

this noxious drug at the shop windows. They then retire to the interior, where a number of sickly-looking persons, in the last stage of consumption, haggard, and worn down with care, are seen smoking. The drug is sold in very small pieces, and for ten cents enough to fill a pipe once is obtained. With it are furnished a pipe, a lamp, and a couch to lie on, if such it may be called. The pipe is of a peculiar construction, and is in part of metal, having an interior or cup just large enough to contain a piece of the size of a pea. The opium is difficult to ignite, and it requires much management in the smoker to obtain the necessary number of whiffs to produce intoxication in one habituated to its use. The couch is sometimes a rude bench, but more often a mat on the floor, with a small raised bench. Each of these mats in the frequented shops is generally occupied by a pair of smokers, who have a lamp between them.

These shops with their inmates formed one of the most disgusting spectacles I saw during our extended cruise; although, to one who could be amused with human degradation, this sight could not have failed to afford pastime.

It was not difficult even for a stranger to distinguish those who have long indulged in this pernicious practice, from those to whom it is yet new. The eagerness with which the former sought the mat, seized the pipe, and inhaled the smoke, showed a nervous anxiety to reach that point where forgetfulness should come. This in the novice was but the work of a few minutes, while those whose organs had become accustomed would draw long whiffs and puff away until the weakened state of their lungs would betray them, and cause them to stop to renew their breath before they were enabled to accomplish their wishes. I learned that many of the old smokers found so great a difficulty in inducing the action of the smoke that they were accustomed to have recourse to swallowing the drug itself. The Chinese only are addicted to this practice: the Gentoos and those of the Moslem faith look upon it with great horror and disgust.

The individuals whom I have described above are the wealthy, who can afford to smoke the drug as it is found in commerce. From the difficulty with which it burns there is a large residuum left, which is carefully taken out of the pipes, and sold to the less opulent, who in like manner smoke it, though without the luxury of mats and lamps. I was told that there is still a poorer class of Chinese, that again use the residuum of this second smoking.

The Chinese at Singapore possess every facility for full gratification in the smoking of this deleterious drug; for there is no interdiction to its introduction, and most, if not all the vessels engaged in smuggling