



Fine Habits

opium & morphine users
in British Columbia to 1914

Curated by Chris Willmore

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Selected, transcribed and annotated by Chris Willmore

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OPIUM

1870 – 1884

The opium den of *Edwin Drood*¹ (1870)

Charles Dickens opened his final, unfinished novel with a scene in an opium den. This description of a *fictional* opium den had a strong and lasting influence on journalists describing *real* opium dens, including those in British Columbia.

Shaking from head to toe, the man whose scattered consciousness has thus fantastically pieced itself together, at length rises, supports his trembling frame upon his arm, and looks around. He is in the meanest and closest of small rooms. Through the ragged window-curtain, the light of early day steals in from a miserable court. He lies, dressed, across a large unseemly bed, upon a bedstead that has indeed given way under the weight upon it. Lying, also dressed and also across the bed, not long-wise, are a Chinaman, a Lascar², and a haggard woman. The two first are in a sleep or stupor; the last is blowing at a kind of pipe, to kindle it. And as she blows, and shading it with her lean hand, concentrates its red spark of light, it serves in the dim morning as a lamp to show him what he sees of her. [...]

He rises unsteadily from the bed, lays the pipe upon the hearthstone, draws back the ragged curtain, and looks with repugnance at his three companions. He notices that the woman has opium-smoked herself into a strange likeness of the Chinaman. His form of cheek, eye, and temple, and his colour, are repeated in her. Said Chinaman convulsively wrestles with one of his many Gods, or Devils, perhaps, and snarls horribly. The Lascar laughs and dribbles at the mouth. The hostess is still.

“Vigorous measures should be adopted”³ (September, 1872)

Should the Mongolians⁴ visit these shores in very large numbers vigorous measures should be adopted for the circumscribing of the evils connected with opium smoking within the narrowest limits.

The sum a wealthy Chinese spends in opium is on an average from 10s.⁵ to £1 a week; those in middling circumstances from 7s. to £1 weekly; the poorer class, from half a crown to 3s. weekly. The estimated number of opium smokers, according to my returns, is – the lowest, 50 out of every 100; the highest, 60 out of every 100. Of these one-third are set down as confirmed smokers. The period when the habit of smoking

¹ From Dickens, C. (1870). *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Charles Dickens's last, unfinished novel opens with this scene in a London opium den. The description was very influential.

² A sailor from India, the Arabian peninsula or southeast Asia.

³ From The Chinamen Coming. (1872, September 12). *The Ottawa Daily Citizen*, p. 2.

⁴ A racist term for Chinese people.

⁵ In the English currency system of the time, there were 20 shillings in a pound, abbreviated s., and 12 pence in a shilling, abbreviated d. (for *denarius*, the Roman penny).

opium becomes confirmed varies – it may be at the end of the first year, or the second, or the third; and the rapidity and force with which the appetite is gratified also differs very considerably. There are numbers who are satisfied with what may be called a very moderate allowance, and as long as that is the case it appears to be smoked with comparative impunity; but, like moderate spirit drinking, it may predispose to, if it does not directly excite, disease. The larger proportion, however, of those who are addicted to this practice are not content with a fixed ratio, but desire and require accumulative doses. The period, likewise, when the constitution begins to suffer is variable; with some it is as soon as three or four years; with others, not for ten or more years. The opium shops which stud the Chinese camp so thickly are also dens of infamy and immorality. In these are found abandoned European women, some of whom have also got into the habit of smoking the drug; and there is reason to fear that in the course of time the practice will extend to our European population.

“Are there any opium dens in Victoria?”⁶ (February, 1881)

The use of opium is steadily increasing throughout the Empire. Since 1867 the importations of opium have doubled and the habit has extended to districts previously free of the drug. We have not the statistics at hand; but the statement has been frequently made, and never contradicted, that the consumption of opium is rapidly increasing in civilized countries – particularly in the United States. The readers of “Edwin Drood” will call to mind Dickens’ description of an opium den in London. There is reason to believe that similar establishments exist in nearly all the large European cities, and that their frequenters are not confined to Chinese or East Indians. In California and Oregon, where the Chinese population is large, the dens are much visited by whites of both sexes. Young as well as old abandon themselves to the pleasures of opium-smoking, and the evil has become so great that legislation has been found necessary. The police frequently raid the dens and scoop up a miscellaneous assortment of opium eaters of all colours, ages and conditions, whom they find lying on the floors in a blissful state of unconsciousness – reveling in the joys of an opium Elysium.

“Are there any opium dens in Victoria?” we asked an intelligent Chinaman on Saturday.

“Yes,” he replied, “six or seven. A good deal of opium is smoked here; but people are so quiet when under its influence that no one hears a sound. Very different from the effects of liquor. Suppose a man drunk with opium, he sleeps, sleeps, sleeps, and dreams, dreams, dreams. But suppose a man drunk with liquor; he shouts, sings, makes a noise, kicks up the devil and beats his wife or gets put in gaol.”

“Are Chinese the only people who smoke opium in this city?”

“No; plenty white people come. Two years ago seven white men and two white women used to come and smoke. Now fourteen or fifteen come regular – three or four of them women and two or three young boys.”

⁶ From OPIUM. (1881, February 15). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 3.

“What do they pay for a pipeful?”

“Two bits or four bits.⁷ Sometimes they have no money and then they beg a smoke just as if it was bread. Oh! yes! They get crazy for opium, sometimes, and give away clothes if they have no money.”

“What does an opium-smoker look like?”

Beckoning us to the front door the Celestial⁸ gazed up and down Cormorant street for a few minutes and then pointed to the shrinking, shivering figure of a Chinaman crossing the street.

“That man likes opium.”

The advancing figure was clad in the dress peculiar to his countrymen. His head rested on his breast. His shoulders were drawn up on a level with his ears; his chest was sunken; his hands were pushed into the sleeves of his silk jacket; and as he scuffled along his appearance was that of a shivering wretch who had been fished out of the harbor on a cold day and was hurrying home to change his clothes. As he passed the group at the door he surveyed it with a pair of glassy, dead-fish-like eyes. “There is no speculation in those eyes,” we quoted as the man turned into a small, dark alleyway and was lost to sight.

“Whenever,” concluded the Chinaman, “you see a Chinaman or whiteman walking like that man, you may be sure that he likes opium.”

“Selling stolen property”⁹ (November, 1882)

The chief of police at Victoria has written to Chief Woolery, of this city [Seattle], that two young fellows, recently from Seattle, have been arrested at that place, charged with selling stolen property. When arrested one of the boys gave his name as Treat, and said he had a father living in Seattle, and the other stated his name as Ludlow, and said he had no parents on earth. The articles they were attempting to sell consisted of gold spectacles, a gold reading glass, gold locket and chain, silver watches and a pistol or two. He said the boys were both opium fiends and should be looked after. It will be remembered that last week Chief Woolery arrested three young fellows for opium smoking. One was named Treat, another Larry Kimberling, and a third named Smith. The first two were let out under fifty dollars bonds each by Justice Cann, for their appearance. Treat’s father who is quite a respectable, hard-working gentleman, went his bond, and young Kimberling’s brother signed for him. This was on Saturday. Before Monday morning the young fellows Treat and Kimberling had jumped their bail and skipped to Victoria. It now transpires that they were guilty of no less than two burglaries and two larcenies before they left. On Sunday in broad day light the residence of Rev. J. P. Ludlow was entered and the very articles these young fellows are arrested for trying to dispose of in Victoria were taken therefrom. The gold spectacles have Mr. Ludlow’s mother’s

⁷ A bit is 12.5 cents, so two bits are 25 cents, and four bits are 50 cents.

⁸ A problematic term for Chinese people. It derives from a poetic name for China – the Celestial Kingdom.

⁹ From Selling Stolen Property. (1882, November 28). *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, p. 3.

name engraved on them, and the locket, which was a present to Miss Ludlow, from her grandmother, had her initials engraved thereon. One of the watches and the reading glass also belonged to Mr. Ludlow. It seems young Kimberling, in order to make the thing look all right, assumed the name of Ludlow. Chief Woolery will probably go to Victoria and bring the offenders as well as the stolen property back.

“A Man in a Mask”¹⁰ (February, 1883)

Late last night Supt. O'Connor¹¹ and officer Lindsay¹² came across an individual in the alley near the Chinese theatre on Cormorant street wearing a frightful mask and a tremendous false head. The disguised party, who proved to be a white man, was not a little astonished to find the Supt.'s firm hand upon his coat collar and officer Lindsay stripping off the hideous mask and accompaniments with the friendly invitation to step over to the lock up. To-morrow the affair will be investigated before the police magistrate and the party will find out that wearing a mask is an indictable offence under a Dominion statute and is classed with carrying deadly weapons. What the object of the man was has not transpired, at least satisfactorily; but it could not have been a legitimate one. His own version of the affair is that he wished to find out, unrecognized, as to whether a friend of his was in any of the opium dens that abound in that vicinity.

“Her name was Emily Horton”¹³ (September, 1884)

Nicholas Flood Davin¹⁴, the secretary of the Chinese Commission¹⁵ which lately sat in Victoria, has been made the victim of a good deal of fun lately in the eastern press, because of the statement made here that he could not be found when the Commission wanted him. Mr. Davin said to the eastern press in his own defense that he had been absent studying the habits of the Chinese in their dens, and that

¹⁰ From A Man in a Mask. (1883, February 25). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 3.

¹¹ William F. O'Connor. In 1883 he lived on Fisguard street, between Government and Douglas. The 1881 census lists him as being 43 years old, Irish, single and a Reformed Episcopalian.

¹² Thomas D. Lindsay. In 1883 he lived on Fisguard street. The 1881 census lists him as being 34, Irish, a Reformed Episcopalian, and living with his wife Eliza (30 years old, American, Presbyterian) and their one-year-old daughter Vera.

¹³ From THE SEDUCTIVE OPIUM. (1884, September 19). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 3.

¹⁴ Nicholas Flood Davin (1840 – 1901) is one of the founders of Canada's residential school system, a policy of government-sponsored cultural genocide of Indigenous people. His 1879 *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds* urged the federal government to establish a residential school system for Indigenous children. Davin was also the founder of the *Regina Leader* newspaper, and served as a member of parliament for Assiniboia West (later divided into several ridings in Alberta and Saskatchewan).

¹⁵ The Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration. As a result of its final report in 1885, the Canadian government placed a \$50 head tax on Chinese entering Canada to discourage immigration. This was higher than the Commission's recommended tax of \$10.

while there he had discovered a young woman under the influence of the baleful opium, and had “examined her carefully.”

The Ottawa Free Press asked him about her.

“Her name was Emily Horton¹⁶,” replied Mr. Davin. “She was young, very good looking and handsomely dressed. She was at first very unwilling to answer questions from fear that I should put her statements into the newspaper, but on giving her my word of honor that I would not communicate her remarks to the Victoria press she chatted freely. I learned that she was well educated, seventeen years of age, and that she commenced to smoke opium in San Francisco. Trouble, was the reason she assigned, which made other people drink.”

“I think it is better than drink,” said Emily. “People who smoke opium don’t kick up rows and go on sprees. They injure no one but themselves, and I don’t think they hurt themselves very much. I know opium smokers who are 65 and 70 years of age. There is a man over there,” pointing to an old Chinaman, “who has smoked opium for 30 years. I have read De Quincey¹⁷ on opium eating, but never felt the pleasure he describes. I require about twelve pipes, and then I fall into a state of somnolence and complete rest. When I am awake I feel all right, and go about my business, and work as would anybody else. I do not feel sick, or nervous, neither have I the inclination to smoke more opium.”

“Then why do you smoke?” asked Mr. Davin.

“Ah! that’s it,” answered the young girl. “There’s a time when my hand fails me, the tears come to my eyes, and then I come here and have a smoke, which puts me all right. There is too much nonsense talked about opium smokers. I see no harm in it. Life without it would be unendurable. I am in excellent health, but I suppose everybody has their troubles, and I have mine.”

“I don’t want to be offensive,” said the secretary of the Chinese Commission, “but are you a fast woman?”

“I am, but you would be greatly mistaken if you imagined that all the women who come here to smoke are of that character. It is the reverse. In San Francisco, I have known some of the first people in the place to visit opium dens, and many respectable people do the same her, although drinking is more common.”

“The first case of its kind”¹⁸ (October, 1884)

The police have always experienced considerable trouble in securing convictions amongst the Chinese offenders. Last night, however, a new departure was

¹⁶ This was one of many aliases. The same opium user is featured in other articles in this section.

¹⁷ Thomas De Quincey’s autobiographical *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1821) was hugely (and controversially) influential for more than a century after its publication. Critics of the book often pointed out that De Quincey made opium sound like an aid to creativity and essential to getting the most enjoyment possible out of life, while glossing over its downsides.

¹⁸ From *An Opium Fiend in Court*. (1884, October 7). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 3.

taken. About midnight Sergeant Flewin¹⁹ and Officer Hough²⁰ dropped into an opium den on Fisguard street, which is kept by a Chinaman named William, alias Ah Foo²¹, and discovered several persons smoking opium, and among them was an Indian girl named Mary. This morning Ah Foo was brought up on a charge of selling an intoxicant to Indians. Mary herself gave evidence to the effect that she had smoked opium in the house, and her evidence was corroborated by a white woman, Clara Kinsellis, who was also in the house. After hearing the evidence Judge Pemberton sentenced the prisoner to pay a fine of \$50 or serve three months at hard labor. As this was the first case of the kind that had been tried in the court here, the officers are to be congratulated on their success, and they may rest assured that any efforts which they may make toward rooting out, or even checking these dens, will be endorsed by the citizens.

“Vile dens in this city”²² (October, 1884)

We learn from good authority that not later than last Sunday a well known money man of this city, after visiting one of the opium dens in Chinatown, undertook to walk the roof of a house while under the effects of the narcotic. Not realizing his position he walked into space and fell a distance of about twenty-five feet, injuring himself more or less, and requiring medical assistance. When is this nuisance to be put a stop to? Is it possible that our police authorities are not aware of the existence of these and other vile dens in this city?

“Not grand establishments”²³ (November, 1884)

Knowing that considerable opium is consumed in Victoria, curiosity led us to visit the opium dens or “joints,” as they are more frequently termed by smokers. These are not grand establishments with gorgeous trappings and magnificent temples, so often depicted by sensational writers in the east, where the sleepy God can be wooed and man slumber under the blissful influence of the poppy juice. As near as we can ascertain there are eleven regular “joints” in the city, but this number does not include the many places connected with the laundries where large quantities of opium are daily consumed and which are accessible only to the Mongolian. The principal “joint” in the city is situated off Fisguard street, and is run by an old broken-down Chinaman known to the police as “William,” who has smoked himself almost into the grave. Entering the den through a narrow, dark, death-breeding stench alley, the

¹⁹ John Flewin. In 1884 he lived at the corner of Quebec and Montreal streets, in Victoria.

²⁰ Walter R. Hough. In 1884 he was a resident of Herald street. In the 1881 census he is listed as a 37-year-old member of the Church of England, who is single and lives alone.

²¹ The census of 1881 lists several Ah Fooks in British Columbia, but only one in Victoria. He was 28, and lived with a married couple in their 50s with the last name Thompson. No occupation is listed for Ah Foo. The census form is unfortunately faint and difficult to read, so other details are not available.

²² From *The Chinese Must Go*. (1884, October 23). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 3.

²³ From *VICTORIA'S SLUMS*. (1884, November 1). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 3.

reporter found himself face to face with a shadowy, skeletonized Mongolian, and was shown into a back room about 6x10 containing two large bunks, made by covering a rough board platform with two or three old blankets and a couple of dirty looking pillows for the head. Upon the bunk stands the “lay-out” consisting of a bamboo stem, several clay or stone bowls, a *yeu-hock*, resembling a knitting needle, a crooked hook to clean the bowl, a lamp and a glass globe evidently made by grinding the bottom of a goblet, making a hole one inch in diameter through which the flame protrudes, and then a hop-toy to hold the pernicious drug; this constitutes the magnificent paraphernalia of a Victoria opium “joint,” or rather the back room of a third rate wash house.

Here is a sad scene. On one bunk lies a young man of fine physique, well-known in the city, who possesses promising elocutionary ability, but who is rapidly being transformed into a “regular pipe fiend,” aspirations all gone, and a few short months will transfer him beyond the limits of hope. Near by on another bunk are three or four Chinamen in a semi-state of insensibility, and to complete the motley crowd is a white girl, N. F. Davins’ “beautiful young lady,” known as Clara Kinsella²⁴. Here she may be found any night reigning supreme; a Chinese idol in this filthy hell-hole of corruption, one of the most depraved and degraded of God’s creatures in the city. One Sunday night not long since a respectably dressed woman, in rather a staggering condition, with incoherent speech, might have been seen standing on the steps of the Methodist church, Pandora street, calling for her daughter whom she claimed was morally lost. In a trembling and supplicant manner she begged a gentleman to find her child. If she had a daughter her search was useless; she walked away in the direction of Cormorant street, and in a couple of hours afterwards was thoroughly under the influence of the fascinating drug, lying in the most disgusting condition, in one of the vilest “joints” at the rear of the theatre building between Cormorant and Fisguard streets. The reporter was informed that some white women “smokee,” but the “lay-out” is taken to their houses. This probably refers to certain of the demi-monde who are addicted to the use of the drug. As a rule, however, the Chinese object to female patrons on account of a Chinese superstition that women bring bad luck. [...]

