

THE GLEANER.

And Northumberland, Kent, Gloucester, and Restigouche Schediasma.

Volume XIII.

Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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THE GLEANER.

From the New York New World.
ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE WAR
BETWEEN ENGLAND AND CHINA.

Continued.

In this ignominious position, closely watched and imprisoned, and dependant entirely on the tender mercies of Lin for their daily supplies of food and water, all the foreign residents remained for the tedious period of more than seven weeks. For a short and concise account of the high handed measures of Lin towards these defenceless strangers, we prefer to refer our readers to an indignant remonstrance addressed by Elliot to the Emperor shortly after their release, as such documents, bearing the stamp of official authority, are more likely to gain credit than the simple narrative of an unknown individual. Elliot commences by protesting against Lin's having issued official notices to be publicly placarded and sent to the English ships, 'inciting the English merchants, commanders and seamen, to disregard his lawful injunctions issued in the name of his gracious sovereign—' (Elliot having, a few days previous, in the name of the Queen, enjoined all British subjects to leave Canton, and to refrain from trading with the Chinese, on the ignominious conditions imposed by the high commissioner.) The Superintendent then goes on to inform the Emperor of the motives which 'compelled him to require the merchants of his nation to leave Canton, and the ships no longer to return within the Bocca Tigris,' he proceeds as follows: we give his own language—

"On the 24th of March last, Elliot repaired to Canton, and immediately proposed to put an end to the state of difficulty and anxiety then existing, by the faithful fulfilment of the Emperor's will,—and he respectfully asked that he and the rest of the foreign community might be set at liberty, in order that he might calmly consider and suggest adequate remedies for the evils so justly denounced by his Imperial Majesty. He was answered by a close imprisonment of more than seven weeks, with armed men day and night before his gates, under threats of privation of food, water and LIFE. Was this becoming treatment of the officers of a friendly nation, recognized by the Emperor, and who had always performed his duty peaceably and irreproachably, striving in all things to afford satisfaction to the provincial government? When it thus became plain that the commissioner was resolved to cast away all moderation, Elliot knew that it was incumbent upon him to save the Imperial dignity, and prevent some shocking catastrophe on the persons of an imprisoned foreign officer and two hundred defenceless merchants. For these reasons of prevailing force he demanded from the people of his nation all the English opium in their hands, in the name of his sovereign, and delivered it over to the commissioners, amounting to 20,233 chests. That matter remains to be settled between the two courts.

"But how will it be possible to answer the Emperor for this violation of his gracious will, that these difficult affairs should be managed with thoughtful wisdom, and with tenderness to the men from afar? What will be the feelings of the most just prince of his illustrious dynasty when it is made manifest to him by the command of her Britannic majesty, that the traffic in opium has been chiefly encouraged and protected by the highest officers of the empire, and that no portion of the foreign trade to China has paid its fees to the officers with so much regularity as this opium!! Terrible, indeed, will be his Imperial Majesty's indignation, when he learns that the obligations into which the High Commissioners entered, under his seal, to the officers of a foreign nation, were all violated! The servants were not faithfully restored when one fourth of the opium was delivered—the boats were not permitted to run when one half was delivered—the trade was not really opened when three fourths were delivered—and the last pledge, that things should go on as usual, when the whole was delivered, has been falsified by the reduction of the factories to a prison with one outlet, the expulsion of sixteen persons, some of them who never dealt in opium at all, some clerks, one a lad, and the proposal of novel and intolerable regulations.

"Can a great moral and political revolution be effected at the sacrifice of all the principles of truth, moderation, and justice? Or is it believed that these spoliation proceedings will extinguish the traffic in opium? Such hopes are futile, or the emperor has been deceived." We will make no further extracts in proof of the several points which have assumed; let those who dispute them disprove the facts alleged; we have, we think, brought forward

testimony sufficiently valid to show not only this want of connivance of the British government at the opium traffic, but such gross and unmerited indignities by the Chinese authorities toward the British Superintendent, and other resident, as no independent nation can with honor submit to. If those writers, who have so warmly denounced England in the affair, instead of lavishing all their Christian sympathy on a Pagan nation, had shown a little charity to their Christian brethren, by condescending to inquire into the real facts of the case, they might have found that, strange as it may seem, England could be once in the right! The most prominent characteristic of every article that has come under our notice, professing to enter into the merits of the question, has been a profound ignorance of the subject. In corroboration of this prevailing ignorance we would refer to the city article of the *Arcturus* for January last, in which the writer administers the usual dose of virulent abuse of England, but directs his angry indignation especially to horrible atrocities committed by the British soldiery on taking possession of Canton, which we learn from him was 'given up to sack and pillage, to the confiscation of its homes and temples, to the plunder of its property, to the violation of its chaste mothers and wives and daughters.' Now, in this state of horrors, one principal ingredient is wanting, and that is truth, and, while we regret that the writer should put himself into a fever by heating the air so lustily, we have much pleasure in informing him that those deeds of horror which seemed to have moved him so deeply, are but the offspring of his own imagination. Canton has not been entered by a single British soldier, so far as intelligence has yet reached us—and the sack and pillage and confiscation and plunder and violation spoken of, he alone is responsible for. It was once said by Talleyrand of a celebrated physician, that he knew a little of every thing, even of medicine. We would change the expression somewhat, and say of this writer, that he may know a great deal of other things, but he knows nothing of the subject he attempts to discuss.

