

WAR TO STAMP OUT OPIUM



NEW YORK.—A national vice that does not pay is in a bad way. It's like a brainless man who has become penniless—it has no friends.

Therefore, when the statesmen of the earth reached the tardy conclusion that the encouragement of opium-smoking really did not pay, the gaunt giant of the poppy fields was ready to be bowled over, writes Allan L. Benson. At this propitious moment the United States government, which had never sought to fatten on the opium traffic, initiated a world-wide fight against it.

That was two years ago. China, which for 700 years had alternately fought against and wrung revenue from its greatest national weakness, rallied for another attack.

First an edict went forth that every Chinese official who smoked opium must forthwith cease to do so.

Then the common people of China were notified that they, too, must soon stop. The common people, however, were given ten years in which to taper off the habit to the vanishing point.

China also entered into an agreement with Great Britain to decrease, year by year, the area devoted to poppy culture in China and in India.

Of course one does not need to go far to find the reason for America's opposition to the opium-smoking habit. As a people, we do not burn the poppy's blood, and are not greedy enough to care to continue to collect the \$6 a pound tax that we have levied on the opium that the Chinese and the white degenerates want to smoke.

But how comes it that England, which once fought for opium with her armies and her fleets is now openly against it? And how comes it that China, whose public officials have so long fattened on the taxes wrung from the traffic, is sitting beside England? Back of these circumstances is a profound economic fact.

This fact is that opium smoking does not pay. It never paid—but shortsighted governmental officials long thought it did. Yet the changed view has not its origin in the failure of tariffs and imposts of various sorts to wring enormous sums from those who smoke the Oriental pipe. Here is the real story in three sentences:

Men, to pay taxes, must first be born.

After birth they must have strength and industry.

And they must not die until they are too old to work.

Now see what opium does:

In those families where the father smokes opium the average number of children is 1.09. The few children who are born and who reach maturity are poor workers, and they die young.

Here is the world crying for efficiency and prodigious production. Here are the great nations scanning their budgets and their industries in desperate desire to raise the enormous sums with which to maintain their armies, increase their navies and carry on their other great governmental activities. And here is opium palsying the hands that could turn many a wheel.

Is it any wonder that the poppy fields are giving way to rice, and that the American congress has passed a bill excluding smoking-opium? The statesmen of an older school, it is true, would have done otherwise. They would have clutched the penny-tax and lost the ultimate dollar. But even England is no longer so unwise. England knows that her Dreadnoughts were not launched from poppy fields; that they were made possible only by the well-worked mines and mills and farms of England. And while she is aware that she could continue to reap a pittance from the poppies, she is now seeking bigger things. She wants to tax the greater products of vigorous men.

Yet what a fight it has been for China to see this happy day when the world's interest in this matter has become like her own! It's a fight that began 700 years ago, and it illustrates, as nothing else can, the peculiar strength and the peculiar weakness that are inherent in the Chinese character. It also affords one of the few illustrations of the superiority of bureaucratic government over popular rule. For while the people of the opium habit, always vigorously fought for it, even as they are now rioting against the curtailment of the poppy fields, the government has always opposed it, precisely as it opposes it today. Sometimes it has yielded to exterior force, and then it has shown its weakness by impoverishing with taxes those whose bodies opium was impoverishing.

Opium was unknown in China until the latter part of the twelfth century. Who brought it there perhaps does not make so much difference, since it is there, but the British say the Arabs did. At any rate, the dried juice of the poppy came from some of the eastern Europeans or western Asiatic

countries, where it had been known for a hundred years prior to the Christian era. And at first it was used only for medicinal purposes. Then, as now, many Chinese were afflicted with fevers, and opium helped them.

Meantime the Turks had introduced opium into India, where the natives soon engaged in its cultivation on a large scale. The Chinese, after forming the opium habit, then bought their supplies in India. At that time there was a considerable export trade from China to India, and the junks that carried other merchandise from the Celestial empire brought back the raw material from which opium is made.

In 1368 the habit had become so widespread that the emperor, noting its ill effects, issued an imperial decree against the use of and the traffic in opium. In the original decree he prescribed only moderate penalties for its violation, but as his subjects did not obey him, he increased the severity of the penalties until death or transportation became the lot of every one who persisted in the use of the baneful pipe. And, as the Chinese had then been smoking opium less than 50 years, they broke off the habit just as an American youth who has smoked tobacco only a year or two can give up the use of tobacco.

But, like the American boy who "swears off" and then in two months goes back to his tobacco, the Chinese in a few years resumed the use of opium and again a stern emperor stopped it. Nor was opium again smoked in China until the latter part of the eighteenth century.