As will be seen by the customs statistics there is a large amount of the raw poppy imported to the Province. This is all manufactured into opium in Chinatown. There are nine opium factories fitted up with all the necessary and modern improvements, opium safes, etc. It costs about \$10,000 to operate one of these factories. The money for stock is required to be sent to China in advance, the poppy is then shipped and there is a constant shipping of the needful and receiving of the drug all the year round. The high tariff in the United States causes this industry in Victoria to be a most remunerative one. The duty on the manufactured article is \$5 per pound. A new factory has not long since been built and fitted up at a cost of \$6800, and although considerable manufactured opium was imported into the country last year, Victoria bids fair to be the center of the opium trade in Canada which seems to be increasing, both in production and use to an alarming extent.

²⁴ Alias Emily Horton.

“Women had been seen to enter”²⁵ (November, 1884)

It has long been known that white people were in the habit of visiting the many opium dens in Chinatown after dark, and that even white women had been seen to enter these places, for the purpose of smoking the vile drug. The latter class of human beings were generally supposed to belong to the demi-monde, and but little attention was paid to them, as their doings generally create but little surprise. It may be news to some of the readers of this city, however, when it is stated that these same opium dens in Chinatown are visited almost nightly by young girls and women, whose characters in Victoria are supposed to be without a blemish. This is what the Chinamen have done for this city, and, it may well be added, the Province.

For some time past it has been whispered among a few people that so-called respectable young women had been seen entering houses in Chinatown after dark, but the report was generally discredited. A reporter of THE TIMES had ascertained on the most undoubted authority that the rumor was true and that two young girls had been seen entering a certain place several times, by a man who had known them to remain within for several hours. This the gentleman knew to be a fact, as he lives but a short distance from the opium den, and on three occasions had made it an object to watch where the girls went and how long they stayed.

As the gentleman volunteered to accompany the reporter around to several of the opium dens last night, the offer was accepted, and about 9 o'clock they entered the first place, a low, one-story building on Cormorant street, between Government and Store streets. No difficulty was encountered in getting in the building, but upon going back in the rear, the doors were found to be locked, and for several minutes no one seemed willing to respond to a knock. After trying it several times a woman made her appearance, and in very fair English asked what was wanted. The reporter replied that he wanted to smoke opium. This the woman did not believe at first, apparently being of the opinion that the visitors were officers, and that trouble was brewing. However, after thoroughly inspecting the intruders, she led the way through several rooms, then down a long, dark passage-way and into a dark apartment. This was supposed to be the end of their journey, and the place where opium smokers regaled themselves with the vice. The room was frightful to behold. Stretched upon the floor were half a dozen Chinese of both sexes, and two half-breed women. They were all unconscious, having smoked until they had reached a state of perfect helplessness. The door having been tightly closed for, perhaps, several hours, the fumes of the burning opium had become so dense that it was with great difficulty one could breathe. The reporter and his companion concluded that they did not care to try the pipe, so after making the woman understand that they had changed their minds, the two took their departure, feeling greatly relieved when fresh air was reached. [...]

His guide then suggested that they go up the street a little distance and enter another opium den which receives considerable patronage from all classes of people.

²⁵ From OPIUM DENS. (1884, November 8). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 3.

They entered the front door but had the same difficulty in being admitted to the room. The opium dens seem to be run by Chinawomen, and whenever a strange white person appears, they imagine the invaders are officers of the law. After kicking the door a number of times, a woman let the visitors in, who stated, as they did to the other one, that they wanted to smoke. Upon receiving this information she started towards the rear of the building, the reporter and his companion following. Before reaching the end of the passageway, the reporter thought he would look into a room which had an air of mystery about it. The door was ajar, while a curtain hung on the inside, through which a dim light could be seen. The door being pushed gently open, a cloud of smoke was encountered which was almost enough to knock down the most powerfully constituted man. The interior of that room was a sight to behold. The apartment, though small, contained several bunks, a table and two chairs. Stretched upon one of the bunks were two white girls, aged about sixteen and eighteen respectively. The reporter hastened to the door and called the gentleman who accompanied him, who by this time stopped at the other end of the hall to wait for him. As soon as the Chinawoman discovered that the reporter had entered the room where the white girls were, she made a great effort to get him away. This, however, the two visitors declined to do, and going in where the girls were, endeavored to talk with them. One of them had become so stupefied by the drug that she was unable to speak, while her companion, although very much under the influence of opium, could talk quite rationally. The reporter's guide recognized the elder girl as one he had seen entering that house several times before, but the other one was a stranger to him.

The spectacle was truly a touching one. Here were two young ladies, one of them comparatively well known in Victoria, lying on a bed in an opium den, drunk from the effects of smoking opium. The girl, as soon as she realized that she had been discovered, commenced to cry, and begged the two men not to expose her. Upon being assured that it was not their intention to have her arrested, or to tell her mother, she related how she came to such a place, without her whereabouts being known. For several months past, she said, a companion of hers had been in the habit of visiting this den at intervals, and on one occasion she was asked to accompany her, which had resulted in the latter's becoming a frequent visitor. Last evening, not caring to go alone, the unfortunate girl had induced a young friend to go along, and after getting inside the woman who conducted them to the room persuaded the two to smoke awhile. Upon being asked if she was enabled to keep her mother in ignorance of her visits to that place, she replied that she always told her she was going to visit a friend for a few hours in the evening, and that she returned before ten o'clock. She remarked that her first information of the place was obtained through her cook, who is a Chinaman.

"Did my parents know of this," said the poor girl, "they would be broken-hearted, and I promise never to come here again."

She aroused her companion and the two were still sitting there when the reporter and his guide took their departure. The elder girl resides on Douglas street, and should her name be given the readers of this paper would be shocked beyond expression.

1885 – 1894

“Its use should be limited”²⁶ (February, 1885)

The report²⁷ of the Hon. Mr. Chapleau²⁸ and Judge Gray²⁹, commissioners appointed to enquire into and concerning all the facts and matters concerned with the whole subject of Chinese immigration, its trade relations, as well as the social and moral objections taken to the influx of the Chinese people into Canada, was present to parliament to-day. The commissioners report [that] the value of opium entered for consumption in the Dominion in the fiscal year ending June 30th 1884, was \$201,083 of which \$192,149 was entered in British Columbia. The commissioners think a considerable part of this opium may be smuggled into the United States and continue: Its use should be limited to medicinal or scientific purposes, and every aid should be given to those people who seek to prevent its consumption being introduced as a habit among our people either for smoking or other merely indulgent ends. The evidence taken before the commission in British Columbia shows no perceptible tendency among the people of the province, in any way, to adopt such a habit. In every city, in every part of the world, there will possibly be found persons of the lowest and most degraded habits who frequent opium dens, but they are almost always persons who have fallen so low from previous debauchery and vice, that there is no lower depth to which they can descend. [...] The evidence does not show reasonable ground for fearing in British Columbia any contaminating influence from either one or the other of these vices [of opium and prostitution], as coming from the Chinese. It may safely be affirmed that the white associates (few as they are) of the low Chinese in these vices will be themselves found to come from the lowest and most degraded classes of the whites, persons so utterly dead to every feeling that becomes either a respectable man or a virtuous woman, that wherever they might be, in whatever city of the world, if it were possible to find any place lower than an opium den or a Chinese house of prostitution, it is there they would have to be sought.

“Long Clara”³⁰ (March, 1885)

Nicholas Flood Davin, on his return to Ottawa, reported that he had found in a Chinese opium den in Victoria a beautiful white girl stupefied by the effects of the drug. This “beautiful white girl” was arraigned this morning on a charge of vagrancy. Her baptismal name is Clara Gonzales³¹; but she is known in the society which she adorns as “Long Clara.”

²⁶ From THE CHINESE QUESTION. (1885, February 26). *The Montreal Gazette*, p. 2.

²⁷ The *Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration*, ordered by Sir John A. Macdonald.

²⁸ Joseph-Adolphe Chapleau (1840 – 1898). He would serve as Lieutenant Governor of Quebec from 1892 until a few months before his death in 1898.

²⁹ John Hamilton Gray (1814 – 1889) served as Premier of New Brunswick from 1856 to 1857.

³⁰ From Municipal Police Court. (1885, March 17). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 3.

³¹ Alias Emily Horton, alias Clara Kinsella.

Sergt. Flewin deposed that he had known defendant for over twelve months, but had never known her to do anything during that time. Had seen her in saloons and opium dens. She was a street walker.

Defendant – How do you know that I am?

Witness – I say that you are reputed to be one.

Defendant – Oh! only reputed to be one?

Witness – I have good reasons to believe that you are one.

Defendant – Oh! perhaps you have good reasons to now that I am?

Magistrate, to witness – Have you ever seen defendant around town late of nights during these last three months?

Witness – Yes, often.

Defendant – Ah, but I was never alone at those hours!

Witness – No, that's just where it was. Sometimes you were in company with one man – sometimes with another.

Office Sheppard gave similar testimony.

Defendant said she had nothing to say.

The magistrate remarked that he could only deal with the case as the law allowed. There was no need for him, he said, to remind the defendant that women of her class could not be tolerated plying their selling on the streets, nor any need to remind her of the invariable end of the life she had [chosen].

His honor [was about to end the] proceeding when a young man stepped [forward] and said he had something to say about the matter. Upon being sworn in he said his name was L. W. Garland; that he was a carpenter by trade, and had lived on Discovery street with the prisoner for over a year, whom he had supported during that time.

Supt. Bloomfield³² – Are you married to the woman?

“No; I am not.” In answer to a question he said he had never given defendant a pistol for the avowed purpose of shooting another man; did not know the woman to have slept elsewhere than at his house; it was with his consent that she had walked the streets at all hours of the night; but he did not know what she did upon those occasions; she might have been visiting the sick for all that he knew.

The magistrate thought the evidence of the last witness had rather confirmed than disproved the evidence of the constables. He should inflict a fine of \$25, or in default two months' imprisonment with hard labor.

³² Charles P. Bloomfield (1844 – 1893), who in 1885 lived on John St. In 1871 he married Elizabeth Watkin Bloomfield (1843 – 1921), with whom he had one child, Rachel Anne Bloomfield Creech (1877 – 1916). Bloomfield was born in Kirton, Suffolk, England, and became a private detective after retiring from the police force. “C. P. Bloomfield, aged 55, ex-chief of police of Victoria, and lately a private detective, died suddenly at his residence, 39 Hillside avenue, last evening of heart disease. [...] The deceased was a pioneer of the province and was very well known. He was chief of police before Henry Sheppard and since then has been a member of the detective firm of Miller and Bloomfield.” DEATH OF C. P. BLOOMFIELD. (1893, March 20). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 5.

“Been’s wife is boss”³³ (November, 1885)

Song Kee, of new China Town, [Nanaimo] was charged by Constable Stewart with selling opium without a license.

M. Bray³⁴, government agent, deposed – Song Kee has not taken out a license to sell opium in Nanaimo district; I have not issued a license to sell opium up to this date. I don’t know whether opium is sold or not; never saw any sold; have during the last five years frequently asked Chinese store keepers if they sold opium; they have replied “no, they did not sell any opium.”

Wm. Stewart, chief constable, deposed – I saw Song Kee in a house in China Town today; he was in a small room sitting on a kind of China lounge; there were about six Chinamen in the room with him; two or three of them were smoking out of the opium smoking pipes produced; I found some opium and apparatus for smoking opium in the house; immediately opposite was what I should judge to be a gambling room; from information conveyed in the deposition of Song Kee made yesterday³⁵ I had no hesitation in arresting him as I caught him in the act of smoking opium and having a lot of Chinamen with him doing the same thing; from what I saw at the same place yesterday and today I should think that Song’s place was a regular opium den; all the opium pots, lamps and pipes, etc., and the eight Chinamen now in court, were brought by me with the assistance of constables Drake³⁶ and O’Connell from the house of Song Kee.

By Mr. MacElmen³⁷ for the defence – The tin pots contain what Song called opium “seat”; (the interpreter of Song Kee explained that “seat” meant the remains or all the same ashes of opium once smoked). Don’t know whose house Song was living in.

By the Court – as nearly as I can remember Song Kee said in court yesterday, that he kept an opium smoking house, in answer to a question as to what his business was, he also said in reply to another question that he paid no licence.

By Mr. MacElmen – Song understood the question as to what his business was as well as he did the other questions put to him; if there were good grounds for a prosecution against Song it would certainly be my duty to act.

Ack, No. 300 at No. 1 Shaft called for the prosecution said – I was at Been’s house today; stopped to sit; sat down in Soong Kee’s room; saw Mr. Stewart; mixed a pipe of opium for Soong and afterwards mixed two or three more pipes; the pipe marked A is Soong’s pipe; don’t know who smoked the other pipes; the house is Been’s, he is gone to Victoria to go to China; Soong is stopping in the house; he is minding

³³ From Provincial Court. (1885, November 25). *The Nanaimo Daily News*, p. 3.

³⁴ Marshal Bray lived on Albert St., Nanaimo, in 1885.

³⁵ “The police yesterday made a raid on an ‘opium joint’ kept by a Chinaman named Song Kee, at new China Town. The police secured the owner of the “joint” and nine Chinese engaged in smoking opium, together with the smoking apparatus.” Raid Upon an Opium Joint. (1885, November 21). *The Nanaimo Daily News*, p. 3.

³⁶ Probably Samuel Drake, who is listed in the 1885 directory as a “prisoner guard” resident at Needham St., Nanaimo.

³⁷ A. T. D. McElmen had his office on Commercial St.

Been's house till he comes back; Been's wife Chip is "boss;" she is gone to Victoria; Soong stops there to look soo [sic]; he is no more boss; Been's wife is boss; she comes back on Monday; men from South Field, Chase River and new Shaft come to stop and sit down with Soong and smoke Chinamen's tobacco; no smoke opium; two men stop in that house.

All efforts to obtain evidence from this witness as to Soong's selling any opium were utterly futile.

Hingee, called for prosecution said – was in Song's room; was not smoking opium; Song was sick; went to see how he was getting on; don't know what any one was doing; saw Mr. Stewart to-day; know nothing.

Ma Hing and five other Chinamen after having been duly and solemnly sworn in Chinese form all eventually no savee'd smokee, buy or sell opium.

Song Kee was remanded till the 23rd. Bail, himself and one surety in \$250 each.

Monday, 23rd.

Song Kee appeared on remand for selling opium without a license.

Constable Stewart stated that owing to the failure of the Chinese witnesses, and without them there was no means of proving sales of opium by Song, he must with regret, apply for leave to withdraw his information in this case.

The Court in granting the application commented severely upon the utter disregard for the sanctity of an oath shown by the Chinese in this case.

Song Kee was then charged with being an idle and disorderly person.

The Depositions in the opium case were put in as evidence of the vagrancy.

Fined \$10 with \$10 costs or one month's imprisonment with hard labor.

"No indication of absolute destitution"³⁸ (January, 1886)

A large block of tenements between Cormorant and Fisguard, and leased and sub-leased until it would be difficult to find a responsible landlord in connection with any breach of sanitation, was next made the point of observation. On each door was stenciled the information "licensed to hold four persons," but necessity which knows no law evidenced their capacity of holding in many cases three times that number. Among these, though there were signs of poverty, there was no indication of absolute destitution; but one could not fail to be struck with the petty, the "picayune" nature – if the expression be allowed – of their operations. As examples: A Chinaman, outside his door, was chopping wood, in quantity about enough to keep an ordinary grate fire liberally going for a quarter of an hour; yet he apparently treasured every chip as carefully as he would a stick of wood under less straitened circumstances. Over a small fire inside a room a Chinaman was frying seven small fish, each about two inches long, while eight Chinamen were surveying the process with an interest that was incited by appetite. A room close by contained more striking signs of affluence in the presence of a sack of flour and half a mat of rice. Eleven Chinese were scattered

³⁸ From CHINATOWN. (1886, January 20). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 3.

around, and some who at a table were playing dominoes, showed that as they were somewhat easy in mind they also probably were in their interior economy. Passing four rooms severally rented and nightly slept in by four Chinese cooks in white families, the door of the next room or compartment was thrown open by the officer, and disclosed the inside of an opium den, presided over by a Chinaman, and who at that moment was enjoying the company of four white men, three of whom were smoking the drug which once partaken of will contend successfully with the strongest resolution to discontinue its use. The fourth white man was making a cigarette, while the Celestial was frying a quantity of fish that looked small enough to be whitebait. Disturbed at their avocation, two of the men, reclining, half arose.

One of them, putting on his hat as he moved outside, addressing the officer in a deprecatory manner, said: "I am sorry you have caught me here, sir!"

"Then why do you come, Howard, and run the chances?" enquired the prosaic individual addressed.

