

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1898.

HASHISH OUSTS OPIUM.

DISAPPEARANCE OF THE OLD TIME OPIUM JOINTS.

Their Former Frequenters Now Take Hashish—It Annihilates Time and Space—Gives a Man Blissful Moments, but at the Expense of Health.

'Fill this prescription as quickly as you can, please. I'll take it here with a little soda.'

The speaker was a short, fat, young man, whose face was bloated and badly splashed, while his eyes were streaked with alternate red and yellow. His expression was suddenly dull. As he handed the piece of paper on which the prescription was written across the counter his hand shook violently.

The proprietor of the little Sixth avenue drug store in which the young man stood read carefully the prescription. Evidently it was a genuine one, for he nodded assent, and turned to the long stretches of Latin-labelled bottles behind him. One long, slender vial was soon in his grasp. It contained an opaque liquid of a dark and sinister green color. Reaching for a graduating glass the druggist poured out a small quantity and was about to transfer it to a tiny goblet when the bloated young man, whose congested eyes had assumed an evanescent brilliancy, restrained him with an impatient exclamation:

'Don't,' he cried eagerly, 'don't waste time—give it to me at once.'

In a twinkling he gulped the liquid, which emitted a strong and disagreeable odor, returned the graduating glass and drained a goblet of soda which the druggist thrust into his trembling hand.

'Give me back the prescription, doctor,' said the customer, as he paid for the drug and began to totter feebly from the shop. 'I'll be in for another dose this evening.'

Outside the drug store the young man sought the support of a convenient lamp-post against which he leaned for a minute or two. Then he straightened up and a most wonderful transformation took place. All evidences of decrepitude vanished. The sodden dulness of his expression disappeared and was replaced by keen sensibility and intelligence. His baggy form seemed to undergo alterations and to conform more closely with those lines of physique which one would naturally expect to find in a person of his youth and development. This metamorphosis complete, away he started at a brisk pace and was soon engulphed by the hurrying throng of passersby.

'Jekyll and Hyde,' murmured the reporter who had witnessed the transformation and foregoing incidents. 'What is the matter with that young man—alcoholism?'

'No,' replied the druggist, as he returned the bottle of green fluid to its shelf, 'he is one of New York's thousands of hashish eaters. Hashish, as you perhaps know,' he continued didactically, 'is a preparation of hemp professionally known as Cannabis Indica. It is a narcotic, further reaching in its pernicious influences than any form of opium you may name. Indeed it has succeeded opium in the favor of those persons who are constantly in search of new sensations.'

'Ten years ago New York was filled with opium dens, many of which were palatial Fortunes were expended in fitting out a single joint, in creating a fairy-land-like environment to correspond with the roseate visions supposed to visit those who hypnotized themselves with the fumes of opium. Where are those joints today? Where are those exclusive dens that catered to patrons who wished to indulge the vice in assured and luxurious seclusion? They have disappeared one and all. Only miserable, filthy joints in side streets and remote purlieus are now running.'

'It is not that a wave of reformation has swept the high-class places away, but the one-time frequenters and supporters of exclusive opium joints have undergone a change of affections. They have taken up hashish as a means of more thoroughly satiating their appetites.'

'Many of the opium eaters who have discarded that narcotic for hashish are men of keen sensibilities. Some are men of a high order of intellect and intelligence. It is to such persons that the effects of hashish appeal with greatest fascination. It distorts the fancy far more than opium, and the imagery begot of it when first used is more kaleidoscopic and pleasing than any form of opium gives.'

'It has been contended by an astute philosopher that true happiness will only be possible when time and space are

abolished. Well, this is what hashish temporarily accomplishes. It sweeps from the mind all idea of chronological division: it eliminates the appreciation of space, and conquers geographical distances in the mind of the eater with electrical rapidity. So time and space, mentally no longer in, the budding hashish eater finds that all things of earth contribute to his pleasure and that life is one long reign of ecstatic joy. A wonderful metamorphosis takes place in familiar surroundings. A tiny ballroom expands into a vast palace of marvellous beauty; a rubbish-filled backyard becomes a tropical garden. A street is no longer a mere tumultuous thoroughfare, it is a populous world. But that, remember, is only in the hashish eater's novitate, when the drug appeals most entirely to his mental faculties. Habitual use makes it a physical need or craving, and the hallucinations, less picturesque and pleasing, often end in hideous, terrorizing visions which drive the victim into the madhouse or the grave.'

'Do you know of any hashish joints in New York?' asked the reporter.