British rule having been imposed upon India, the government in 1757 granted to the East India Company a monopoly of the trade in opium. The East India Company at once cast its eyes Chinward. There it saw an emperor who had forbidden the importation or use of opium; there it also saw laws fixing the opium smoker's penalty at death. But there it also saw Chinese gold, and plans were at once laid to provide the Chinese with opium whether their emperor would have it or not.

The scheme devised was for British ships to lie off Chinese ports and deliver opium to such Chinese merchants as might come out to buy. And the plan worked so well that in 1790 600,000 pounds of the forbidden product were sold in China.

Of course the Chinese government did not sit idly by. It cut off a few heads and sent many persons out of the country for the country's good; but the smoking of opium went on. What's the threat of death to a man who wants to do something? Around the world in England at that very moment men were stealing five-shilling purses and being hanged for it. And the Chinese continued to smoke their opium. In 1839 the East India Company sold to them and they smoked 2,500,000 pounds. The East India Company was becoming rich and the British government took toll from its trade.

History records the fact that in the year 1837 the Chinese emperor screwed up his courage and talked fight. The sale of opium to his subjects must stop. The supply ships that were lying outside his harbors must clear out. If they didn't there would be trouble. So he said in his proclamation.

The British East India Company treated him as if he were a chattering child. Not a ship moved. Not a Chinaman came after opium who did not get it. Everything went on as before.

But the emperor was no chattering child. He was a raging, roaring old man. He felt precisely as the Bostoners did when the tea-laden British ships came in after their tax. And he did precisely what the citizens of Boston did—boarded the ships, by proxy of course, and dumped the opium into the ocean—3,000,000 pounds of it!

Of course this act was construed by the British to constitute a cause for war, and hostilities were opened as soon as the aggrieved persons could get their guns into action. This was in 1840. The Chinese, even in that day, were as poor fighters as they are now. In a little while a British fleet had captured Chusan. The next year the Rogue forts fell, and then Canton, Amoy, Shanghai, Chapoo, and a lot of other places gave up the ghost. By 1842 the Chinese emperor was very glad to buy peace by ceding Hong-kong, paying an indemnity of \$21,000,000, and throwing open four ports to foreign trade. He even humiliated himself by degrading Commissioner Lin who had carried out the emperor's orders. Nor did he get even the thanks of his own subjects for his efforts in their behalf. The whole empire was torn with rebellion. Rebel armies robbed, murdered and plundered almost as they pleased. If they had had an intelligent leader who could have welded them together and directed them with spirit, they might have done away with old Taou-kiang, but in

1850 he saved them the trouble by dying.

From that day until two years ago no Chinese emperor dared say anything against smoking. The Chinese raised poppies in nine of the eighteen provinces of their country, and would have raised more if the climate and the soil had been suitable. From an importer of the drug China has become an exporter. Almost all of the opium that is brought into the United States comes from the Flowery Kingdom. No longer does it pay tribute to Britain for its supplies. Britain can tax the trade in her own India, but that's a good deal like trying to lift herself by her own bootstraps. And as was said at the beginning, when a national vice does not pay it is in a bad way.

The Chinese consul in New York was sought to throw light on the efforts of his government, after 70 years of silent resignation, to free its subjects from the opium habit. He was educated at George Washington and Columbia universities and speaks English well.

"Will the Chinese," he was asked, "be able to break off the opium habit in the ten years in which they have been given to do it?"

"I think so," he replied. "The government has already taken extraordinary measures to curtail the sale of the drug, and the increasing difficulty with which it may be obtained will assist victims of the smoking habit in breaking off. It used to be, for instance, so that any coolie in a city need not go more than half the length of one of your city blocks to find a place where he could buy all the opium he wanted or could pay for, more than that, there were in all Chinese cities places where anybody could go to smoke the pipes and other appliances being furnished by the proprietors. These places were for the accommodation of the poorer class of Chinese who could not afford to own pipes. It was the custom of Chinese laborers to drop into these resorts two or three times a day and smoke, just as an American laborer may take a glass of beer at noon and another at night.

"All this is now changed. The Chinese government has imposed the same sort of regulations upon the sale of smoking opium that many American municipalities have imposed upon the sale of liquor. If the public officials of America were suddenly ordered to stop smoking cigars I imagine the command would be obeyed only with the greatest difficulty by some of the

"Yet the health of such as these invariably soon gives way. First they become ghastly thin—sometimes almost approaching the skeleton stage—then they lose strength, ambition and lastly life itself.

"In the country it is different. Many farmers who raise poppies do not smoke opium. As a result they have good health and live long. It is not unusual for a Chinese farmer to reach the age of 70 or 80 and occasionally one hangs on until he is 100."

Those who have believed that opium smoking is a natural vice in China will perhaps be surprised at the consul's statement to the contrary. Yet this statement is verified by the fact that China's birth rate remains moderately high, notwithstanding the low rate in the cities, where opium is used.