"Well," was the evasive answer, "if ever you catch me again take a club to me." In reply to this the officer briefly remarking that he would at that rate be engaged all the time, moved off, adding to the reporter, "He didn't recognize you, and was giving that deal for your benefit, so that you might imagine it was the first or nearly the first time he has been to a den."

The reporter replied that in several rounds of the dens he had made with the police he had seen the same man similarly engaged, and knew him to be a confirmed opium smoker. The other three men are equally well known to all the reporters and police of the city, though in this instance their names are not published. It would be well for them to apply for a license to smoke the drug or else discontinue their visits.

"Smoking a pipe of opium"³⁹ (October, 1888)

On Monday night a TIMES reporter, accompanied by two citizens, visited that section of Victoria which is bounded by Pandora, Douglas, Fisgard and Store streets and occupied by the Chinese portion of our population. The first place visited was a small opium den on Pandora street, a few doors west of the Methodist Church. On entering the building the fumes of the narcotic poison almost overpowered the party; but, with a determination to finish the investigation, they stayed long enough to watch the preparation and smoking of a pipe of opium, which is done in the following manner:

Two Chinamen were lying on a wide, low couch – one with his bare feet on an adjoining table. Near them stood an oil lamp and a small phial filled with a dark brownish liquid. The smoker held a long steel bodkin in one hand and an opium pipe in the other. He took a small quantity of the drug from the phial on the end of the bodkin, which was held over the light and twirled around until it was ready to place in a small hole in the pipe. The stem of the pipe was then placed in his mouth and

³⁹ From VISIT TO CHINATOWN. (1888, October 24). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 1.

the bowl held over the light, whilst he sucked at the stem and inhaled the smoke which he exhaled from his nose and mouth.

“They will show you a safe”⁴⁰ (November, 1888)

The best Chinese quarter in Canada, with its joss house and opium dens is, of course, at Victoria, and one sees in it often the queer picture of the North American Indian bargaining with the other round faced barbarian from over seas. Not one-hundredth part of the opium manufactured here is consumed in Canada. On the raw drug the American Government charges a duty of ten dollars a pound, against the one dollar imposed here. Our government collects one hundred thousand dollars a year on the opium import. Ninety-nine hundredth parts of the stuff goes to the States, openly or smuggled. The cans are sent hither and thither by express to evade the American detectives, who are as sharp on the Pacific coast as anywhere else. Not long ago they seized \$2,000 worth of contraband opium, after devious wanderings, in Detroit. Often it crosses the continent once more before it reaches the San Francisco market. In Victoria they will show you a safe containing \$25,000 worth of the brown taffy-like stuff, a little blue jar full worth twenty-five dollars. And you will see a Chinese proprietor on quite a large scale dip out what might be a teaspoonful with a stick, dab it on a bit of brown paper, weigh it carefully and sell it for ten cents.

“Just for fun”⁴¹ (December, 1888)

The Chinese proprietor of a Victoria opium den known as “No. 13,” appeared at the police station late last night and stated that two well-known “Melican ladies” had visited the place with the intention of smoking a little opium “just for fun,” had smoked and were lying there in a stupor induced by the drug. Police officers visited the place and the women were taken home, still in their stupid slumber. It is not likely that they will ever try any more such dangerous experiments as smoking opium, “just for fun.”

“Topsey”⁴² (January, 1889)

“Topsey” was next called, charged with being an inmate of a house of ill-fame; and a pretty little blonde of some eighteen summers took her stand behind the Superintendent’s chair. She was not like the majority of the great unwashed who come before the Cadi⁴³ of the police court to answer for their misdeeds. Her golden hair was combed neatly back from her shapely head, while the big blue eyes and

⁴⁰ From A FLYING VISIT. (1888, November 18). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 4.

⁴¹ From CITY AND COUNTRY NEWS. (1888, December 18). *The Vancouver Daily News*, p. 4.

⁴² From CITY POLICE COURT. (1889, January 8). *The Colonist*, p. 4.

⁴³ An Islamic judge. The word is here (and below) used sarcastically to describe a judge presiding over petty matters.

exquisitely chiselled features, the face, as yet bearing none of the signs of dissipation, looked strangely out of place in the crime infested court room.

When asked her name by the court, she hesitated a moment, and then replied, "Foster." The name given was not her own however; she still retained the sense of shame and gave evidence of the fact that she possessed intelligence, education and good birth.

Supt. Sheppard⁴⁴, in referring to the case, said that the young prisoner had only been in the city about three weeks. She had not been attracting any attention by disorderly conduct but was one of the many who frequent the opium dens of this city. She had been found in one of the filthy dens at five o'clock in the morning.

Said the superintendent: "I'd like to stop this opium business. It is awful to think of young people like this girl, forming the habit, and ruining both body and mind, forgetting every instinct of decency, and losing all sense of shame that they may smoke themselves to death. On the other side [of the border], smoking opium is a finable offence. I have long wanted a bylaw to be passed making it the same here."

The question of opium smoking having nothing to do with the case, and Topsey pleading guilty, she was fined \$25.

Birdie Jones⁴⁵ (January, 1889)

Birdie Jones, a young woman, was arrested last night by Officer Thomas and charged in the police court this morning with being a vagrant.

Supt. Sheppard said the woman failed to appear on summons. This is the third time⁴⁶ that she has been before the court.

His Honor – How old are you?

Prisoner – Eighteen years.

His Honor – There should be some place where these women should be kept. It is not right to send a young woman like that to gaol.

Superintendent – The ladies of the Methodist church took charge of her, but she ran away.

His Honor – Will they take her again?

Superintendent – I think not. She returns to a life of shame⁴⁷ and smokes opium.

⁴⁴ In 1889, H. W. Sheppard lived at 68 Herald street.

⁴⁵ From POLICE COURT. (1889, January 26). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 4.

⁴⁶ Actually the fourth. She was charged with vagrancy in January 1888 (alongside 'Rosie Howard'), and with drunkenness twice – once in November and once in December 1888. She was charged on the latter two counts along with John Davis, who is listed as working on dredges and living at 31 Humboldt St. in the 1889 directory.

⁴⁷ "Birdie Jones, an inmate of Rose Howard's house, was fined \$10." CITY POLICE COURT. (1889, April 26). *The Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 4. Rosie Howard was described as "a half-breed soiled dove" in an 1887 report. CITY AND PROVINCE. (1887, June 29). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 4. In 1886, she was "charged with keeping a house of ill-fame on Johnson street, [and] pleaded guilty. The police reported the house to be of a disorderly character. Fined \$10." POLICE COURT. (1886, January 12). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 4.

His Honor – I fined a number of women of her class.

Superintendent – If she is sent to gaol they might break her of the opium habit.

His Honor – You had better give up this kind of thing. If you continue you will die soon. Give up the life you are leading and go away. Try hard work and you will yet be able to make an honest living.

The woman was sentenced to imprisonment for two months unless she pay a fine of \$25.

“Mysteries of the pipe”⁴⁸ (February, 1889)

Having formed an idea that a few items of interest to the public might be gathered in the Chinese quarters of the city, a representative of THE WORLD found time yesterday to pay a nocturnal visit to the stores and habitations of a number of those forming the Celestial element here, and learned some facts which are herewith given to our readers. On the night the visit was made Chinatown showed signs of dullness and quietude, after the recent celebration of the Chinese new year. [...]

The first store visited was that of Hip Tuck Lung & Co.⁴⁹, which is being fitted up as an opium factory. The interior walls were covered with long red parcels, bearing inscriptions which were found to be in poetry, and represented touching sentiments. Hip Tuck, rather taller than the usual run of Celestials, offered THE WORLD man cigars, and was as genial as could be. The opium factory is not yet in running order, but probably will be before long. After being permitted a good look round the store the newspaper man departed. [...]

By this time a longing had come over the newspaper man to fathom the mysteries of the opium pipe, and as luck would have it, not long after leaving [...] an opportunity presented itself for seeing a Celestial actually in the middle of the operation. Walking cautiously into a somewhat musty-fusty kind of store, a few Celestials were to be seen loafing around. To one of these the newspaper man gave a form of greeting and by degree got him to “talkee.” Presently a Chinaman came out from a back room with a long opium pipe in his hand and walked into a side room with a couch in it. The door was left open and as THE WORLD man glanced round and examined objects in the store, he also watched the actions of the opium-smoking Chinaman. Lying back on the couch, he lit a nut oil lamp and holding a pipe over the flame inserted a quantity of opium by means of a thin iron into the bowl of the pipe, the whole of the smoke, as he puffed away, coming through his nostrils. Thinking he would never get information there without asking, the newspaper man asked what was done with the burnt or old opium. This, he was informed, was called “yinshee” or “second grade,” and was bought up by the poorer classes, mixed with water into a kind of paste, and used again. As the Chinamen in this store were by this time showing signs of impatience the scribe proceeded further. [...]

⁴⁸ From VANCOUVER'S CHINATOWN. (1889, February 23). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

⁴⁹ At 4 Dupont St., Vancouver.

Many will have noticed, when business may have called them to Chinatown, a long row of cabins running lengthways with the lot. The Chinamen who rent these, live very much huddled up together, and are a low lot, members of the dregs of Chinese society. In one of them a half-breed woman cohabits with a half negro and it is known that she is an opium fiend herself and in addition has beds on which to smoke the seductive drug, ready fixed up in one of the other cabins. These are not the only cabins and houses in that quarter occupied by cut throat Chinamen and a few half-breeds. All of these THE WORLD man found to have the reputation of being more or less the dens of gambling, iniquity, shame and vice. An effort should be made to wipe them out.

A fact which took the writer more by surprise than anything else was the discovery that in the basement of a building there rooms have been purposely fitted up into which a customer, no matter who she or he may be, can come in, pay so much (about 25c. to 50c.), lie down, “hit” the opium-pipe and slide out again, if possible, unseen. Nor is this habit confined solely to the Chinese element. For the reporter discovered that it is almost a nightly occurrence with many members of the white but fallen women of this city (which, by the way, claims as much morality as its neighbors), to go into the very establishment referred to and smoke opium until, with many of them, it has become a confirmed habit. It is understood that the very building referred to is to be divided up into a saloon, a house of ill-fame, a gambling den of some sort or other, and, as stated before, an opium-smoking establishment. This is something for our moralists to meditate upon. The [Vancouver City] Council never made a better move than when they inserted a clause in the amendments to the charter for the suppression of these opium-smoking dens.

A “pronounced opium fiend”⁵⁰ (March, 1890)

Chas. A. Lovell was [...] charged with vagrancy. The prisoner pleaded not guilty. The appearance of the prisoner betokened the pronounced opium fiend. A sallow complexion, deep sunken eyes, hollow cheeks, nervous manner and generally wrecked looking system was proof positive that the seductive drug had in him a slave. His case was adjourned until Monday to enable the prisoner to leave the country.

“Not unpleasant after the first gasp”⁵¹ (March, 1890)

A few days ago an enterprising reporter on one of the Victoria, B. C. newspapers sallied forth in the wake of a Chinese guide to hunt the opium demons in their lair. This was on Sunday night. By many a devious winding way, and many a stumble over things in general in the dark, the seekers sought the first “joint.” Tap, tap, went the guide’s bony knuckles against a dirty, rotten, criminal-looking door. A minute’s pause and shuffling footsteps could be heard inside, the door was cautiously

⁵⁰ From POLICE COURT. (1890, March 8). The Victoria Daily Times, p. 4.

⁵¹ From HELL-HOLES IN VICTORIA. (1890, March 14). *The Winnipeg Tribune*, p. 1.

opened about two inches, and a pinched, yellow face, like that of an aged sewer rate, peered out.

“What you wanted?” came the sing-song, pigeon-English query. The guide jargonized some Chinese, and after a little swearing at one another in that language, each man of the visitors squeezed himself into the room through the few inches of space between the door and the sill, and as none of them were troubled with embonpoint all arrived safely in the interior of a hideously dirty room.

The place reeked with the dull, heavy smell of opium; not unpleasant after the first gasp, the fumes of this drug become quite redolent. The only light in the room was afforded by a small brass lamp, the sickly, yellow rays from which could scarcely struggle through the smoke wreaths curling around. At one side of the room were three bunks, one above another; the two lower ones were occupied. In the lower lay a young man on his back, one hand that had clasped the noxious pipe lay across his breast; the pipe had fallen from his numbed fingers to the floor. The bosom of his shirt was open revealing the slowly-heaving chest and a skin that, by comparison with his grim surroundings, seemed snowy. His mouth was open, and his eyes, but they were glazed and fixed, rivetted in a stony, corpse-like stare upon nothing. From the gaping mouth oozed the unrestrained saliva mingled with froth, flowing down on the pillow. Only the breathing proclaimed the form animate, and not a sullen cadaver ready for the dissector’s scalpel. Indeed, contrasted with the ghastly pallor of his skin and his rigid attitude, the stentorious breathing smote upon the ear like something out of place. The dreamy-eyed wretch who kept the den came peering over the shoulders of the horror-stricken strangers with a mocking tehee, as if he gloried in the sickening spectacle. He might have quickened his movements considerably had he known how near he came to getting a thorough, good Anglo-Saxon kick on the end of the back just then.

Straightening up from viewing the young man in the lower bunk, the strangers peered into the one nearly level with their eyes, expecting to find another young man in the arms of the Chinese Morpheus. What then was their astonishment to find there a young white woman! Like the poor unfortunate below, she lay stretched upon her back, inert as if in death, stupefied to insensibility, and indicating by her breathing alone that the vital spark had not gone out. The neck and breast of her dress had been loosened, and her dark hair also, and the latter streamed down in wild profusion over the intense whiteness of the neck, shoulders and bosom. Her eyes were half open, just exactly like those of a drowned person; and there was the same glassy fixedness in them as in the young man’s below. From her mouth also flowed a copious salivation, flecked with unnatural foam or froth; the lips were blue and shrunken, setting off in ghastly contrast the marble, chalky whiteness of the face. Her pipe, still reeking and casting off heavy cloud forms from her glowing bowl, lay not far from her head, and at each deep breath the smoke wreaths seemed drawn that way and down into the heaving breast. Again the leering Celestial Cerberus of the place came grimacing and chuckling around, placing several prominent portions of his anatomy in dangerously close proximity to hands curled up tight and boot-toes animated with superhuman vigor. Dropping a small fee into the joint-keeper’s filthy paw the party

made their exit, and the first breath of heaven's fresh, cool air was almost intoxicating after the experience of a few minutes spent in that reeking Chinese inferno.

Another "joint" was visited, and sights as loathsome and disgusting found there as in the other. The places were about equal in regard to their condition, the most abominable state of filth characterizing them; want of air and light did the rest. A very low price was charged for "hitting the pipe," as it is brutally termed; and no other form of vice, by all accounts, possesses such a fatal fascination for its devotees as does this insidious and truly devilish one of opium. The frenzy of the dipsomaniac for his dram is said to be nothing compared with the awful lust that gripes the very soul of the unhappy wretch who has tasted of this allurements, whose practice means certain and speedy death. People who have had experience with both have told the writer that only the fierce and insatiable craving for human blood, once they have tasted it, shown by the striped monsters of the Indian jungles, can compare with the awful mania of the opium user for his drug.

A test case⁵² (April, 1890)

Yuen Lee⁵³ was charged by Officer Irvine⁵⁴ with having in his possession opium, contrary to law, and also with smoking the drug, not having obtained the certificate of a medical man. Under a never-enforced statute this was intended to be made a test case, and, if possible, the license of \$10 semi-annually will be collected from every Chinese smoker in the city. In the event of the test case "sticking," a revenue of a good many thousand each year will be created.

"From the avails of prostitution"⁵⁵ (May, 1890)

Chas. A. Lovell was charged with having no visible means of support and with deriving his living from the avails of prostitution carried on by Flora Nelson⁵⁶, a young woman only 19 years old. The evidence showed him to be a confirmed opium eater, and was particularly revolting. His sentence was consequently six months at hard work.

⁵² From CITY POLICE COURT. (1890, April 4). *The Colonist*, p. 1.

⁵³ Listed in the 1890 directory as a merchant in an alley between Cormorant and Fisguard streets.

⁵⁴ William Irvine, who in 1890 lived at 154 Pandora Ave.

⁵⁵ From POLICE COURT. (1890, May 17). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 4.

⁵⁶ Flora Nelson also came to the attention of the courts in 1892. "Flora Nelson pleaded guilty to assaulting Patrick Kennedy, who appeared with a beautifully decorated optic in support of the charge. She was fined \$15. Kennedy had been drunk and abusive and he was fined \$10." At the Police Court. (1892, April 4). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8. "Flora Nelson, a Dupont street woman, was fined \$10 for being drunk". At the police court. (1892, April 25). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8. "Flora Nelson and Pearl Deming, both inmates of Belle Johnson's brothel, next to the Newcastle House, appeared before the Magistrate this afternoon, charged with disorderly conduct. These women have during the last two weeks been carrying on in a disgraceful manner, to the great annoyance of respectable people." POLICE COURT. (1892, July 5). *The Nanaimo Free Press*, p. 1.