'I have heard there are two or three,' answered the druggist, 'but certain peculiar properties of the drug narcotic makes such places unnecessary. When a man first begins to eat hashish he finds he has no need to repair to a secluded place in order to prevent friends and associates from discovering the fact. He can load up with a good-sized dose and go about his usual employment without any one being the wiser. There will be nothing extraordinary in his actions and he will conform strictly with the usual routine of his daily movements. In fancy he may be traversing the wilds of Africa, may be gliding through the skies in a balloon five miles from earth, but, at the same time, he is able to conduct a conversation with an unhashished friend without betraying his visionary flights. In fact, a man under the influence of the narcotic figuratively, and frequently consciously, leads a dual existence. He is sufficiently aware of his physical actions to separate them from the ever-varying movements of his distorted fancy.'

'One curious thing hashish does for its victim is to deprive him of horizon. As I said, he loses all appreciation of space, and thus objects at a distance and those at hand have the same relative value in his mind. Everything appears to him in a beautiful vista, whether he contemplates actual and physical occurrences or disports amid the pleasures of fancy's realm.'

'A young friend of mine, who, as an experiment, took a big dose of the fluid extract, a form in which hashish is usually administered, told me that within ten minutes he was amazed to see the street suddenly broadened and the houses fall away until the horizon became vague and finally altogether indeterminate. He also imagined that his movements were impeded by a remarkable slowness which he was powerless to overcome, strive as he would. After many years of travel, according to his distorted imagination and loss of chronological sense my young friend arrived at the grounds in the rear of the American Museum of Natural History and sat down to rest. He was perfectly aware of his locality, but was very much surprised to find that the aspect of things had greatly altered since a previous visit. The shrubbery, formerly of a very uninteresting character, had given place to brilliant hued tropical foliage, and the paths which once were made of common gravel now were filled with beautiful precious stones which glanced and glittered with a thousand iridescent lights. It struck him as something very singular that the municipal authorities should have become so prodigal in public adornment, but nevertheless, after surreptitious glances to make certain he was unobserved, he improved the opportunity to load his pockets with diamonds, pearls, rubies, sapphires, opals and topazes.'

'Shortly after acquiring this treasure he fled to Japan—in his mind—and remained there some two or three years studying the customs and habits of the people. This journey he subsequented with a tour of Europe, finishing up in Paris for purposes educational. He took in Africa on his way home to the United States, and incidentally visited Khartoum to learn the mysteries of that late Dervish stronghold and render valuable assistance to the British Army by reporting his observations.'

'In the meantime he was fully conscious that a part of him was sitting on a bench in the rear of the Museum, and it occasioned him no surprise to find himself there once more in the whole. Recollecting an engagement to call on a young woman, and feeling confident that that social duty could be performed without betraying his hypnotized condition, he left the grounds and repaired to her home. Some months after his admission to the reception room the young woman entered, and he rose to acknowledge her presence with a bow. It took him several mental days to accomplish this simple ceremony, but his dual consciousness advised him that he did

it with the proper physical despatch. For several weeks they talked, and my young friend was beginning to speculate as to how many more would elapse before it would be good form for him to take his departure, when suddenly and to his great dismay he seemed to rise from his chair and sail upward to the ceiling. Attaining this very unusual position for a well conducted youth unused to acrobatic exercise, his dismay gave way to astonishment, for he found himself looking down on himself, that is, his astral body was suspended in midair and contemplating his physical body, which remained erect and sedate in a chair and conversed with the young woman on topical things in the most ordinary way.'

'Now, the physical body was aware of the extraordinary actions of the astral body and became uneasy, as is feared the young woman might look aloft and discover the astral body floating about her cornices and playing the part of an eavesdropper. It was also worried for fear the astral body might not come down in time to accompany the physical body home. But that strange consciousness that protects the hashish eater from divulging his real condition came to his rescue, and thus assured, he talked on and on as if things were normal.'

'The astral body did eventually abandon the cornices and take its place inside the physical body. This accomplished, my friend concluded to run no risk of a reparation while the young woman was around and took his departure. He returned to my shop by a long and devious mental route which embraced most of the geographical points not included in his first journey abroad. When he arrived he called for a neutralizer. He waited patiently, he said afterward, for a week or so. but I heeded him not. A second time he demanded relief, and waited many days with the same negative results. He repeated his demands five or six times, until I had to beg of him to desist, for he was tumbling them out in a convoluted string which gave no opening for a reply. But he was not aware how rapidly he spoke, so well in hand did the hashish have him by that time.'