We believe then that we have made out, that the Chinese government are founded in truth and justice:

The abrupt stoppage of the whole legal trade of the port of Canton—

The close imprisonment, for more than seven weeks, of her Majesty's Superintendent, and of all foreigners without distinction, alike the dealers in opium and the many honorable merchants who had ever yielded a willing and scrupulous obedience to the laws—

The open and undisguised threats to hold foreigners responsible with their lives for the surrender of the opium, and for any future infraction of the Chinese laws—

The obtaining, through this forcible detention and those threats, the surrender of property to the value of from ten to fifteen millions of dollars—

The attempt to force foreigners to sign bonds rendering, not only themselves, but all others going to China, over whom they have no control, liable to the same penalties; and, on the refusal on the part of the foreigners to sign such bonds, in the promulgation of an edict by the high commissioner, declaring the determination of the government to enforce such penalty—

The treacherous non-fulfilment, by high commissioner Lin, of the promises made to the Superintendent as to the re opening of the trade &c. on the surrender of the opium.

Now we will not yield to any one in honest indignation at the conduct of those unprincipled men, who, in defiance of law and justice, forcibly introduced into China that perfidious poison, which, while it mocks its victims with bright and beautiful dreams of paradise, is hurrying them on the swift road to perdition; but, we confess we are entirely ignorant of any ground that can be offered to justify such a total recklessness of every principle of justice, such indignities and aggressions as those recorded above,—unless on the ground that the end justifies the means—a principle, often mooted, but which we believe has never yet been adopted into any code of morals. The Holy Order of Jesuits has been charged with making this the rule of their actions,—but, we doubt not, that even the most devoted disciple of Ignatius Loyola would exclaim with pious scorn against the charge. Some of the most atrocious acts that stain the pages of history could, by this rule, be rendered meritorious. The apologists of Charles IX of France, might urge his ardent love for Religion, in justification of the dread scenes of St. Bartholomew's Eve; and, the plea of 'devotion to liberty,' boldly offered before the Peers of France, by the regicide Fieschi, would have justified the wholesale murder, by his infernal machine, on the Boulevard of Paris.

The policy and the interest of England are alike essentially pacific. The trade of Canton is of vast importance to her, amounting in some years to ninety millions of dollars,—any wilful interruption to it, would be like the policy of killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. But, interest should ever yield to principle and, much as we abhor war and all its attendant horrors, we see no other course she can pursue with honor. Unwilling to commence hostile operations, for many months she entreated, nay, even sued for justice, in terms which would have been unworthy of her had she used them to an equal. But, apology and indemnity have alike been steadily refused, and always with a tone of arrogance in itself insulting. Since war could no longer be avoided every one, who has watched its progress may have seen that it has been carried on, on the side of England, with a merciful moderation, which her cowardly and boasting enemies have often abused, by claiming her victories as their own, and issuing flowing bulletins, inciting to continued resistance and making peace more remote. The British Government however, wearied out by the treachery of the Chinese, who have never scrupled faithfully to break traces they themselves had solicited, when they hoped to find their enemies at a disadvantage, have at length decided to change their policy, and have sent out, to assume the chief command and direction of affairs, Sir Henry Pottinger, a man whose character for energy and decision is the best guarantee that the war will now be prosecuted with a vigor and activity which is probable after all the most merciful policy, as likely soonest to terminate in peace.

Some of the apologists of the Chinese, in objecting to this war, have urged that, the Foreigners having gone voluntarily to Canton, they necessarily subjected themselves to the operation of the Chinese Law—and this, we acknowledge may be true to a certain extent. But, if those Laws themselves or their interpretation so conflict with every established principle of justice, as to subject the avowedly innocent to punishment for the crimes of others—then it becomes a sacred duty to resist them. Were Great Britain to pass laws to imprison all American citizens within her own border, including even the American Ambassador himself, because some of their countrymen, reckless adventurers, would, spite of all her efforts, persist in a contraband trade in tobacco—could the government of this country remain passive spectators of the abuse? The idea is ridiculous! And, as regards uncivilized countries, let us look at the policy of this government. When an expedition was sent some years ago to the coast of Sumatra, to destroy the town of Quallah Battoo, and put many of its inhabitants to the sword for the murder of some American citizens—had it previously ascertained the fact, that such murder by the natives was against their laws? Recent intelligence from the exploring expedition informs us that Lieutenant Wilkes, for the murder of one of his men by a native of an Island in the South Seas, had taken a signal vengeance by sacrificing the lives of several of the Islanders, because they would not surrender the murderer. Now, let us suppose the murderer had been given up, would Lieutenant Wilkes have established a commission of inquiry, to ascertain if this murder of a foreigner were a crime by their laws; and had it been proved by their laws, that the murder of a foreigner, instead of a crime, were a meritorious act, would he have loaded the native with presents and sent him away rejoicing? And yet this is but the 'reductio ad absurdum,' of the arguments brought forward. It would be well, as a general rule, before judging too hastily the conduct of others, to look a little into our own past history. We are ever too ready, after using the telescope to survey the faults of others, to reverse it when we examine our own. Looking through our passions and our prejudices, we will see many defects and imperfections, when an unbiased judgment finds all to praise—just as the microscope betrays loathsome vermin feeding on the tender leaves of the rose bud, when the ordinary vision sees nothing but freshness and beauty.