“Rescued”⁵⁷ (December, 1890)

A Chinese woman, well up in years and mother of a large family of both boys and girls, found her way last week to Mr. Gardiner’s residence⁵⁸, in this city, and whilst there narrated the history of her life, which, if true, was one of a continuous chain of sorrows, bereavements and general disappointments. The father of the first two children had died many years since, and the man with whom she decided to live after the Chinese fashion, turned out to be an opium smoker, gambler, and at best gentleman of leisure. Often when fortune refused to smile and he saw heavy stakes swept from him, he would, it is alleged, return home and give expression to his feelings of disappointment by punishing the children for trivial causes, or no cause at all, and latterly he has aroused the suspicion that he would, after selling the furniture, sell some of the girls also. Under these circumstances, with her children growing up around her, whom she needed to support in addition to supporting him by taking in sewing, with responsibilities rapidly multiplying themselves, and finally with poor prospects of holding out much longer, she sought relief at the only quarter she could think of, and acting under the advice of the missionary, the whole family found their way into the Chinese Rescue Home⁵⁹ last Saturday evening, at about 8 o’clock, where they are now made comfortable, happy and out of danger’s way. With the mother’s consent, the matron⁶⁰ of the Home has been appointed legal guardian of one of the daughters.

“Completely overcome with it”⁶¹ (January, 1892)

Follow me through Chinatown, Port Haney⁶², where I have been. The morning is wet and the brickyards will not run to-day. About eight o’clock we go to the Chinese store kept by Wa Loos; we try the door; it is locked. [...] We next make our way through filth of every description to a large opium or sleeping shed. Entering we find it fitted up much after the fashion of a lumber shanty, two rows of bunks on each side and nearly every bunk occupied by a couple of Chinamen, and between every two bunks a curious little lamp, the occupants of the bunks lying in such a position that they can reach the light with the small ball of opium after they have shaped it for the purpose. Here are a couple of dozen poor wretches, some busy smoking opium, some completely overcome with it and recovering from its effects.

⁵⁷ From RESCUED. (1890, December 9). The Victoria Daily Times, p. 7.

⁵⁸ Probably the residence of Mrs. Kate Gardiner, at 128 Yates St.

⁵⁹ Probably the Chinese Girls’ Mission Home at 100 Cormorant St.

⁶⁰ Probably Miss Annie Leake, live-in matron of the Mission Home.

⁶¹ From FARMER. (1892, January 20). THE RACE PROBLEM. The Vancouver Daily World, p. 2.

⁶² Maple Ridge, B.C.

“Female Opium Fiend”⁶³ (October, 1892)

It has been reported to officer Harris⁶⁴ that a woman dressed in black, with dark brown hair, has been for a week or so infesting the Chinese opium joints on Dupont street. When under the influence of the drug, she acts in a very peculiar manner on the street. One of the Chinese connected with a joint said that she smokes on an average 75 cents’ worth of the drug a day, and that she can roast the dope more expertly than any of the Chinese habitues.

Castro Sutherland⁶⁵ (October, 1892)

Castro Sutherland, the female opium fiend, said that she was born in Valparaiso⁶⁶. She was brought here from the United States a few weeks ago by one Joe Miller. He put her in a tent on False creek, stole her watch, money and clothes and then left her there; she then had gone to live with the Chinaman. She and Ting, her Chinese paramour, were remanded till to-morrow.

The jail cure⁶⁷ (October, 1892)

The poor woman Castro Sutherland, who was found to be far gone on the path of the opium fiend, was sent to Westminster jail for three months, where in the past several other women, who had become morphine and opium slaves, have been cured.

“Beyond belief”⁶⁸ (September, 1893)

The dimensions of the opium-smuggling traffic between this city and various adjacent parts of the United States cannot be imagined by anyone not in the confidence of the smugglers or who has not enjoyed a chat with one of the men employed for the suppression by the Government of the United States. I knew that a good deal of illicit trading in the drug was done, with this city as a base of operations, but I confess the statements made to me by a man who acted as a spy for the American authorities, and chiefly through whose exertions some of the largest seizures on the coast have been made, astonished me. Outside of some of the Oriental cities, Victoria enjoys the somewhat damnable distinction of being the biggest opium depot in the world. The quantity manufactured here is beyond belief; and yet more astounding is the quantity now and, I am told, at all times in stock ready for transmission to the American side. My informant told me that a computation of the stock on hand could

⁶³ From Female Opium Fiend. (1892, October 14). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8.

⁶⁴ Probably Albert Harris, who in 1892 lived at 10th Avenue, Vancouver.

⁶⁵ From POLICE COURT. (1892, October 18). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

⁶⁶ A city in Chile.

⁶⁷ From POLICE COURT. (1892, October 19). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

⁶⁸ From Grigg, P. (1893, September 2). VICTORIA A VAST OPIUM DEN. *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 2. Note: P. Grigg is a pseudonym.

be expressed in tons quite well, and the number of tons might surprise most persons. A great deal of the opium is seized in transit, but vast quantities are of course successfully forwarded to destination. More surprising than all, however, was the list of names shown me by the spy as being those of persons actively interested in the disposal of the drug. There were names of prominent citizens on the list; men who have thousands of dollars invested in the enterprise, who possess great influence in the community, and who, I have no doubt, would be very much discomposed if they knew how much a certain sharp Yankee knows about them and their little transactions. The American told me they were “getting the racket down fine” – I do not know what that means exactly, as I never took the trouble to learn enough United States for practical use; but I have had it translated, and it appears that the Government are in possession of such information as would enable them to put a stop to the practice very soon.

“How much a year does the traffic represent to this city, or at least the head smugglers in this city?”

“Damphino,” replied the Connecticutian laconically; “ask me something easy.”

“Well, I mean approximately; how much is the trade worth to them?”

After a lengthy pause and the expectoration of much tobacco juice, he replied: “It’s in the hundreds of thousands somewhere; but it’s hard to spot the mark, or anything like it. I shouldn’t wonder if it ranged all-fired close up to half a million. No, sir, wouldn’t ‘surprise me a bit if I was told that straight, from figgers taken by an accountant s’posin’ he could get at ‘em, and he couldn’t.”

“How do they get that stuff across to the other side?”

“That ain’t the question. It’s how don’t they get it across? Dog on it, man, it goes across in everything from ladies’ satchels to beef barrels. There’s loads of it run over to the Angeles side every week. Almost every steamer carries away heaps of it, unknown, of course, to the owners, and probably to the officers; but it’s there just the same. Of course, you know something about the ingenuity shown by smugglers to hide their contraband stuff. [...] Well, here’s a man I’m interested in coming up street. So long; I’ll see you later.”

In the opium smuggling business the risk is great; the punishment, if caught, severe; but the profits are enormous. In my opinion, it seems rather anomalous that Great Britain should allow a set of men to be harbored under her flag for no other purpose than to break the laws of a neighboring friendly nation. Were the cases reversed, I can quite believe the British would raise a fearful outcry about it. But I suppose the revenue from opium exercises a wonderful influence on British executive ears. Some young men of my acquaintance have been telling me that their ambition is to “hit the pipe.” I hope they will take enough of it to make them so thoroughly sick that the very mention of opium will make them shudder.

1895 – 1904

“A kindness”⁶⁹ (October, 1895)

George Garland⁷⁰, for petty larceny⁷¹ at Victoria, has been sentenced to two years in the penitentiary. The long sentence is a kindness, as he is an opium fiend and an effort will be made during his incarceration to cure him of the habit.

“The effects of bad habits”⁷² (August, 1897)

To the cursory observer the Chinese population is still packed in close. They appear to be dwelling by dozens and scores in very small apartments. The shelf where four of them lay smoking opium might be eight feet one way by four the other, while the remainder of the room, which was the kitchen, parlor and all the rest of the home, might be eight feet square. One sad looking smoker got his pipe fired and sucked up the smoke greedily. Then his pained look disappeared, and a smile dawned on the corner of his mouth. It spread until his whole face glorified. When his pipe was smoked he handed it to his neighbor and became loquacious. It was not hard to follow the pigeon⁷³ English which he addressed to our guide in response to his question: “Snatch ‘em pipe much now?” “No, no muchee, times bad, no money buy opium.” He showed the little portion of opium for his pipe. It contained six smokes and cost “four bittie.” “When lots money smoke all that one day. Now one smoke one day.” His 50

⁶⁹ From CITY AND PROVINCE. (1895, October 24). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 3.

⁷⁰ George W. Garland, who in 1895 was a clerk working at a clothing store at 187 Douglas St, and living at 135 Quadra St. In the 1891 census he is listed as being 15 years old and living with his parents, Aaron (1836 – 1901) and Ruth J. (c. 1841 – March 26, 1897) Garland. His parents were Methodists born in England, and his father worked as a locomotive engineer on the Esquimalt & Nanaimo railway. George himself was born in the U.S. In 1887, he won an award for deportment in James Kay’s third division class at the Spring Ridge Ward School. By 1894, things had changed: “George Garland pleaded guilty in the police court this morning to the theft of \$34 from the till of the Central Drug Store. Garland is 17 and is apprenticed to Dr. Jones, the dentist. On Sunday and Monday Garland was drinking heavily, and on Monday night he went into the Central Drug Store for a ‘dose to brace himself up.’ While Louise Hall, the clerk, with whom Garland is acquainted, was preparing the dose Garland robbed the till. Garland pleaded drunkenness.” BRIEF LOCALS. (1894, April 25). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 5. He was sentenced to one month in jail despite a good character reference from ‘Postmaster Shakespeare’. Noah Shakespeare was a prominent anti-Chinese activist, photographer, tax collector for the Chinese head tax, member of parliament and one-time mayor of Victoria (in 1882).

⁷¹ “George Garland, a youth of 20, who was convicted summarily of stealing some jewellery from a woman named Kitty Gibson, alias Kelly, was given two years by magistrate Macrae. He had been convicted before and is an opium fiend.” NOTES FROM THE CAPITAL. (1895, October 23). *The Nanaimo Free Press*, p. 4.

⁷² From Scott, S. D. (1897, August 9). THE EDITORIAL VIEW. *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 6. Written by the editor of New Brunswick’s Daily Sun newspaper after visiting Victoria. S. D. Scott edited the paper starting in 1885.

⁷³ A typo for ‘pidgin’ English – simplified English used by people not familiar with the language.

cents' worth of opium now has to last him a week instead of a day. Then Sam fell to moralizing, his face still illumined with the angelic smile. "Opium vely bad. If no smoke now feel bad here," putting his hand on his stomach. Then he held up his hands, causing them to tremble, and explained how the opium smoker's limbs shook when he went without the drug. Sam seemed disposed to discuss the effects of bad habits at great length, as he lay on his couch apparently half asleep, but we left him smiling still in his divine ecstasy, while his companions lay languorously beside him half dreaming, like Tennyson's Lotus Eaters⁷⁴ of the old days and the old home beyond the seas. [...] Presently there appeared a neighbor attired in the best of Chinese clothes. He was a merchant [...] and well known in the English part of the city. His English was perfect, and except for a slight hesitation while waiting for a word his language would not indicate his foreign origin. From his point of view bad times largely resulted from a reduction of the United States duty on opium. The duty was formerly \$12 per lb. The drug could then be bought for some \$7 in Victoria, and the smuggler cleared \$10 or so by shipping it over the line. But now the duty is so low that the business does not pay for the risk.

"Gone to pieces"⁷⁵ (January, 1899)

When Lieu Youen, the alleged "auger burglar," appeared before Police Magistrate Russell⁷⁶ the other day to answer to numerous charges of burglary and theft committed in the city recently, he did not look like "a good man gone wrong," but rather a bad man "gone to pieces."

His sunken lustreless eyes, and the nervous twitching of his claw-like hands betrayed the opium fiend robbed of his very existence almost – the dope pipe.

With his shock head – a stumpy, unkept queue sticking out grotesquely behind like a handle – bowed wearily on his breast, and his projecting yellow tusks apparently sunk into his heavy underlip, he presented a typical picture of a degenerate – an outcast whose hand was against every man's.

The implements, or rather tools, he is charged with having used in his alleged nefarious work, noticeably the much talked-of augers, lay before him on the magistrate's desk. During the trial they were picked up and shown to him. For one moment only a flash of intelligence and possibly of humor shot from his dull eyes. Then he relapsed into the same stolid Chinaman who had entered the court room to all appearances indifferent to his fate.

⁷⁴ Alfred, Lord Tennyson, wrote a poem called *The Lotus-eaters* in 1832, in which he describes the experiences of a group of narcotic users. It reads in part: "They sat them down upon the yellow sand, / Between the sun and moon upon the shore; / And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland, / Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore / Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar / Wear the wandering fields of barren foam. / Then some one said, 'We will return no more'; / And all at once they sang, 'Our island home / Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam.'"

⁷⁵ From T. M. B. (1899, January 21). A Wily Chineer. *The Province*, p. 5.

⁷⁶ Joseph Ambrose Russell (1866 – 1949) was police magistrate from 1891 to 1900. He later practiced law as a partner in the firm of Yates, Jay & Russell.

Chief Stewart⁷⁷ thinks that he has in the person of Lieu Youen, the most remarkable criminal ever captured in this city. He believes that had the Celestial not been captured he would have bored his way sooner or later into some large mercantile establishment, and carted the contents of the warehouse to Chinatown.

It is alleged that Lieu operated with his little augers in this city for a period of three months at least. During this time he entered a number of stores and hotels by boring away panels, and removed quite a quantity of goods, chiefly cigars and tobaccos.

While Chinatown slept, played fan tan or smoked itself stupid with the dope pipe, Lieu, it is stated, worked. Stores that had been successfully bored into once were, strange to say, entered a second time. Then the sleepless auger man by his remarkable energy infected the policemen with stamina. They watched and waited weary nights without success. Furnished with the description of a Chinaman minus a queue, they passed over Celestials having this typical appendage. Lieu they suspected and shadowed for three months. Once they cornered him, but with a look that was "childlike and bland," he passively submitted while they examined him. He did not even wince when one of the officers passed his hand caressingly over the glossy pigtail. A slight jerk would have ended a long and wearisome search, for it was afterwards ascertained that the queue was carefully platted into the stump of a once luxuriant tail that had been cut off in the Westminster penitentiary.

Lieu was captured last Sunday in a miserable room on Dupont street. At the same time alleged burglarious tools were found on his person. Then his false pig tail was rudely jerked off.

Coming on the loss of his dope pipe, this last great loss was too much for the wily Celestial. When committed for trial by Magistrate Russell, Lieu preserved a remarkable silence. Through the interpreter, Cumyow, he was asked if he had anything to say. His dogged reply was that if he went to jail all right; if he did not it was all right, too.

An educated Celestial of this city who knows the ways of Chinatown thoroughly, informed me that Lieu Youen was at one time a member of the local Chinese Highbinders' society. He had, however, been expelled for bad conduct and non-payment of fees.

⁷⁷ John Malcom Stewart (1837 – 1906), Vancouver's first chief of police. In 1899 he lived at 512 Alexander St.

“Knights of the jimmy and auger”⁷⁸ (October, 1898)

An early account of Lieu Youen’s exploits. At the time his robberies were believed to be the work of a group of burglars.

A daring attempt was made some time early this morning to break into the Bridge hotel on Westminster Ave.⁷⁹ and while the attempt was unsuccessful the work was so well planned as to show plainly that some skillful burglars are at large in Vancouver.

The Bridge hotel, which is kept by John Austin⁸⁰, stands on the east side of Westminster avenue, at the north end of the bridge over False creek. The building is erected on piles and at high tide the water comes right underneath it, while at low tide the place where the cellars ought to be is easily reached from below the bridge.

This morning, when Mr. Austin went to open his bar he found two complete lines of auger holes bored through the floor. Realizing the significance of this he went underneath the building and there found that the bottom floor had been completely cut out. The section cut away, which was lying on the ground, measured nearly two feet square. The burglars had then attacked the upper floor and had half completed their work when they apparently were frightened away.

The scene shows that careful preparation had been made. A big log which had floated under the hotel was used as a base for a platform which the night workers had erected. The floor showed marks of smoke which indicated that the men had used a candle.

Upon making a further examination of the premises it was found that the putty had been removed from two panes in the side window of the bar, and two auger holes had also been drilled in it.

The knights of the jimmy and auger must have started operations at about 2 o’clock this morning as the falling tide would have given them a chance to get under the building. The section cut away shows the work of a skilled burglar, and that the work was not done by any new hand is further instanced by the fact that the people in the house were not awakened though some were sleeping within a very short distance of the spot. It is supposed that the window was first attacked, but this means of ingress was abandoned as being plainly in sight from the road.

The burglars would not have got much for their trouble even had they effected an entrance, as Mr. Austin had banked on Saturday and all the money in the till was some odd change. The stock of liquors might, however, have suffered severely.

⁷⁸ CRACKSMEN AT WORK. (1898, October 4). *The Province*, p. 7.

⁷⁹ At 984 New Westminster.

⁸⁰ John Austin was a noted duck hunter. “The proprietor of the Bridge Hotel got up early the other morning and succeeded in shooting no less than 74 ducks, of the mallard and teal species, at the head of False Creek, above Westminster Avenue bridge.” CITY AND COUNTRY NEWS. (1889, October 1). *The Vancouver Dailiy World*, p. 4.