But, if the consul's statement be surprising, what must be said of that of Dr. Hamilton Wright. Dr. Wright says the Chinese who are resident in America are rapidly giving up the use of the drug. The better class of Oriental elites not only do not smoke, but regard with scorn any of their countrymen who do.

Why, then, are the importations of smoking opium into the United States increasing? And who smoked the million and a quarter dollars' worth that was imported in the first 11 months of last year?

In the answer to these questions lies the interest of the United States in excluding opium from this country and stopping its use everywhere. The fact is that American women, or at least white women, used a large part of the smoking opium that was brought into the country last year, and therefore supplied much of the great sum that went to pay for it. Even the lowest white men are not likely to develop a hankering for opium, but degraded white women yield to it as readily as any Chinese ever did. Possibly they want to forget—perhaps opium helps them to blot out for a time that which they would not remember. In any event, every great city contains places where women may go to smoke opium, and in New York in particular, one need not go far down the hall of many a cheap lodging house to catch the fumes of the drug with which China has wrestled for 700 years.

If white women used even half of the smoking opium that was brought to the United States last year, and each woman during the year bought \$20 worth there are 30,000 such women in this country. It doesn't seem possible! But the opium was brought

What Profiteth It a Man to Be So Wise

By HIRAM RICE

(Original.)

The professor of ethnology in a certain institution of learning, who was contemplating a trip to darkest Africa in search of curious specimens of humanity, abandoned his design when he spotted among the students a couple named Thomas and Heiney. There was no need, he told his wife, of musing around in the tangled swamps of Central Africa, fighting mosquitoes and other wild beasts, and running the risk of having to marry the dusky queen of some savage tribe in order to preserve his head in its accustomed place, while searching for people with whom nature had been having fun, when two such choice specimens were, so to speak, left on his doorstep.

Thomas was one of those individuals who preferred to stuff his head instead of his stomach, and as a result was about the hungriest-looking mortal that ever tried to make a scientific theory take the place of a large helping of corned beef and cabbage. He had a head as big as a pumpkin, and there was so much learning inside it that it bulged out in ridges until it resembled one of the aforementioned ingredients of a pie. Poring over books and holding up that enormous head had bowed out his back and bent in his wishbone until he looked like an exaggerated interrogation point. Nature had been kind enough to Thomas in the beginning, so the neighbors said, inasmuch as she had endowed him with sufficient good looks to put him in the beauty class had he cared to follow that line; but the Ambition Bug had bitten him when he was a small boy, and now about all he cared for was to wear enough clothes to keep the police from bothering him, and store up facts in his thick closet.

Heiney was a big, husky chunk of bone and muscle, with a face that would frighten a she-bear, and a head about the shape of a green onion. He wore fancy vests and loud socks, could roll cigarettes with one hand, and was about as intellectual as a crawfish; but having gumption enough to go indoors when it rained he was satisfied with his mental attainments and paid more attention to the dinner horn than the class bell.

Thomas and Heiney came from the same town, and in a way were close



"Beat it."

rivals. Thomas' father was the village plutocrat, having gotten rich shaving notes and foreclosing mortgages. When he discovered that his son yearned to be one of the intellectual lights of the country he told him to go as far as he liked along that line, for he realized that soaking up learning was less expensive than soaking up highballs.

Heiney's father was a shoe cobbler, by trade and an enemy of the rich by profession; when he heard that Thomas was to have his brain stuffed with all the facts and theories it would hold, he declared that learning was one thing the rich couldn't completely corner, and determined that Heiney should have all that he could cram into his queer-shaped head, no matter how many half soles it took to accomplish it.

Thomas took to books like a girl to pickles and ice cream, but Heiney's brain was as tough and unyielding as some of his father's sole leather. The only reason he went to school was because no one would play hockey with him, and his father had a habit of bending him across a barrel and beating the protruded portion of his anatomy with an oak lath every time he spent a lonesome afternoon down by the creek bank.

Heiney could fling a stone with the precision of a mule's kick, and being as strong and frisky as a yearling colt in pasture, he developed into the best baseball and football player in the town, and then he endured the enforced hours in the school room so he could indulge in his favorite sports during the intermissions. Of course he could not rub up against so much learning without being inoculated with some of it, so the teachers gladly passed him on till the time came for his class to graduate; the principal heaved a sigh of relief and crossed his fingers when he signed his name to Heiney's diploma.

A whole lot of women would like their husbands better if they didn't always have to pick up after them.—Detroit Free Press.

the knowledge dispensed in the home schools he began to tease his father to be sent to a university. The old man thought it over awhile, then foreclosed on another farm, and set a portion of the proceeds aside for this purpose. When the news got around to Heiney's father he ordered a keg of kerosene, another side of sole leather and spread the information that he would keep his shop open nights.

