

in a bad way. It's like a brainless man who has become penniless-it has

Therefore, when the statesmen of the earth reached the tardy conclusion that the encouragement of opiumsmoking really did not pay, the gaunt giant of the poppy fields was ready to be bowled over, writes Allan L. Ben-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 oplum must forthwith cease to do so.

Then the common people of China were notified that they, too, must soon 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 oplum-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 ermies 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

This fact is that opium smoking does not pay. It never paid-but shortergovernmental 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

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

Is it any wonder that the poppy fields are giving way to rice, and that the American congress has passed a bill excluding smoking-oplum? 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 autocratic 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 to-day. Some times it has yielded to exterior force, and then it has shown its weakness by impoverishing with taxes those whose bodies opium was impoverish-

Opium was unknown in China until eastern Europeans or western Asiatic away with old Taou-kwang, but in feeling the usual fatigue.

EW YORK .- A national | countries, where it had been known vice that does not pay is 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 oplum 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 monopoly of the trade in opium. The East India Company at once cast its eyes Chinaward. 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

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 oplum went on What's the threat of death to a man who wants to do something? Around the world in England at that very mo ment men were stealing five-shilling purses and being hanged for it. And the Chinese continued to smoke their onium. In 1830 the East India Com pany 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

History records the fact that in the year 1837 the Chinese emperor screwed up his courage and talked fight. The sale of onlym 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 be fore.

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 the ocean-3,000,000 into 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 Bogue 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 Hongkong, paying an indemnity of \$21,000,-000, and throwing open four ports to foreign trade. He even humiliated come to him for a while, though ultihimself by degrading Commissioner Lin who had carried ut 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 during the day, and go at it again at the latter part of the twelfth century, torn with rebellion. Rebel armies Who brought it there perhaps does not robbed, murdered and plundered almake so much difference, since it is most as they pleased. If they had had there, but the British say the Arabs an intelligent leader who could have At any rate, the dried juice of welded them together and directed they are also able to do a great poppy came from some of the them with spirit, they might have done amount of work for a while without the poppy came from some of the them with spirit, they might have done

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 king-No longer does it pay tribute to Britain for its supplies. Britain can tax the trade in her own India, lift herself by her own bootstraps. And statement is verified by the fact that national vice does not pay it is in a high, notwithstanding the low rate in

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 gov ernment 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 brought into the country last year, oplum 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 to the United States last year, and of America were suddenly ordered to each woman during the year bought granted to the East India Company a stop smoking cigars I imagine the \$20 worth there are 30,000 such women command would be obeyed only with in this country. It doesn't seem posthe greatest difficulty by some of the slble! But the opium was brought

"Yet the health of such as these invariably soon gives way. First they become ghastly thin-sometimes almost approaching the skeleton stagethen 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 but that's a good deal like trying to statement to the contrary. Yet this as was said at the beginning, when a China's birth rate remains moderately 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 exiles 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. fact is that American women, or at least white women, used a large part of the smoking opium that was 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 oplum, 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



A COMMON SCENE IN CHINA YEARS AGO.

men who have been using tobacco 20; here, sold, paid for, and smoked, and 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 mately 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 night, continuing until sleep overpowers them. In this way they economize on food, for one who smokes immoderately cannot eat much and

those who are most familiar with the facts say that white women used much of it.

Such despondency 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 woman 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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