“An attempt was made”⁸¹ (December, 1898)

A tale of an unsuccessful burglary tell us more about Lieu Youen and his auger.

An attempt was made to burglarize the store of Stanley White & Co., on Westminster avenue⁸². Mr. White and his son live in the rear of their store, which is near the corner of Princess street. At 20 minutes past 1 this morning, Mr. White was awakened by a grating noise caused, he thought, by a rat gnawing wood. It was the auger man, of course. He got up and, following up the sounds, came to the back door. This he opened, just in time to hear a man jumping over the back fence in a big hurry. On examining the back door he found that one hole had been started, about a quarter of an inch deep, when the noise caused the proprietor to awaken.

The auger that has done so much damage was lying on the ground. It is very short, the bit being only about two inches long and sharp as a razor. The handle, about five inches wide, was wrapped around with cloth string, so as to give a strong grip, and braced by a piece of iron, all very ingeniously put together.

Mr. White is strongly of the opinion that the man is a Chinaman, though he did not get a good look at him. There was a boot mark, very distinct in a pile of ashes, from which the man had stepped on to a box and then over the fence. The boot must have been about a No. 7 and was very nearly smooth all the way along the bottom, very little of the heel impression being shown, as would not probably be the case if the boot were that of a white man.

“Rather diminishing”⁸³ (April, 1899)

Health Inspector Marion intends to see to it that, if fairly making a revolution on Dupont street among the Chinese can have anything to do with making them any healthier, he is going to do it. [...] There are several recognized opium “joints” in Chinatown, which the inspector intends to close up immediately. In fact yesterday he placed yellow cards on several of the doors to the effect that the premises were unsanitary, and consequently uninhabitable. At almost any hour in the day Chinamen, in numbers from one to a dozen, can be found in one room lying on the beds “hitting” the pipe. How the men ever managed to exist at all with this continued form of dissipation is more than even the inspector can fathom. [...]

⁸¹ From LOST HIS AUGER. (1898, December 14). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 3.

⁸² A clothing store at 504 Westminster, opened earlier in 1898. “Stanley White & Co., who recently sold their clothing and Klondike [gold rush] outfitting business at 74 Cordova Street to the Donaldson Trading Co., have opened out at 504 Westminster Avenue, nearly opposite the city hall, with an exclusive line of men’s hats and furnishings, bright new stock and latest designs. The Messrs. White, father and son, came direct from England last year and after six months’ business here are extremely well satisfied. They have become permanent residents and hope to do their share of trade if close prices and good stock will do it.” A New Business. (1898, April 2). *The Province*, p. 8. The motto printed in their numerous ads was “Small Profits and Quick Returns.”

⁸³ From UNSANITARY CHINESE. (1899, April 7). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

The opium trade of Chinatown is rather diminishing. There are now only two opium factories on Dupont street. Years ago there were more. It is like Victoria, where five or six years ago there were half a dozen factories where now there are only two. The Celestial in charge of one of these which the inspector visited said that was “all on account of the duty” which the Americans have placed on the article going from here into their country. The opium is brought from China in sections like cannon balls, the opium crates being about seven inches in diameter. These are opened and the poppy leaves contained in the centre are carefully abstracted, placed in pots, and boiled over a slow fire for many days, then the empty cannon balls are sent back to the old land for refilling.

“Ah Sing”⁸⁴ (March, 1900)

The sole offender in the police court this morning was Ah Sing, alias many other Sings, who was sentenced to three months’ imprisonment for vagrancy. Besides being an old offender, Sing enjoys the distinction of being the dirtiest Chinaman to occupy the attention of the court for a long time. He is a confirmed opium fiend, and spends the majority of his time indulging in this habit in the cabins off Cormorant street. In spite of this it is understood that Sing has wealthy connections in China, where his wife at present resides. As Chinese education goes, he was well favored in this respect, but became connected with a disreputable set and getting rather prodigal with not only his but his father’s money, he was deported to Victoria four years ago. Since then he has existed by divers means in the opium dens of Chinatown, and also in jail, having only recently been liberated from a three months’ imprisonment on the charge of supplying intoxicants to Indians.

On Chinese names⁸⁵ (November, 1887)

Many native English speakers had a poor understanding of Chinese names, which makes it difficult to identify specific individuals reported in the news. This article, written by someone who was “for many years court interpreter of Chinese in San Francisco,” and who published a Chinese-language newspaper in the 1870s, provides a brief explanation.

All Chinese males have two proper names; many have three and some have four. At his birth he is entitled to his father’s family name; when he goes to school he receives a new name, called the school name; when he marries, his wife, in place of

⁸⁴ From The sole offender. (1900, March 10). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 5.

⁸⁵ Gordon, F. L. (1887, November 17). CHINESE TRAITS. *The Abilene Journal*, p. 2. Written by F. L. Gordon (1849 – 1917). On May 26, 1876, he testified before a California Senate Committee on Chinese Immigration, leading to this memorable exchange. “F. L. GORDON sworn. *Mr. Donovan* – Do you know of any persons being killed among the Chinese by hired assassins? A. – I know of three.” Special Committee on Chinese Immigration. (1878). *Chinese Immigration: Its Social, Moral and Political Effect*. Sacramento: F. P. Thompson.

taking the husband's name, retains her own maiden title, but the husband adds the family name of his wife to his numerous titles. Then if he enters into business on his own account he adds a business name to the rest; but never will he place either of his names on a sign over the door of his store or elsewhere, yet every business man, from a petty storekeeper to a large importer, will have a name or title for his store.

Europeans take it for granted that the name on the sign over the door is the name of the proprietor, and will generally address a Chinese by that title. John rarely takes the trouble to explain matters to the "foreign devil."

I know of a Chinese laundry which for a number of years has displayed the sign "Wah Lee." Since the place was started it has changed hands five times, and each and all of the Chinese who have occupied the place answer readily to the name of "Wah Lee," yet the words Wah Lee are not a proper name but a descriptive title, and when translated into English means clean work.

One often reads in the newspapers such names as "Ah Sing," "Ah Wo," "Ah Mook," etc. These names are always given and not surnames. The prefix "Ah," which is used alike by males and females, is equivalent to the English Mr. or Mrs. An American named John Smith, for instance, if asked his name; would reply, if he answered *a la Chinois*, "Ah John." If further asked, "What Ah John?" he would say, "Smith Ah John;" so with Chinese, "What Ah Sing?" "Why Ho Ah Sing." There are only eight distinct family names in China, though the different branches of the family have a descriptive title – as the family of Lings for instance – one will be known as the Choo Pay Ling, or the light-skin Ling; another will be known as Ho Pay Ling, or dark-skin Ling, etc. A Chinaman considers all Chinese having the same surname as cousins.

"Rendezvous for opium fiends"⁸⁶ (June, 1900)

There are some quarters that cannot be legally destroyed, and the powers of the sanitary inspector cannot prevent them from becoming more than ordinarily filthy. Among these are the opium dens in which the Celestial passes his nights, in many cases, doubtless, fondly imagining that the enervating stupor resulting from the influence of the drug serves as an efficacious and delectable substitute for sleep. If the "dope" fiend in his lethargy is transported to the Elysium fields his countenance does not indicate it, for the pallid, haggard expression gives the lie to mental sensations, and stamps the terrible drug as worse than demoralizing.

There are certain quarters in Chinatown which serve as rendezvous for opium fiends. There is usually accommodation for about a dozen, and it is needless to state that the accommodation is always taxed to the utmost. If the smoker is a neophyte he is soon wafted to bliss through the agency of a couple or so of pipes, but if he be a hardened and accustomed habitue and his countenance usually marks him as such, he will smoke for hours before his appetite is satiated. Some time ago the sanitary inspector made a tour of one of these districts and found the place so eminently filthy

⁸⁶ From *Where the Japs Sleep*. (1900, June 18). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 3.

that it required all his strength of purpose to enter. The rooms were divided into two stories, as it were, by an improvised ceiling, which allowed of about six feet of standing room in each division. The subdivisions had been made merely for the purpose of providing additional accommodation of the wretches who were smoking their substance, minds and very bodies away in the clutches of the “dope” habit. Stern measures were resorted to, and the Celestial occupants were compelled to clean out their premises, take down the improvised ceilings and whitewash both the interiors and exteriors. This was done, and although the places are still far from being clean there is a faint semblance to cleanliness which, until a short time ago, had never been apparent for many decades.

“Hitting the pipe”⁸⁷ (June, 1901)

Police supervision is too strict in Vancouver to make it possible to have anything like recognized opium parlors, furnished with swell fittings, as can be seen in San Francisco, for instance. But the Chinese have small rooms off their living apartments, where they lie in numbers and smoke dop to their hearts’ content, though the surroundings are not very up to date, even for a dope joint.

The largest opium smoking establishments in Vancouver used formerly to be situated in cellars on Columbia avenue, but these have been done away with by the order of the health authorities, and now these underground residences are not permitted for habitations at all. This is one of the improvements of Vancouver’s Chinatown; every person with possibly one or two exceptions, lives above ground.

The stench, when one goes from the open air, into a dope joint, as they are termed in the slang, is terrible, and only a man with a pure conscience and the gastronomic apparatus of a detective is able to stand it at first. But gradually, the air begins to brighten before one’s eyes, and the opium mist is penetrated, and one recognizes the position. [...] Having survived the horrors of the first introduction, the novice is shown the whole performance, that is usually termed “hitting the pipe.”

A new man will expire into unconsciousness long before he has finished the first dose, while an old hand at the game will take three or four of the little opium pills that he has so deftly rolled before he is overcome and sinks into that state of coma, which comprises all the slumber that some Chinese get from one year’s end to another.

The apparatus consists of a little oil lamp, with a bright flame to light the opium; the long pipe, a sort of mixing stick and the can of opium form the remainder of the outfit. This the operator takes to bed with him, and it is a matter of three or four minutes’ work before the operator takes his first puff. First he gathers a little of the dry brown opium, as much as would lay on a Canadian five-cent piece, from the precious can, and hooks this on the end of the little mixing stick. Then he holds the dry shreds of opium in the flame until they melt into a kind of sticky brown paste,

⁸⁷ From ORIENTAL COMMISSIONERS VISIT THE OPIUM DENS. (1901, June 7). The Vancouver Daily World, p. 2.

and from the appearance of it the novice would as soon swallow the same weight in carbolic acid as take chances on an injection of the opium pill. The operator takes it out of the flame when it begins to burn, and then twirls it with a rapidity borne of long practice, so that it will not fall to pieces. After a couple of minutes, the little brown pill has been baked to the desired standard, and the operator unfolds it with the greatest care into the little bowl of the pipe. He rolls himself over until he is at a nice angle to the lamp flame and then begins to puff. A pipe will last from five to 10 minutes, according to the ability of the smoker, and then the operator pulls up another pill and smokes that and follows it with another – if his animation is sufficient to carry him safely through the operation for the third time.

“A temperate people”⁸⁸ (October, 1901)

“We are a temperate people,” said a Chinaman as he regarded one of his brothers coming out of a saloon with a kettle of beer, “and a sight like that is rarely to be seen here. Joe Kee has a white wife, you know. Maybe the beer is for her. Anyhow not one Chinaman in ten in this colony would take a drink if you should ask him to, and not one in a thousand would get drunk. Did you ever see a drunken Chinaman? Are there Chinese among your barroom loafers and hangers-on? But you will say with a sneer that we all smoke opium, and that an opium smoker of course will not drink because the pipe gives one an aversion to alcohol. It is true that the opium smoker can’t drink, but it is not true that all Chinamen smoke. For no one can smoke and work, and it is only the loafers of Chinatown, the card sharps and confidence men, who hit the pipe. The true reason for Chinese temperance in this country is one of economy. We can’t afford to drink, to get drunk, to be arrested and to be fined.”

“Ah Sing still sleeps”⁸⁹ (February, 1902)

Ah Sing, the Chinaman, still sleeps, but his slumber now is that which knows no waking. The Celestial took a turn for the worse about midnight, and died at 5 o’clock this morning. Everything possible was done to save the opium fiend’s life, but all was to no avail.

He had slept eight days before released by death, as he was taken to the Chinese hospital last Wednesday morning, and it is said that he was in the land of dreams two days previous to then, which, if true, would make the man’s time in a comatose state ten days.

⁸⁸ From CHINESE ARE TEMPERATE. (1901, October 18). *The Province*, p. 8.

⁸⁹ From AH SING STILL SLEEPS. (1902, February 26). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8.

“I can’t live without it”⁹⁰ (June, 1902)

The terrible craving of an opium fiend for his favorite drug and the extremes to which he will go to obtain it, were well illustrated yesterday in the cases of the three men who were sent to Westminster from the local police station to serve terms for attempted burglary in this city. The men were Joe King, alias Clark, Thompson and Orkey. Thompson was the man, who tried by every means in his power, to smuggle some opium into the penitentiary with his outfit, but did not succeed.

The men were taken over by Detectives Jackson⁹¹ and Mulhern⁹², and were searched by the prison authorities at the penitentiary. Thompson had a package of opium concealed in a watchcase, which he carried in his boot while in the Vancouver station, and it was only after he was searched the second time that this was found on his person.

He begged hard to be allowed to keep it.

“I’ll die if you don’t give me some,” he whimpered to the jailer, and seemed to go all to pieces when he found that he would not be given the drug while in the jail. “I can’t live without it,” he cried in a shriek, but the prison officials were obdurate and maintained their point.

King was particularly desirous when he arrived at Westminster of getting one good square meal before he commenced serving his terms of two and a half years.

“I can’t walk up that hill,” he said to Jackson, and he begged to be taken into a restaurant where he could gratify his appetite to last him during the next thirty months.

“Fallen in a fit”⁹³ (July, 1902)

A female victim of the opium habit, in the last stages of collapse, has been taken charge of by the city [of Vancouver]. She was found in a filthy hovel on Dupont street, her clothes half torn off. She had fallen in a fit and cut herself on the forehead, from which the blood was flowing. She had been unconscious for hours when found by the police.

“Not residences but merely places”⁹⁴ (December, 1902)

In a large factory, owned by a wealthy son of the Flowery Land, we were shown the process of opium manufacture. Business was over for the day on our arrival, but a number of the employees were got together, and each of them seemed to be more eager than the other to enlighten the strangers upon the properties of the drug. They

⁹⁰ From BURGLARS ARE OPIUM FIENDS. (1902, June 18). *The Province*, p. 1.

⁹¹ In 1902, constable John Jackson lived at 430 Princess St.

⁹² In 1902, Charles Mulhern lived at 242 Dufferin E.

⁹³ From Arrested for Misappropriation. (1902, July 10). *The Colonist*, p. 1.

⁹⁴ From Proudfoot, J. (1902, December 6). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 11. James Proudfoot, “of the Glasgow Herald,” describes a visit to Victoria in September 1902.

gathered in clusters round individual members of the party, and if we left the premises not greatly wiser than we entered, the fault certainly not due to reticence on the part of our instructors. In the outer hall or shop we were shown opium pipes, and had explained to us the way to use them, with occasional flashes of humor at our innocence of the habit.

From the theoretical we passed to the practical. Half-way down a dingy street we were conducted into a narrow passage, and ultimately found ourselves within one of the numerous opium dens in the locality. In the dim light of a feeble lamp we could distinguish two or three narrow beds or couches. Each had an occupant. Two of the men were either unconscious of or indifferent to our presence. The third one stared at us for an instant, and, evidently grasping the situation, put us at our ease with a smile. He was apparently an old stager, and in reply to questions he told us that he had smoked for 14 years, and had not experienced any evil effects. He could not or would not, however, relinquish the habit. He enjoyed it. And he proceeded to manipulate the plug of opium which he was preparing to smoke by heating it at the lamp, and rolling it backwards and forwards on the point of a long pin into a small ball.

The process was continued for some considerable time, and when the plug had been reduced to the desired condition it was placed in a wooden pipe and a light applied. Not more than two minutes sufficed to exhaust the charge, and then the victim began the preparation of another smoke. He could smoke eight or ten pipes, he said, and declared that it did him no harm.

Other dens, of which several were visited, were found to be similar in all respects. They are not residences but merely places to which smokers may resort, and for a small payment for the occupancy of the couch soothe themselves into dreamland or into oblivion.

“No novice at the game”⁹⁵ (November, 1903)

Health Inspector Robert Marrion⁹⁶ went on the warpath in Chinatown last evening on an annual tour of inspection. [...] At about 4 o'clock this morning, [...] the Inspector and his party broke in on an opium layout that surprised every one. There were nine persons in the room. One was a white man, another a white woman, and the others were Chinamen. The man is a youth who works in an uptown store. He readily admitted to being in the habit of “hitting the pipe” periodically. The lady, who is sometimes seen on uptown streets, was apparently no novice at the game. She strenuously objected to any interruption of the pleasant dreams she seemed to be having just at the time. The policeman of the party took a note of the place and passed on.

⁹⁵ From INSPECTOR'S TRIP THROUGH CHINATOWN. (1903, November 17). *The Province*, p. 1.