'I gave him a large dose of lemon juice, which is a good neutralizer of hashish, and soon he was once more mentally clear. Then from his pockets I dumped the gravel which he had amassed at the grounds in the rear of the Museum and sent him home to sleep. There were no consequent evil effects and seldom are after the first dose of the narcotic.'

'Some men who use hashish regularly and who come under my observation are excited to pugnacity by the drug. Others, and, indeed, the majority, sink into

dreamy contemplation, incline to motiveless gaiety or maudlin sensibility. Nearly all habitual hashish eaters become unnaturally active and restless. In the last stages a drowsy stupor is characteristic, also restless muscular movements, more or less insensibility to pain and touch, and very often impaired power of locomotion. Hashish carries with it a voracious desire for food. The invariable physical end is bloated and bloated faces, congested eyes, and weak and tremulous limbs. It gradually paralyzes both mental and physical energies and is far more difficult to cure than the opium habit.'

'Hashish is a poison, and is sold only by prescription. But you know how easy it is to obtain a prescription for anything in New York, and how easy it is for any person with a smattering of Latin to sit down and write one which, having the appearance of genuineness, the druggist cannot refuse to fill.'

'Several of the confirmed hashish eaters who come to my shop,' concluded the druggist 'have fallen slaves to the drug through constantly using it to allay neuralgic pains. There are hundreds of sufferers in New York whose only relief from this most unbearable of all pains is hashish, and so they soon contract the habit which is seldom relinquished until inevitable death or madness claims them.'

Luxury or Books.

Richard De Bury once said: 'The library therefore, of wisdom, is more precious than all riches; and nothing that can be wished for is worthy to be compared with it.' Success gives an interesting anecdote, told by Agassiz, of his visit, when a young man, to the great German naturalist, Professor Lorenz Oken. The professor received his guest with warm enthusiasm, but apparent embarrassment. He showed his visitor the laboratory, and the students at work, also his cabinet, and lastly his splendid library of books pertaining to zoological science, a collection worth some seven thousand dollars, and well deserving the glow of pride which the owner manifested as he expatiated on its excellence. The dinner hour came, and then the embarrassment of the great German reached its maximum point.

'Monsieur Agassiz,' he said, with perturbation, 'to gather and keep up this library exacts the utmost husbandry of my pecuniary means. To accomplish this I allow myself no luxury whatever. Hence my table is restricted to the plainest fare. Thrice a week our table boasts of meat, the other days we have only potatoes and salt. I very much regret that your visit has occurred upon our potato day.'

And so the splendid Switzer and the great German and his students dined together on potatoes and salt. And what must those students have enjoyed in the conversation of those remarkable men!

Mrs Sandkins says that her husband is a three-handed man—right-handed, left-handed, and a little behind-hand.

The Dominion Official Analyst's Statement with Regard to the Value of Abbey's Effervescent Salt.

Abbey's Effervescent Salt has received the highest endorsements from the Medical Journals and from the Physicians of Canada since its introduction here. It has sustained its European reputation.

It is a highly palatable and efficacious tonic. As a refreshing and invigorating beverage it is unequalled. Its use has prevented and cured innumerable cases of Sick Headache, Indigestion, Biliousness, Constipation, Neuralgia, Sleeplessness, Loss of Appetite, Flatulency, Gout, Rheumatism, Fever, and all Febrile states of the system. In Spleen Affections and as a regulator of the Liver and Kidneys, its value is unquestioned. Its use purifies the blood in a natural manner, leading to good health and a clear, bright complexion.

A Teaspoonful of Abbey's Effervescent Salt, taken every morning before Breakfast, will keep you in good health.

SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS AT 60 CENTS A LARGE BOTTLE. TRIAL SIZE, 25 CENTS.

LABORATORY OF INLAND REVENUE,
Office of Official Analyst,
Montreal, July 28, 1898.

I, JOHN BAKER EDWARDS, do hereby certify that I have duly analyzed and tested several samples of "Abbey's Effervescent Salt," some being furnished by the manufacturers in Montreal and others purchased from retail druggists in this city. I find these to be of very uniform character and composition, and sold in packages well adapted to the preservation of the Salt. This compound contains saline bases which form "Fruit Salts" when water is added—and is then a very delightful aperient beverage, highly palatable and effective.

Abbey's Effervescent Salt contains no ingredient of an injurious or unwholesome character, and may be taken freely as a beverage.

(Signed,) JOHN BAKER EDWARDS,
Ph.D., D.C.L., F.C.S.,
Emeritus Professor Chemistry, University Bishop's College, and Dominion Official Analyst, Montreal.