once put under Church discipline.

In considering the means to be used for the suppression of the opium traffic, Dr. Douglas said he had learned in the case of the Temperance movement, that it was not well to attempt too much at first. The first thing to be tried in the present instance, was to sever the connexion of the Indian Government with opium and also to resist any proposal to restrict the power which the Chinese Government now possesses over the traffic. By existing treaties the Chinese Government has unlimited power of imposing taxes upon opium when once it is out of foreign hands. In this respect Opium is on quite a different footing from all other articles of import, for with regard to them, there are clauses in the treaties regulating the rate of taxation in the interior of the country, but in the case of opium, there is nothing to prevent the Chinese Government from putting on any duty they please in the interior. This power should not be at all restricted, but every assistance should be given to the Chinese Government in the exercise of its legal powers of repressing the sale and use of the drug.

He said he had also learned from his experience in the Temperance cause, that a distinction may be made between the trade and those engaged in it. He would wage war to the last extremity against the liquor traffic in Eng-

land, yet he would admit that there are many good men engaged in it. So whilst we attack the opium trade we should beware of denouncing all who are connected with it. It is wonderful how far a man whose *principles* are right, may be blinded in the *application* of those principles, by custom or by interest. Yet on the other side, he would relate a fact. Many years ago the head of one of the principal firms engaged in the sale of opium, residing at one of the treaty ports of China, was deeply affected by the power of the Gospel. He at once felt the need of reconciling his position with his religious convictions; he set to work to write a pamphlet in defence of the opium trade; it was almost ready for the press when he saw that his arguments were faulty, he tore up his manuscript and resigned his situation.

The Rev. G. John of the London Missionary Society, Hankow, said that he was very thankful for the admirable paper to which we had all listened with so much interest. Especially he felt thankful to Mr. Moule for calling the attention of the Conference to the duty of prayer in regard to this subject. He felt with Dr. Williamson that the matter was in the hands of God. Even if the foreign trade in opium were suppressed, opium-growing and opium-smoking would still go on in China. Yün-nan, Kwei-chow and Sze-chuen were red with the poppy every year. In several of the other provinces also it was extensively cultivated. The evil was one of enormous magnitude and he did not see what could stop the curse but the Spirit of God. Some things however, we might do and ought to do. We must keep opium out of the Christian Church in China. If we wished to sink the Church and degrade it in the eyes of the heathen we could not succeed better than by admitting opium smokers into it. Much of our hope for the future of China depended on maintaining the purity of the native church. Then we must do also what we can to save the opium-smoker. Mr. John said he was one of those who believed that opium-smokers can be cured, and this belief was based on what he had himself seen in Hankow where many opium-smokers attend the Hospital, not a few of whom have been attracted by the reports of others who had been under treatment there and have returned to their homes completely cured. He thought that as missionaries we must take up an uncompromising attitude in regard to the immorality of the trade in opium, and the evil of smoking it. Attempts were sometimes made to palliate the sin of the trader and to make light of the evil effects of the use of the drug. On both points our utterance must be clear and emphatic. We *know* that opium is a *curse*—a curse *physically*, a curse *morally*, and a curse *socially* to the Chinese, and this fact we must declare in loud ringing tones. We must also denounce the trade as immoral. It had been suggested that while we blame the

trade, we must be tender in speaking of the trader. But Trade has no conscience to which we can appeal. If we blame at all, it must be the trader. Whatever the trader may be in other respects, and he may be a very admirable man indeed—his relation to this traffic must be denounced as wholly wrong. The missionary is made to feel constantly that this trade with its disgraceful history, speaks more eloquently and convincingly to the Chinese mind *against* Christianity, than he, the missionary, does or can do for it. It is our duty to appeal to the great heart of England—for she has a heart, and when that heart begins to beat warmly on the question, this foul blot on her escutcheon will soon be wiped off.



II.

A Committee consisting of the Revs. C. W. Mateer, G. John, R. Lechler, A. E. Moule, and C. Douglas, LL.D., appointed to prepare some resolutions in regard to the Opium question, presented the following report, which was adopted :—

1.—That opium-smoking is a vice highly injurious, physically, morally and socially.

2.—That the opium trade, though now no longer contraband, is deeply injurious, not only to China, but also to India, to Great Britain, and to the other countries engaged in it ; and especially that both from its present history, and its present enormous extent, producing suspicion and dislike in the minds of the Chinese, it is a most formidable obstacle to the cause of Christianity ; and it is the earnest desire of this Conference that the trade may be speedily suppressed, except so far as it is necessary to supply the strictly medicinal use of the drug.

3.—That while fully aware of the serious commercial and financial difficulties in the way of abolishing the trade, and not venturing to give any opinion as to the means by which these may be obviated, it is the solemn conviction of this Conference that in this case, as always, “ nothing which is morally wrong can be politically right.”

4.—That in addition to the dissemination of strictly accurate information, the Conference believes that the labours of those in Great Britain opposed to the opium trade may at present be most practically and beneficially directed towards the effort to sever the direct connexion of the Indian Government with the growth, manufacture and sale of opium ; and to oppose any attempt to obstruct the action of the Chinese Government in all lawful endeavours to regulate, restrict or suppress opium-smoking and the opium trade in China.

5.—Finally, this Conference urgently appeals to all the churches of Christendom to pray fervently to God that He may prosper the means used, so that this great evil may speedily come to an end, and to make their voices heard in clear and earnest tones, so as to reach the ear and awaken the conscience of England, and of all other Christian people and governments.