⁹⁶ Robert Marrion was Vancouver's city health and plumbing inspector. In 1902 his office was at 151 Powell St., and his home at 229 12th Avenue E.

“A young man named Osborne”⁹⁷ (February, 1904)

A young man named Osborne, whose eye-sockets were cavernous and face shrunken and pallid, was discovered last night hitting the pipe in an opium den on Dupont street. He was arrested, in view of his having been previously warned to get out of town. He confessed to the Magistrate that he had done no work for three months. For a similar time he will work in the chain-gang without monetary remuneration.

T. P. Young and the paint brushes⁹⁸ (August, 1904)

T. P. Young, who was charged in the police court this morning with the theft of a quantity of paint brushes from the Melrose Company, attributes his downfall to the opium habit. He pleaded guilty to the charge, but promised to turn over a new leaf, and on the strength of this assurance he craved the leniency of the court. It was, he said, his first offence. Mr. Newton, manager of the company, said that Young had been in their employ from April up to a month or so ago, and was a good workman, but unfortunately was addicted to the opium habit. He asked the magistrate to deal leniently with the man. A sentence of two months' imprisonment with hard labor was inflicted.

Two sides to the story⁹⁹ (November, 1904)

In the Police court yesterday Magistrate Hall¹⁰⁰ dismissed the charge preferred against a young man named John Ruskin, by Dai Quan, a Chinaman, of aggravated assault. In giving this decision the magistrate stated that he was not satisfied of the truth of the story told by Ruskin and his female companion, Marie Harris, and warned Ruskin that if he desired to keep out of trouble he should choose better company than at present.

The row started in an opium den. Of course, the story told by the informant, Dai Quan, and his witness differed in almost every particular from that told by the defence.

According to Dai Quan's story he was in Lee Ping's opium joint off Fisguard¹⁰¹ street at 6:45 on Saturday morning when the accused, Ruskin, and Marie Harris came in and the accused picked a quarrel with him, chased him out of the joint and down the street, caught him by the pigtail and hammered him with half a brick.

Ruskin and Harris stated, on the contrary, that they went to Lee Ping's to eat noodles and have some tea, and that Dai Quan started the row by calling Ruskin

⁹⁷ From A young man. (1904, February 6). *The Province*, p. 3.

⁹⁸ From T. P. Young. (1904, August 1). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 5.

⁹⁹ From A BAD LOT. (1904, November 10). *The Colonist*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁰ H. G. Hall, with offices at 12 Bastion Square and a residence on Douglas St. N.

¹⁰¹ At the time, the accepted spelling of what is now Fisgard St.

offensive names and striking at him. They also said that Dai was armed with a knife and that Dai and another Chinaman, armed with a club, chased Ruskin down the street while he fled for his life. Ruskin also averred that Dai struck at him with the knife twice, on one occasion cutting his trousers, and that Dai's reputation was that of a murderer. Ruskin and the woman denied that they had gone to the opium den to "smoke."

One Young¹⁰², a white man living at Lee Ping's and who recently left gaol after doing time for stealing paint brushes from the Melrose establishment, gave evidence partly bearing out the story told by Ruskin, and so the weight of evidence was with the defence. Young admitted that he took the "black smoke," and the others looked as if they did.

1905 – 1907

"A memory of Chinatown"¹⁰³ (February, 1905)

"And how about Chinatown?" I said to my host, as we were about to take our departure from his cosy bachelor home, where we had been drinking tea with other congenial spirits.

"Any time which will suit you best," was the kind rejoinder. No time like the present, then why not tonight, especially as Saturday night would be the best evening in the week for this little excursion. So it was arranged. [...] "We will do a few shops first; then I will take you to the Reform Club¹⁰⁴ and we will save the opium den for the last." [...]

Time was flying, and we hastened on for the finale; the opium smokers. The rain still poured gaily down as we came into the street. In a few moments we were climbing dark narrow stairs, steep and uneven. We women confessed to nervous tremors, in whispers, as we groped our way upwards, but I clutched a hand of our kind guide and my fears subsided. Miss E. held on to me with tenacity. Now and then through the gloom we saw dimly a dark form which flattened itself against the wall to enable us to pass. At the top of the long staircase a faint light showed us a long corridor; evil smelling, with doors on either side, like cabins on board ship. Our friend led us on, until we came to a den where he was evidently well known, for, as the door opened, several Chinamen came through the door and saluted him. Everyone ceased smoking and I felt very much like an intruder, who is spoiling fun. Mr. McL. begged them to go on, and we sat down and looked about. There were perhaps more than a dozen men in the room, reclining on wide hard divans, but with plenty of soft cushions. To each group of three or four men, was a small pot of black gummy opium, a peculiar little lamp with a globe nearly closed at the top, and the long pipe filled

¹⁰² Probably T. D. Young, of paintbrush theft fame.

¹⁰³ From S. D'E. (1905, February 17). WOMAN'S IMPRESSIONS OF LOCAL CHINATOWN. *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁴ Probably the office of the Chinese Empire Reform Association of Canada, at 529 Carrall St.

with water. On the divan near which we sat was a most happy looking young Chinaman and he glanced at us with a merry face, as he prepared his opium. Removing the globe from the lamp, he lifted from the pot a piece of opium the size of a large pea, and held it on the point of a wire between two little wires over the flame of the lamp, working it with the wires as it heated. As it cooked, the little ball swelled to the size of a woman's thumb, and became a light-brown color; then it gradually diminished and grew dark and thick, then it was worked off the two sticks into the pipe. The globe was returned to the lamp and the man turned the pipe over the flame drawing deep, strong breaths at it ignited. Leaning back, he inhaled the smoke for a comparatively short space of time. The opium was very quickly exhausted, and the smoker sank luxuriously into his cushions, and one of his companions who had looked on with eager eyes, repeated the performance. I was very sorry that we had no cigarettes with us, to have smoked at the same time with them. It would have been so much more sociable.

Well, outwardly, this was all. The pipe made its continual rounds, and happiness and content was written on the faces of the smokers. The keeper of the place was a colossal Chinaman, very pleasant in appearance. Although we have all at least heard of the awful results of the opium habit, I could not reconcile it with these quiet happy-looking men. It is possible that our friend and guide did not wish us to have any experience which could be unpleasant. Surely, with the exception of the odors – which were not of “Araby,” in getting out of that long corridor and feeling our way down the long flight of stairs, we took away a memory of Chinatown which will be pleasant to look back upon when we are far from Vancouver.

Painter, watchmaker and thief¹⁰⁵ (June, 1905)

Theodore Young, arrested by Sergeant Detective Palmer and Detective O'Leary, will be charged with two burglaries, evidence having been secured by the detectives connecting him with the looting not only of the premises of Dr. F. G. Moody¹⁰⁶, but also of the dental parlors of Dr. Clemence¹⁰⁷. [...] Young is a painter, also a watchmaker, and – so the detectives state – also a thief. He is an opium smoker. A heterogeneous collection of effects taken from his room include opium pipes and lamps, some of the former decorated with silver mountings engraved by Young. Some burglar's tools were also found secreted in the room, and also some Chinese drills. The burglar's tools included instruments for turning from the outside keys left on the inside of closed doors.

Yesterday further stolen property was recovered, and now the greater part of what was taken from the dentists has been recovered by dint of much work on the

¹⁰⁵ From BURGLARIZED TWO PLACES. (1905, June 1). *The Colonist*, p. 2.

¹⁰⁶ Frank Gage Moody (1870 – 1938). In 1904, his office was at 76 Yates St., and he lived at 86 Pandora Ave. He reported yearly earnings of \$1,000 in the 1901 census. At that time he was living with his father, wife, brother and two children (aged 4 and 6). Frank was a Methodist, but his wife was Presbyterian. His brother William, then 20, was studying dentistry.

¹⁰⁷ Samuel George Clemence (1866 – 1958), with offices at 98 Yates St. and a home on Linden Ave.

part of the officers. From Dr. Clemence's premises dental goods to the value of about \$15 were taken, and goods to the value of \$150 from Dr. Moody's office. The gold, platinum, dental tools, etc. have been recovered.

Young has been charged with breaking and entering both places. He is an old offender, having served about a year ago for stealing paint brushes and other goods from the Melrose company. He then went to Vancouver on his release and was alleged to have robbed a place there, but the police could not obtain sufficient evidence against him at that time and he was not held.

Included among the effects of Young are a number of cleverly executed oil paintings, the majority of them studies of portraits of women of the demi-monde. He is obviously an artist, but the effect of the opium is noticeable. In his addiction to the drug Young has been a frequent visitor of Chinese opium dens, and has kept an outfit always at hand to smoke in his lodgings.

“He might have been angry”¹⁰⁸ (June, 1905)

James H. Sweetman, who was accused of stealing letters from Lee Yuen & Company¹⁰⁹, and stealing a hat and umbrella from another person, changed his plea to-day and said that he was guilty. He said that he and a friend had been out and that they had smoked opium. They changed hats and he went back to smoke some more. He could not remember much else. He admitted that he was an opium smoker, and that he might have been angry and grabbed the letters in the Chinese store when he was refused more dope. The magistrate decided that three months in the chain gang might cure him of his dope habits.

“He was paid to play Poker”¹¹⁰ (June, 1905)

Thomas W. Powers, one of the trio accused of forging and uttering [sic.] post-office orders was yesterday convicted by his honor Judge Henderson¹¹¹ on the latter count and sentenced to three years' penal servitude. [...] A noteworthy point was brought out when the prisoner was put in the box to give evidence in his own behalf. It was shown that he had lived for many years of his boyhood in New Westminster and Vancouver and that he had, except for a very short period, never been sent to school. Growing up without education he had drifted into the underworld where, being naturally bright, he had lived by his wits. He admitted having been in jail twelve times on charges of vagrancy, many of them arising out of his occupation as a booster for a Seattle gambling house. Asked the precise nature of his duties by the court, Powers said that he was paid to play poker. He played with four other men who

¹⁰⁸ From OPIUM FIEND SENTENCED. (1905, June 14). *The Province*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Probably the Lee Yune Company at 37 Dupont St., managed by Lee Kee. They were importers, wholesale merchants and opium manufacturers. Lee Kee lived on site and was also a trustee of the Chinese Benevolent Association.

¹¹⁰ From THREE YEARS TO SPEND IN JAIL. (1905, June 23). *The Vancouver World*, p. 5.

¹¹¹ The Hon. Alexander Henderson, county court judge. In 1905 he lived at 1424 Burnaby.

were also paid. When a “sucker” came in one of them got up and made room for him, thus leaving him to play against four professionals. The prisoner and the other two men accused of the forgeries frequented opium dens in company and appeared to meet in them habitually much as other men might run across one another in a club or a bar. Altogether it was a sad story of wasted and vicious youth to come from the lips of a lad of twenty-one.

“No less than four razors”¹¹² (June, 1905)

The usually sedate little town of Duncan, which lies on the E. & N. railway, midway between Victoria and Nanaimo, has been somewhat startled by the discovery that a female resident is an opium eater. The unfortunate woman, who formerly lived at Nanaimo, had to be taken into custody to save herself. When examined, it was found that she had no less than four razors on her person. She has been sent to the Refuge Home¹¹³, Victoria.

“Dying in city jail for want of opium”¹¹⁴ (April, 1906)

The terrible effect of opium as a system wrecker has a splendid demonstration in the city jail at present in the person of Ah Lee. This celestial is a confirmed opium fiend. He was convicted a short time ago of selling whiskey to Indians and sentenced to six months’ imprisonment. He is such a slave to the drug that he is ready to sell whiskey to Indians or do any other old thing to get the wherewith to purchase dream medicine. Since he has been in jail he has been unable to gratify his appetite and the result is fearfully apparent. The authorities are afraid that he will die on their hands. He was up before, but so great have been the ravages of the opium that his denial of identity almost went with the magistrate. Now he is but a wreck of a human being and the jail officials say that there is no doubt but that the sufferings of the damned are at present being undergone by him. He cannot live long under present conditions and the authorities are at a loss to know what to do with him. He may be released and allowed to shift for himself, or he may be sent to the Chinese hospital if his fellow countrymen are willing to look after him.

“Selling liquor to Indians”¹¹⁵ (April, 1906)

Ah Lee, the thin, six-foot Chinaman, who was arrested Monday afternoon by officers McDade¹¹⁶ and Thompson on the charge of selling liquor to Indians, was given a sentence of six months at hard labor this morning by Magistrate Williams.

¹¹² From CARRIED FOUR RAZORS. (1905, June 28). *The Vancouver World*, p. 5.

¹¹³ The Women’s Christian Temperance Union Refuge Home on Ida street near the corner with Devonshire Rd. Mrs. Betsy Flett, widow of James Flett, was the live-in matron.

¹¹⁴ From Dying in City Jail For Want of Opium. (1906, April 16). *The Vancouver World*, p. 13.

¹¹⁵ SAYS CHINAMAN IS A PERJURER. (1906, April 4). *The Daily Province*, p. 8

¹¹⁶ In 1906, patrolman John McDade lived with Rosa McDade at her rooming house at 241 Hastings.

Ah Lee pleaded not guilty to the charge when it was told to him by Mr. Cumyow¹¹⁷, the interpreter. He said that he did not know Peter the Indian, who said that he had bought liquor of him; in fact he did not know any of the Indians. Further, he said that on Saturday, the day he was supposed to have sold liquor to Peter, he was sick at home with a very bad pain in his stomach. He did not sell whisky at all, but spent his time doing odd jobs around town.

Ah was shown a picture which was supposed to be himself, and taken when he was arrested some time ago and fined for making cigars. He was also shown another photograph which was supposed to be himself when he was arrested and fined for selling liquor to the Indians several months ago. Ah disclaimed any relation to the subject of either of the picture, and in fact it was even suggested that the pictures were better-looking than Ah. Officer Jackson¹¹⁸ and Sergeant Butler¹¹⁹ took the stand and testified that they had arrested Ah on two different occasions, and that they were sure that the photos shown to Ah Lee were pictures of him although he claimed that they were not, and that he had never had a picture taken.

Peter, the Siwash¹²⁰ who was picked up very drunk last Saturday, and who is responsible for Ah Lee being in jail, took the stand, and through Officer Brown¹²¹, who acted as an interpreter for him, he said that he and several of his comrades had bought liquor of Ah Lee upon several occasions.

His Worship decided that the testimony of Peter and the two officers, as well as the fact that Ah had been positively identified as having been arrested before for the same offence, was sufficient to convict. He did not hesitate to say that he believed ah had deliberately perjured himself¹²² on the stand.

Ah Lee and Peter¹²³ (January, 1890)

By 1906, Ah Lee had been selling liquor to Peter for over a decade and a half.

Peter, a Squamish Indian, was fined \$25 and costs for having liquor in his possession, and Ah Lee, of Dupont Street, \$50 and costs for supplying liquor to Indians. For some time past the police have had strong suspicions that Ah Lee was supplying fire-water to the aborigines, and that Peter had made frequent visits to Lee's store on Dupont Street, but have never heretofore been able to find liquor on

¹¹⁷ Won Alexander Cumyow (1861 – 1955) is thought to be the first child born to Chinese parents in what is now Canada (B.C. would not join confederation until he was 10). In 1906, he was a law student living at 458 Hastings E., with his intepreter's office at 439 Carrall St.

¹¹⁸ Officer Hugh K. Jackson lived at 937 Princess St. in 1906.

¹¹⁹ In 1906, Sergeant Thomas H. Butler lived at 603 Campbell.

¹²⁰ As of 2020, an offensive term for a male Indigenous person.

¹²¹ In 1906, John Brown lived at 467 Princess St.

¹²² Ah Lee gave sworn statements. "Lee went into the box on his own behalf. He took the oath Chinese fashion, that is to say, he wrote some Chinese characters on a slip of paper, set fire to the paper, and said things while the paper burned." Ah Lee Puts Another Face on the Matter. (1906, April 4). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

¹²³ From POLICE COURT. (1890, January 23). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 4.

him when caught emerging from that vicinity. Officer Gibson¹²⁴ had often seen Peter in the narrow passage behind the building on the south side of Dupont Street, carrying a bag in which he could hear the bottles jingling, but upon trying to follow the wily Indian came to a sudden end of the narrow walk of one board and found that Peter had disappeared. A few days ago the officer took the pains to examine the walk, when he found that one of the boards could be removed, leaving a yawning abyss of about 10 feet to the ground.

Last night he found Peter in the vicinity and resolved to turn the tables on him. Quietly removing the plank from the walk, he waited for developments. In a short time Peter was seen making his way along the passage with his usual load. Unaware of the game being played on him, he trod on what he thought in the dark was the movable plank, hoping to avoid the officer in the usual way, but found instead the thin air through which he vanished, falling to the ground. A moment later he was made a prisoner, and three bottles of Holland gin were found in the mysterious bag he carried.

Peter owned up to the offence and took the officer back to find Ah Lee, who, he said, had supplied the liquor. The Chinaman was also placed under arrest and both were taken to the station. Ah Lee, in very broken English, stoutly denied that he had given the liquor to Peter, and denounced him in very strong terms for allowing himself to be caught with the gin. The defense was unavailing, and the remembrance of \$53 paid into the city exchequer will cast a gloom over the remainder of Ah Lee's New Year festivities.