But perhaps, after all, the idea of the high commissioner Lin, that the chastisement of the 'Red bristled Barbarians' by the 'Great Emperor of the Flowery Land,' should be received by them with gratitude as Heaven like Benevolence, is the point the most tenable of any assumed against England. The idea forcibly reminds us of a description we once read of the treatment of the geese of Strasburg in training for foie gras, by a profound French Professor of the Culinary Art. It was as follows—'Placed before a great fire and deprived of drink, the condition of this poor bird would, it must be confessed, be painful indeed—but, when he reflects that his liver aggrandized to a size immensely exceeding

that of all other geese, will be renowned throughout the world as the celebrated 'pâté de foie gras,'—he resigns himself to his fate without shedding a tear!?' But John Bull is a stupid and common place animal, having no sympathy with those noble sentiments. He can see no honor in such killing kindness, nor meekly bow his vassal head in token of gratitude to the Celestial Emperor. Spoilation and imprisonment even at the hands of the high commissioner Lin, have no charms for him. Nor can he find in injury and insults any especial mark of favor—although they be inflicted by a delegate from the self styled 'Son of Heaven.'

Poor Lin—alas! from your fate we learn that those who joy in unlimited power to day, may to morrow be fallen so low that there are 'none so poor as do them reverence.' The Tarpeian Rock is near the Capitol, and though yours has not been a Roman fall, your punishment is far more humiliating; degraded from your rank, stripped of all your power, your honors and your immense possessions, and banished to the remote province of Turkestan, you now pass your weary days performing the menial offices of a slave to the soldiery, weeping bitter tears over your unmerited fate. And this punishment you suffer, because the soldiery the Emperor placed at your disposal were not invincible—because, armed as they were with a sword in each hand, which they clashed together with a loud noise to frighten their enemies, they could not resist the onset of European soldiery. And this is a specimen of the internal policy of the Chinese Government that has been so much praised because so little known; the imagination of many men, captivated by the mystery that hangs over this wonderful nation of three hundred millions of souls, and, from its high antiquity, investing its government with all the Heavenly virtues which in their arrogance and pride the Chinese themselves lay claim to; whereas, were we to draw inferences of its rule from the few isolated acts that occasionally penetrate the veil, we would judge that wide and beautiful land tyrannized over by the Imperial Tartar Dynasty with the iron hand of a cruel and Barbarian Despotism.

But we have done. We have given, we think, a fair history of the violent injuries and indignities in which the war originated; let those who declaim so loudly against the conduct of England, either disprove the facts we have brought forward, or failing in this, prove their insufficiency to provoke a war, there would be some show of right in such a course; but the system hitherto pursued, of wholesale denunciation where the most important points are suppressed, is as easy as it is unjust and ungenerous. By such a system in a community ignorant, in a great measure, of the history of the transactions, it would not be difficult to throw a dark shade of infamy over the ablest struggle for human rights.

The result of this war, important as it must be on whatsoever side victory smiles, we must leave to the development of the future; so satisfied are we of the justice of the cause of England, that we willingly leave the result in the hands of the God of Battles; and, with the language of the Heralds at the onset of the Trial of Arms in the Age of Chivalry, we can say from the heart, *May God protect the Right.*

From the American Farmer.

MAKE HOME HAPPY.

It is a duty devolving upon every member of a family to endeavour to make all belonging to it happy. This may, with a very little pleasant exertion be done. Let every one contribute something toward improving the grounds belonging to their house. If the house is old and uncomfortable, let each exert himself to render it better and more pleasant. If it is good and pleasant, let each strive still farther to adorn it. Let flowering shrubs and trees be planted, and vines and woodbine be trailed around the windows and doors,—add interesting volumes to the family library,—little articles of furniture to replace those which are fast wearing out; wait upon and anticipate each other's wants, and ever have a pleasant smile for all and each.

Make home happy! Parents ought to teach this lesson in the nursery, and by the fire side; give it the weight of their precept and example. If they did, ours would be a happy and more virtuous country. Drunkenness, profanity, and other disgusting vices would die away; they could not live in the influence of a lovely and refined home.

Does any think, 'I am poor and have to work hard to get enough to sustain life, and cannot find time to spend in making our old house more attractive.' Think again! Is there not some time every day which you spend in idleness, or smoking, or more listlessness,