When the professors of the university beheld Thomas' dome of thought they gathered about and made his matriculation an intellectually hilarious event, but when Heiney presented himself they sized up his bullet-shaped conk in one glance, then handed him a frown and the highly cultured term of beat for "beat it." They had to simplify the expression before he could understand it, and then Heiney picked up his carpet sack and went forth wondering if dad would use the oak lath on him when he got home and reported. However, he didn't have long to worry about it, for as he was wandering about the campus like a stray calf with too much sour milk aboard, he ran into the director of athletic sports, who was looking for a piece of humanity about the size of Heiney to fit into the keystone position of the football bunch.

He gently drew from Heiney his tale of woe and life's history, and when he learned that the bulky young man with the small cupola could butt a hole through a two-inch board without even peeling the bark off his topknot, and could land a drop kick from the 50-yard line, he took him by the hand and led him back to the men who had turned him down, and ordered his name on the roll for the "good of the school."

At the first recitation Thomas got 100 per cent, and Heiney got a zero, but the professor had his orders from the athletic director, and that counts some in most colleges—or did when this happened. When the first football game was played Thomas was in his room wrestling with a quadratic equation in the third degree, while Heiney was covering himself with glory and mud on the gridiron; and when he was carried from the field on the shoulders of the enthusiastic football bugs, his standing in the university was settled, no matter what blunders he made in the class room, and he wrote a badly spelled letter home to cheer dad at his nightly vigils with the last and shoe pegs.

As time went by the intellectual bumps on Thomas' head grew larger, while Heiney was taken up by the hilarious bunch that had money to spend and didn't care how it spent it. Trigonometry, geology, anatomy, psychology and such things became like unto ABC's to Thomas, and by hard work Heiney got enough mathematics into his head to figure out a race-horse dope sheet and the percentages of the baseball teams. He was a star in the fall on the football field, then he hibernated in a spell of glory until spring, when he added new laurels to his crown by being the only pitcher that could be relied upon by the baseball team. All the girls were daffy about him, the young men were proud to know him, and small boys followed him along the street hushed to a whisper by his greatness. No one but the faculty knew that Thomas was on the roll of students.

The time finally came when Thomas and Heiney's class had to graduate, and as Heiney's days as a football player were ended, by the laws of the game, he was banded a sheepskin that had as much Latin on it as that of Thomas, but he was afraid to take it home for fear his father would ask him to read it.

Thomas was immediately hired by the faculty as an assistant professor of mathematics and the dead languages at a salary of \$500 per year, while Heiney was offered the position of football coach at \$3,000 a year. But the big leagues had been fighting for him some time, and after bagging the usual time he finally signed up as a pitcher at the modest sum of \$6,000 per season. Every paper in the United States made mention of this fact and lots of them run his picture. The home paper doled out nearly a page to it, while Thomas' high honors were dismissed with a five-line squib on the local page.

While the folks of the home town were still talking in bated breath about Heiney's great good fortune he slipped out of town one day and the next heard of him he had married the daughter of a millionaire, who had been bombarding him with sofa cushions, college flags and such things for four years, and trembling all the time for fear she would not be able to land him.

When the old cobbler heard the news he sent his congratulations, and the happy bride responded by making him a present of a mahogany cobbler's bench, with inlaid pearl dudads all over it, gold peg trays, a seat of Russian sable and a diamond-mounted hammer.

Is Worth Robbing.

A diamond salesman often carries from \$100,000 to \$500,000 worth of stones on his trips.



A COMMON SCENE IN CHINA YEARS AGO.

men who have been using tobacco 20 30 or 40 years. They have the habit. That's the difference—public officials in China have not the opium habit.

It is unfortunately true that the lower classes in the cities are slaves of the pipe. When a poor man lives on a farm, he seems to get along easily without using opium, but when he comes to the city he picks up the habit within a year. If he smokes in moderation, no great harm seems to come to him for a while, though ultimately it undermines his health. But the trouble is that few Chinese in the cities use opium moderately. They soon smoke as many times as they can during the day, and go at it again at night, continuing until sleep overpowers them. In this way they economize on food, for one who smokes immoderately cannot eat much, and they are also able to do a great amount of work for a while without feeling the usual fatigue.

here, sold, paid for, and smoked, and those who are most familiar with the facts say that white women used much of it.

Such dependency as they never knew will be ahead of these women after the bill to exclude smoking opium becomes a law. To be caught smoking or merely to be found with the drug in one's possession will then make the offender liable to two years' imprisonment. Yet precisely as there were Chinese 600 years ago who lost their heads because they could not forego their pipes, doubtless there are American women who will go to prison if they can get the forbidden drug with which to violate the law. For it is as difficult to break a bad habit as it is to form a good one.

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