“Out of a job again”¹²⁵ (June, 1906)

John Edwards, a colored man, was given thirty days at hard labor this morning in Police Court for having been so unfortunate as to be caught in an opium den in the company of two Dupont street women. Edwards was out of a job, and as the police figured that an opium den was the last place in the world to look for work, they arrested him and brought him to the station on the charge of vagrancy. Edwards said that he had a job at one of the hotels and was to go to work this morning. Inquiry by the police verified his story, but when the proprietor learned where his prospective employee had been found, he decided that he did not want him. Edwards took the stand in his own defence and said that he had begged the officers not to tell the hotelman where he had been found, but the officers said that it was one of their duties to protect the business men of the town, and as a consequence Edwards is out of a job again.

¹²⁴ Joseph Gibson. He is absent from Vancouver directories for 1890, but is listed as living in False Creek in the 1891 directories.

¹²⁵ From GETS THIRTY DAYS. (1906, June 18). *The Province*, p. 16.

“A break for liberty”¹²⁶ (June, 1906)

John Edwards, the colored man who, about a week ago, was found in an opium den in Dupont street and sentenced to 30 days for vagrancy, made a break for liberty from the chain gang yesterday about noon. He managed to get clear but was found about 11 o'clock at night, in Chinatown, where he was evidently trying to get another round out of a hot pipe. He made a piteous appeal to Magistrate Williams this morning not to be hard on him. "I'll be a man if you're easy with me, your honor. I didn't mean to run away. I wanted to see about my things, and it was working on my mind bad. No, it wasn't just exactly the opium. That boss man on the gang (Leatherdale) he's such a nice man, your honor, that a fellow couldn't do anything dirty to him. That's what I said to the boys. I wouldn't run away on him. Can't you let me go, sir?" Edwards will serve an additional 30 days.

“Of the undesirables, undesirable”¹²⁷ (July, 1906)

John Shaan and Belle Davis are two “hopheads” from the States who were arrested together in a rooming house last night. They have been regular frequenters of the Chinese dens and are undoubtedly of the undesirables, undesirable. The woman pleaded guilty to a charge of vagrancy and being an inmate of a house of ill fame, and was fined \$35, being allowed then to go. The man also pleaded guilty, but sentence in his case was deferred until tomorrow. He is known in every city on the coast and is said to be wanted in more than one place. Both showed plainly in feature the ravages of opium. The woman was rather neatly dressed and is apparently very young. She is expected to leave town.

“Three months will do you good”¹²⁸ (July, 1906)

John Shaan, the “hop head,” who pleaded guilty to vagrancy yesterday, was sentenced to three months this morning. He stated that he had made several efforts to obtain employment in the two weeks he has been in town, but such a story would not go with this magistrate. “The town is full of young men like you, who will not work.” Shaan then tried another tack by offering to get out of town, but that got him nothing. “Three months will do you good. It will get the ‘dope’ out of your system.”

¹²⁶ From THE DREAR GRIST OF THE CADIS MILL. (1906, June 27). *The Vancouver World*, p. 1.

¹²⁷ From THE COURT OF THE CADIS. (1906, July 13). *The Vancouver World*, p. 11.

¹²⁸ From John Shaan. (1906, July 14). *The Vancouver World*, p. 5.

“A party through Chinatown”¹²⁹ (August, 1906)

A well known Vancouverite chaperoned a party through Chinatown a few nights ago and in their progress the slummers visited an opium den. They sidled into the noisome place and awestruck watched a Chinaman – a mere boy – filling his pipe.

“Carefully observe this man,” said the guide with the voice and gestures of a lecturer, “how he prepares the pill in the flame of the lamp–“

“Can’t he understand you?” asked one of the party timidly, feeling that the Oriental might not like this exposition.

“Oh, no,” replied the guide, “he cannot talk English. You will note how expert he is. Presently he will light the pipe and inhale the heavy fumes into his lungs. His lungs are coated with the stuff and it takes each month an increasing amount to satisfy him. I have known this man for fifteen years and in all that time he has been a constant smoker–“

The Chinaman looked up from his work and in a mild voice exclaimed:

“Damn lie, only jiss start.”

“Under the impression that she was in Vancouver”¹³⁰ (March, 1907)

Crazy from the effects of opium and under the impression that she was in Vancouver, [rather than New Westminster,] Rae Millar fought with the conductor on the city line last night at about 8 o’clock, and was obliged to be removed to the station in an express wagon.

Rae Millar is one of the dusky hued demimonde of Vancouver, and came over to this city yesterday on a visit, and during her stay evidently went completely out of her mind. She was noticed by several people on the street yesterday afternoon and thought to be acting very queerly, making herself conspicuous at the tram office, where she purchased a ticket for Vancouver. Having boarded a Sapperton car, she went as far as the mail, when she considered that she had reached her destination, and resented the assertion that she was still in New Westminster. Several arguments were advanced to convince her to the contrary, and then the trouble started, which terminated in her consignment to the city lock-up where it was only with difficulty that she was restrained from doing herself bodily harm. The woman is an inveterate opium fiend, and a constitutional wreck, and from her actions, completely off her mental balance.

¹²⁹ From OBITER SCRIPTA. (1906, August 29). *The Province*, p. 8.

¹³⁰ From OPIUM FIEND CRAZY. (1907, March 26). *The New Westminster Daily News*, p. 5.

“Used to an alarming extent”¹³¹ (April, 1907)

Opium is being used to an alarming extent in Vancouver, according to the local police, and the indications are that it will outrival morphine in the hold which it is gaining over its numerous victims, who are increasing in numbers rapidly.

“At a conservative estimate,” asserted Sergeant Mulhern¹³², last night, “I would place the number of opium and morphine fiends as being seventy-five per cent. among all the criminals on the Pacific coast. In Vancouver alone the number using these drugs is quite startling.

“We attempt to suppress the smoking of opium by white people in the dens in this city by arresting the users as vagrants, when we can catch them in the act. But, there is no law against the use of the drug, and consequently it is difficult to put a stop to the practice.

“Hop fiends” is a common term used by citizens in designating victims of the habit, and a few enquiries last night elicited the fact that there is an alarming number of young men who “hit the pipe” regularly.

A trip through Chinatown last night disclosed the fact that in almost every instance the “pipe” was being used incessantly in the rooming houses of the lower class of Chinamen. Some of these men were questioned as to whether white men or women ever come in these places to smoke opium. The Chinamen invariably denied that such was the case, but the officer on the beat asserted emphatically that a great many did, and that arrests were frequently made, the prisoners being charged with vagrancy.

There are large numbers of youths – almost boys – ranging from sixteen to nineteen years of age, who have become opium victims. Many of them have no relatives in the city and are from Eastern Canada and from the British Isles. Making their own way in the world and relying entirely on their own actions numbers of them have visited the “opium joints” just to try the “pipe.” They enjoy such a pleasant sensation that they try it again, and it is asserted by both the police and the victims that after a few trials they end by becoming permanent victims of the habit.

It is in this manner that the young men lose all sense of right or wrong and become criminals, according to Sergeant Mulhern. He is especially emphatic in regard to the use of morphine, which is almost identical with opium in its results. Both drugs produce a pleasant feeling to the victims who rapidly get to the stage where they can hardly exist without them.

While there are a few who use opium moderately, and thus manage to live to a greater age than its more ardent devotees, the majority lose all control over themselves, and use the opium pipe until they fall, unconscious to everything. Hundreds of Chinamen may be seen in the latter condition every night in the lower dens of the Chinese section. They smoke pipe after pipe of the stuff, their eyes becoming more glassy, and their faculties more deadened. Filling the pipe as long as

¹³¹ From OPIUM-SMOKERS MANY IN VANCOUVER'S HALF-WORLD. (1907, April 13). *The Province*, p. 20.

¹³² In 1907, Charles Mulhern, sergeant detective, lived at 242 Dufferin St. E.

they can see it, they continue to smoke until they are in a state of coma, from which an earthquake would not arouse them.

The worst victims are merely skin and bone. Crouched over in the shoulders, hollow-eyed and weak, they are stupid until they inhale the opium fumes again. It is their only pleasure in a life which averages from three to six years after they have become confirmed “opium fiends.” A glance at these men is sufficient warning to those who never used opium.

That great demoralization among the white people is resulting from the use of the drug in Vancouver, is certified to by police on the Chinatown beat. The drug is used to such an extent that the Chinamen have a factory for the manufacture of opium in the heart of Chinatown. Thousands of dollars a month are used up in the purchase of the drug, and the business is increasing rapidly.

Morphine is also used to an alarming extent in Vancouver, and inquiries of a few drugstores on the sale of this article indicates a steadily increasing demand is being made for it. Three-quarters of the number of vagrants and lawbreakers brought to the city jail are covered with spots made from the needle used to inject the drug. Several prisoners have their skin literally covered with the needle marks.

Piteous scenes are common in the jail, where the victims can no longer secure morphine. Officers have been tearfully entreated by those victims to get them just a little of the drug. In some cases the victims have been on the verge of insanity when deprived of the use of their favorite stimulant. Both men and women are victims of this habit, from which they rarely recover. The life of a morphine “fiend” is barely over three years, and among the demi-monde who use it, the mortality is highest.

It is asserted at police headquarters that the most clever criminals, the men who are smartest in breaking the laws, and who show an infinite variety of tactics in accomplishing their ends, are the criminals who use morphine or opium. It is also confidently stated that most of them have turned criminals after becoming addicted to these drugs.

A vagrant detective¹³³ (August, 1907)

T. W. McCarthy was arraigned at the police court this morning and charged with being a vagrant. The police said that he spent his time between a disreputable resort in Shanghai alley and various opium dens. He had told the police that he had a room in a certain rooming house, but search of the room showed that it was occupied by a woman of uncleanly habits. McCarthy said that he was a detective employed by the United States customs to spot opium smugglers. The detectives said he had found opium all right because he was full of dope when they accosted him. McCarthy had also said that he had a permit from Ex-Chief of Police Chisholm¹³⁴ to hang about opium dens so as to get information. The magistrate, being strongly urged by Mr. J.

¹³³ From T. W. McCarthy. (1907, August 3). *The Vancouver World*, p. 7.

¹³⁴ Colin Alexander Chisholm (1846 – October 1907). Probably the Colin Chisholm listed in a 1907 directory as living at 346 Cordova E.

A. Russell¹³⁵, for the defendant, dismissed the case. McCarthy when arrested put up \$10 cash bail.

The death of Thomas Oliver¹³⁶ (September, 1907)

Thos. Oliver, aged 22, died at St. Paul's hospital at noon today as the result of opium smoking. From what has been told to the hospital authorities Oliver and a friend were indulging in opium smoking at a Chinatown den last night and returned to their lodging house, 445 Pender street, at 5 o'clock this morning. Oliver has only been out from Toronto a short time¹³⁷, but, although it is well known that there are many opium dens in that city, he had not learned the habit there, but was simply trying [it] here more in a spirit of bravado than anything else. His friend did not inhale as many whiffs of the pill as did Oliver, and he woke up somewhat sick but in possession of his faculties this morning about 10 o'clock. The condition of Oliver was such at the time that he became alarmed and sent for a medical man. The doctor found Oliver in a dying condition and had him removed as speedily as possible to St. Paul's hospital, where there is every requisite for treating such cases. It was too late, however, and Oliver died at 12 o'clock. The young man is well connected in Toronto.

"This habit has spread"¹³⁸ (September, 1907)

Wherever the Chinaman goes he takes his national habits with him, and the greatest and most unconquerable of these is the opium habit. What has this meant for British Columbia, for California, Oregon and Washington? It has meant that the poison, far from being confined to the Chinese, has crept in among white men, while even women have been known to fall under the influence of the all-powerful drug. The average man in the street and the woman sitting at home fully know that from time to time the papers report cases of white youths being found in opium dens, and such like, but they do not know to what extent this habit has spread, nor of the numbers of men, women and boys who have fallen victim to this awful habit. Only the other day here in Vancouver a mere boy of 22 or thereabouts succumbed to the effects of opium poisoning, having taken a few whiffs "just for fun." Stories of women of refinement and education who have fallen under the influence of the drug at first seem too impossible to be true, but there is little doubt but such cases exist. Only one

¹³⁵ Joseph A. Russell, a partner in the firm of Russell & Pottenger. In 1907, he rented a room at the Hotel Vancouver on the corner of Georgia & Granville streets, and had an office at 505 Hastings St.

¹³⁶ From YOUTH DIES FROM EFFECTS OF OPIUM. (1907, September 20). *The Vancouver World*, p. 10.

¹³⁷ "Thomas Oliver, the deceased, Drago his alleged friend, Graham and Sevastia, two of the witnesses [...], were members of a party of thirteen hotel and restaurant workers who left Toronto on a Friday about six months ago to come west. They landed at Regina and from there separated." WARRANT ISSUED FOR NEGLIGENT WITNESS. (1907, September 24). *The Vancouver World*, p. 12.

¹³⁸ From BETH. (1907, September 28). Women, Wraps and Wrangles. *The Vancouver World*, p. 19.

or two people out of a hundred can even speculate as to the number of victims yearly claimed by the opium fiend throughout the Pacific provinces.

1908 – 1911

James Martinley¹³⁹ (January, 1908)

James Martinley, a negro, was before the magistrate on a vagrancy charge. He was found in a Chinese opium den and the police told the court that he was an opium smoker.

“I warned him before to leave the place,” said Detective Scott. “He is always living among the Chinese.”

Martinley said he had come down from Lulu Island with a load of chickens for local butchers. He was to get \$9 for the load. The case was remanded to inquire as to the credibility of his story.

“A more respectable place”¹⁴⁰ (January, 1908)

“You will find that the city jail is a far more respectable place than a Chinese opium den,” declared Magistrate Alexander¹⁴¹ this morning when he sent James Martinley, a negro, down for 14 days. Martinley is an opium smoker and a frequenter of the Chinese dens. He has been repeatedly warned by the police to keep away from them, but he still persisted in going, with the result that he was taken into custody.

May Woods, of Arizona¹⁴² (January, 1908)

With cheek bones standing out prominently and glittering eyes in strong contrast to the deathly pallor of her face, May Woods was brought up at police court to-day charged with being a vagrant. The woman is a confirmed opium fiend and was seen by an officer coming from a Chinese hop joint thoroughly doped. Even this morning the unfortunate woman was hardly able to stand, and in a dull, expressionless voice told Magistrate Alexander that she “b’longed to Arizona,” and could get money to take her home if given a chance. Sentence was suspended to see what could be done.

¹³⁹ From THESE VAGS PLAY THE ROLE OF CRIPPLES. (1908, January 15). *The Province*, p. 13.

¹⁴⁰ From COURT INCREASES PENALTY FOR DRUNKS. (1908, January 17). *The Province*, p. 24.

¹⁴¹ Henry O. Alexander was a stipendiary magistrate and a partner in the firm of Alexander & Bayfield. In 1908, he lived at 1734 Comox St.

¹⁴² From ARIZONA GIRL WAS THOROUGHLY DOPED. (1908, January 22). *The Province*, p. 1.

“Cesspools of vice”¹⁴³ (January, 1908)

Canton and Shanghai alleys, cesspools of vice in Chinatown in the heart of Vancouver, the stamping ground and refuge of countless petty criminals and the cause of more attention from the police than all the rest of the city combined, are to be purged of their vicious inhabitants.

Chinese opium dens and cribs which line these two short alleys are to be closed and the order has tentatively been given by the authorities that hereafter no Occidentals will be allowed to live in the Chinese quarter.

The movement to clean out this disgraceful locality was inaugurated yesterday when 122 summonses were made out and ordered served forthwith on the occupants of the cribs which have sprung up in this quarter within the last three years. [...]

The action of the police in suddenly issuing these summonses came as a great surprise to the women of the district, and it is reported that many of those served yesterday left for Seattle last night. It is understood that if they should return to Vancouver they will be sentenced to six months' imprisonment, as the authorities are determined that the keepers of Chinese opium dens and cribhouses shall no longer reap profit from the enslavement of these women in Vancouver.

“White slavery in this city”¹⁴⁴ (January, 1908)

In delivering sentence on the women, Magistrate Alexander said that the principal thing that had moved him to this action was the fact that three young girls had been taken out of these dens during the past few days. These girls had been enticed there and put under the influence of opium and thus tied down. Two of them were members of respectable families in the city, while the third was brought out from England upon the assurance that she would be given good employment. The last-named girl had been working in a restaurant but was enticed to the district and kept under the influence of the drug for several days, being in that state when the officers found her. Continuing, the magistrate said:

“We have heard a good deal of the white slavery in this city, and I have come to the conclusion that these dens of vice must cease to exist. From the experience I have gathered it seems that every woman who enters such dives – for there is no other name for them – does so under the influence of opium. The craving for this drug is so great that a woman cannot break away from the life. Now, as you women know, only recently two young Vancouver girls were rescued from those dives and another girl who came from the old country with an immigration company was enticed there by a man. This district has become notorious, not only because of you women, but because of the denizens who hang around – the men who are your hangers on. Messenger boys have been down there repeatedly to take messages from one house

¹⁴³ From DOWN-TOWN DISTRICT MUST BE CLEARED. (1908, January 29). *The Province*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁴ From MAGISTRATE TALKS OF WHITE SLAVERY IN VANCOUVER. (1908, January 30). *The Province*, p. 15.

to another, and every one knows the effect that it has on youngsters at that age. The result has been repeated complaints to the police, and we have come to the conclusion that henceforth these dens must cease to exist. Some of you will be deported. The rest will be given until Monday to return to your homes, and any one of you found in the city after that will be given six months' imprisonment with hard labor.

"These streets are a menace to the public, and it is our determination to clean them out," he concluded, referring to Canton and Shanghai alleys. "So notorious have they become that they are a disgrace to the city."

Belle Walker's return from Seattle¹⁴⁵ (February, 1908)

In an effort to rescue her sister who was held in bondage in a Chinese opium den on Canton street, Belle Walker, a woman from the restricted district, who was driven out of the city, came back from Seattle.

She declares that she had to take up the opium habit, wear Chinamen's clothes and serve as a serf to her captors before she could secure the release of her sister. The rescue was effected under the cover of darkness, when through a clever ruse the sister was smuggled into the open and to freedom.

Belle Walker found her sister in a small room devoid of ventilation in the rear of an opium den. Escape was cut off in all directions, and the continual presence of Chinamen prevented her from making an attempt to get out. The letter she had written to Seattle begging her sister to come and release her from bondage was also smuggled out. The unfortunate girl was kept under the influence of opium most of the time.

She was released and taken to the police station. Charged with being the keeper of a house of ill-fame she pleaded not guilty, and her story told through counsel softened the heart of the court, and he allowed her to go on suspended sentence if she would get out of the city. "Remember, if you come back there will be a sentence of six months waiting for you." The woman presented a pitiable sight as she appeared in court and gave every appearance of being on the verge of physical collapse.

"A strange and weird sight"¹⁴⁶ (April, 1908)

Few of us would care to be engaged in the opium traffic for a livelihood, seeing how many lives are slowly sacrificed to the taste for it, and how many more are reduced to misery and beastliness thereby, even where it does not kill.

But in many parts of the Empire besides Vancouver a considerable revenue is derived from its manufacture, and the vested interests of India in the opium trade were held to be so important within the lifetime of some of us that England went to

¹⁴⁵ From WOMAN TELLS OF RESCUING SISTER. (1908, February 13). *The Province*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁶ From St. John Mildmay, A. N. (1908, April 11). THROUGH THE CHINESE VILLAGE OF VANCOUVER. *The Province*, p. 24. Written by Reverend Sir Aubrey Neville St. John-Mildmay (1865 - 1955).

war with China mainly on behalf of a trade which China herself has at last prohibited as detrimental to the common weal.

Against prohibition there are certain arguments that hold. As for instance, that the decoction, like other poisons, is a necessary ingredient in certain medicines, and if chemists could not obtain opium, certain innocent sick folk would suffer.

But those who know the congenital addiction of the Chinese and of most Orientals to the misuse of this dangerous drug, will not be reconciled to the manufacture of opium in our city by the reflection that the drug habit in this particular form is no serious menace to our own race, for the simple reason that opium is a much nastier and less palatable article than other equally devilish poisons, which under the guise of patent medicines or toothache-cures are, in spite of all the safeguards which legislation has attempted to impose, only too easy for the habitual dabbler in suicide to obtain.

It would be well if the Governments of India and the Dominion of Canada should agree to put a stop to the manufacture under the British flag. But for the thing to be promoted in Canada only would do very little good, as that would entail the placing of opium on the free list, as a thing not manufactured in Canada, and Indian opium would be at once on sale in Vancouver at far less than the price paid under the present excise duty. [...]

A strange and weird sight is the opium still which you may stumble upon in one of the smallest and most unapproachable alleys of [Vancouver's] Chinatown, not far from Keefer street.

It is a square chamber whose only illumination is furnished by a funnel-shaped aperture in the centre of the high smoke-blackened roof. Round the walls are ranged some twelve or fifteen ash furnaces, supporting crucibles lined with white fire-clay.

Some are glowing red, and over them simmer the poppy-heads just torn open from the globe-shaped packages, as large as two coconuts or a small football, by a parchment-faced stooping boy, wearing a peculiar capote, ventilated at the top with cord netting. The contents of the cauldrons look like bubbling tar, which presently begins to change from black to a lurid red. Others of the furnaces give out only a faint smoke, over which discs of brown cloth are being steeped in the wood smoke, laid damp on the inner side of inverted copper saucers, which are clapped over each crucible. What these cloth discs are used for seems to be a state secret, but the smoking (or drying) of them over furnaces of different temperatures is the whole occupation of three cadaverous-looking Chinamen.

Between the ring of furnaces and the boy in the middle, two other lantern-jawed Celestials are pouring and stirring, stirring and pouring the decoction of poppy-juice in a series of large and spotlessly clean polished brass vessels, mounted on wooden stands: and eventually, when it had reached a deep clear red, the oily fluid is drawn off into a vast iron receptacle holding some twenty gallons. And the malodorous brew is now ready to be drawn off into jars for the wholesale houses.

Such is the outward aspect of the Vancouver opium still in the year of grace 1908. Perhaps it is not amiss to have described it: for it impresses on the mind the feeling that the thing is close to us – a needless, perhaps disgraceful abomination.

But there are anti-carnivores who think that a butcher's shop is also a disgrace to civilization; and many more who feel a still deeper horror at the existence of a brewery, and would smell brimstone and scent perdition in presence of the stirring and classic spectacle of an Italian wine-press in the height of vintage-season.

There is indeed a pathetic uncertainty about all our moral judgments: a faint stammer of kindly doubt behind our roundest anathemas: for what iniquities have not time and again been countenanced by that embodiment of the public conscience, the law? [...]

There is something in the much-discredited doctrine of laissez-faire which gives us pause. The law, after all, exists to make men equal, not to make them good. And by trying to put itself in the place of conscience, it may undermine instead of buttressing the individual sense of duty, on which morality depends. Loud outcries for legislative reform in an inquisitorial and grandmotherly direction are often but the symptom and the mask of moral indifference. People who are determined to get rich, if by honest means well and good, but if that does not seem possible, then anyhow and before all things to get rich, are the people who think the Legislature is bound to look after those good old hedges which they have not time to attend to – Sabbath-keeping and sobriety and keeping of bonds – which they do not approve of other people being at liberty to creep through or climb over.

There is a wealth of humbug in this wonderful age, and the eyes of the world are just now upon the Dominion of Canada as its chief emporium. Therefore we may well hesitate to say, "let the Dominion or let British Columbia rise up and crush this or that serpent in its bosom," lest some arch-humbug of all the humbugs should hasten to give the serpent's tail a huge squeeze (and well advertised), and therefore should get up a shout for a permanent salary or a modest pension for the squeezer, regardless of the fact that the serpent's fangs were thereby only driven deeper into the breast of the nursing mother, and that the so valiant squeeze has resulted only in the poisoning of her milk.

It is perhaps only natural that people who feed upon such offal as one sees exhibited in the Chinese eating-house windows should crave for some beastly antidote to a degraded and beastly diet. Would any even moderately well-conducted vulture condescend to look twice at some of the morsels which ornament these horrible shambles?

Abortions of the duck tribe, boned and cut open and dried, and exposed for sale, flattened as by millstones into the shape of a large biscuit, with the half-decomposed beak projecting from the circumference, as the only indication that the horrible, six-month-old, dirty, sapless object is anything connected with the animal creation at all.

If any one of us were called upon to handle this horror as cook, or to sample it as food, and to work for ten or twelve hours thereupon, small wonder if we fled to an opium or any other hell afterwards in order to forget that we are alive upon such terms and kept alive upon such corruption.

There are worse things than the opium-spells in the daily life of the lowest class of Chinaman within our gates. Let us assist the merchants and the many intelligent and companionable persons in the ranks of our Chinese fellow-citizens to

raise their fellows to more enlightened views of diet and domestic cleanliness, without which the mere removal of the opportunities for opium suicide would effect little or nothing. Taking men as they are is the best method of snake-killing, after all.

“Awful effects of the opium habit”¹⁴⁷ (June, 1908)

In the police court this morning, while Vancouver lay in the beauty and brightness of the early sunshine, there emerged into the light ugly and horrible evidence of the dire influence which the opium traffic is exercising among stragglers from the ranks of British Columbia womanhood. May Edwards, pretty, young and saucy, had been found in a Chinese den. She said she had a husband in Victoria, and if allowed to go she would return to him. She was allowed to go.

Much the sadder of the cases, however, was that of Belle Walker. Belle was a resident of the Chinese district in the days before the cleaning. A terrible record of the effects of indulgence in opium was written on her appearance this morning. She was found by the police in an opium den. She had been there for three weeks. The place smelt to heaven. She wanted to be allowed to go, that she might marry the Chinaman. Magistrate Williams sent the Walker woman to prison for six months.

“May Edwards gave the officers no little trouble”¹⁴⁸ (August, 1912)

Four years later, May Edwards was found living at a house of ill-repute.

Elsie Kelly, Eva Moore, “Dode” Vernon and Violet Ford, all inmates of 639 Alexander street, pleaded guilty to the charge of being disorderly women. May Edwards, an inmate of the same house, asserted her innocence, but she was found guilty. All the women were sentenced by Magistrate South to six months at hard labor in jail, but were allowed their freedom until next Monday at midnight on suspended sentence. If they are in the city on Tuesday they will be rearrested and imprisoned.

Inspector McRae, Detectives Hart, Thomson, Crewe, Jewitt and O’Grady visited the house at 10:20 o’clock last evening and after a brief talk with the women made them pack up their belongings and assisted them to the police station where they were refused bail. May Edwards gave the officers no little trouble. She refused to pack up her “junk” at first, but when Inspector McRae informed her that there were other means of dealing with women of her type and character, she “got busy” at once and prepared herself for a ride in the patrol wagon to the jail. This morning she still maintained her insolent attitude, but upon seeing that the other women connected with her were willing to testify against her she soon became very submissive. City Prosecutor Kennedy made a very forceful prosecution.

“Your worship,” said Mr. Kennedy, addressing Magistrate South, “I would suggest that you give these women jail sentences without the option of a fine. I think

¹⁴⁷ From AWFUL EFFECTS OF OPIUM HABIT. (1908, June 8). *The Vancouver World*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁸ From START RAIDS ON ALEXANDER STREET. (1912, August 30). *The Province*, p. 24.

that you will agree with me that these unfortunate women should be given a chance to leave the city, and therefore I would suggest that you will keep the sentences 'hanging over their heads' in case they fail to depart within the next few days.

"These women admit that they are guilty of an evil that has grown like a cancer in this city within the last seven months. It will do no good whatever to fine them, for in the majority of cases they are able to make enough money to pay a large fine almost daily. It was found at the time Shanghai and Canton alleys were 'cleaned out' that fines were of no avail and that jail sentences would be necessary in order to make the women leave the city.

"Now, if jail sentences had a lasting effect in these cases I don't see why they shouldn't be beneficial at this time. Orders have been given the police to move all the denizens of the underworld out of Vancouver at once. The courts have signified their intention of assisting the authorities in this task and I think we might as well begin at once by making the punishment in each case the most severe. Therefore I briefly ask you to find these women guilty and impose jail sentences upon them."

"Mr. Kennedy," said Magistrate South, "I am of the same opinion as you are, and I am going to find these women guilty but will give them a fair opportunity to leave the city, and I shall do all I can in regard to the matter."

After thanking Magistrate South for his fairness in passing sentence, the women all signified their intention of leaving the city as soon as they could get their belongings packed and ready for shipment.

"To save her from herself"¹⁴⁹ (July, 1908)

The [New Westminster] police yesterday made an ineffectual attempt to round up "Babe" Cameron, who last week figured prominently in the local police court in connection with the raiding of a house of ill fame. The girl, who was brought up in the district, and is only sixteen years of age, has become a victim of the opium smoking habit, and it is the intention of the authorities, with the consent of her relatives, to confine her in a home for three years, so as to endeavor to save her from herself.

"The raiding of a house of ill fame"¹⁵⁰ (June, 1908)

An echo of the recent mesalliance¹⁵¹ between a white woman, Edith Lamoung, and a young Chinaman named Nip Sue will be heard in the police court this morning. The woman still bears the marks of the bullet wounds of a jealous paramour, who shot her several times a few days after these matrimonial proceedings were completed, and is not long out of the hospital. The case arises from a raid by Sergeant Gefser and Officers Gill and Johnson on Saturday night on the fruit store in [New Westminster's] Chinatown, where, it is alleged, the officers discovered two girls, a

¹⁴⁹ From DEADLY OPIUM HABIT. (1908, July 9). *The Vancouver World*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁰ From SORDID SEQUEL TO MESALLIANCE. (1908, June 30). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 9.

¹⁵¹ A mixed race marriage.

white, named Babe Cameron, and a negress, Sally Lawrence. A crowd gathered while the arrests were made, but no opposition was offered.

The young Chinese salesman who proved so accommodating in matters nuptial, and his wife with a past, are charged with an offence under the code, and the girls with being inmates of a place of ill-fame.

No bail could be secured and the four accused have remained in the lock-up. So far as is known the house was not a “dope” den. The police have considered the marriage all along a ruse to avoid the law.

“Duplicity and fiendish methods”¹⁵² (July, 1908)

The Chinese today have established in this province dens of prostitution controlled by means of opium, and it makes one shudder to think that these dens are used for the purpose of obtaining white people for the vicious ends of the Chinese. It seems frightful to think that a Chinaman with all his Oriental duplicity and fiendish methods has so established himself in our province that today Chinese dives – prisons would be a better word – actually exist, which from time to time are discovered by the police and in which are found young white girls, who are the slaves of the Chinaman and his chattel, to be used as he sees fit. [...]

These white girls we read of from time to time as being found in these dens are only instances of what has been ascertained, but what has not been discovered must be far more, bearing in mind how skillful the Chinaman is with his secrets and mystery. These girls are daughters and sisters of white people – how they fell makes no difference. As a people we have surely enough to struggle with in trying to overcome our own weaknesses without the further addition of the possibility of allowing our fair women to become the prey of these Orientals.

“This foul blot”¹⁵³ (July, 1908)

In the Vancouver police court on July 13 there was heard a case of such a nature as should cause the ears of every white man and woman to tingle with shame.

The principal figure was a young white girl, who, we are told, stood with drooping eyes and pale face before the justices, she having been found in a Chinese opium den. The officer said he had found her living among some Chinamen, whose place was raided for gambling. In order to get her out of sight they had thrown her down through a trap door. They afterwards found her in filthy quarters at the back of the den, a place full of old broken bottles and garbage, and described by Detective Scott as “a place not fit to keep pigs in.”

¹⁵² From CAHIRMORE. (1908, July 21). THE OPIUM DEN. *The Vancouver World*, p. 2

¹⁵³ From Walker, B. G. (1908, July 25). CHINESE TRAFFIC IN WHITE GIRLS. *The Vancouver World*, p. 6. Written by Benjamin George Walker (d. 1922), J.P., in Burnaby.

Do we not remember the pathos of the immortal Tom Hood¹⁵⁴? “Take her up tenderly / Lift her with care, / Fashioned so tenderly- / Young and so fair.”

This young and erring sister of our race was sentenced to three months’ imprisonment in order that the opium that had lulled her senses and deadened her consciousness of shame might work out of her system. No man, I suppose, will take exception to the sentence, for it would appear to be the only course to take and certainly the most remedial.

But what of the Chinese, who by means of drugs had brought the poor girl down to a level lower than that of the beasts? Are they free to spread their snares to entrap some other young and tender member of our race, who, mother-like, ventures too near destruction? It may strike closely home to any of us for all that we can tell.

Only a short time ago a young girl was found under similar circumstances in the city of New Westminster, I believe. [...]

One and all, every man, woman and child should be enlisted in a campaign to unearth this foul blot. We may reckon on the hearty and faithful co-operation of such gentlemen as the chiefs of police in the two cities referred to, and we know that they will receive the willing assistance of the manly body of men under their control.

Undue excitement and feverish haste will accomplish nothing. Deliberative and well-matured action, upon lines of an unquestionably constitutional character, alone will result in a permanent remedy. Whatever source we have to look to, whether federal, provincial or municipal, we should not rest content till every tenement in Chinatown is thrown open to the light of day, till the construction of underground passages and warrens, the barred alleys and mysterious trap doors shall be rendered a matter of impossibility. In a word, if these people must live here they should be compelled to submit to such conditions as would render it impossible for such revelations to be obtruded upon our notice.

This is a matter [...] before which all other moral reforms, in my opinion, pale into insignificance.

“He had taken all the steps he could”¹⁵⁵ (July, 1908)

A further discussion took place at the [New Westminster] city council last evening on the allegation that social evils, including opium smoking, drinking and gambling, were rampant in Chinatown. Chief of Police McIntosh was present, and his report was read by the chairman of the police committee. [...]

There is no law in Canada making the smoking of opium an offence. An act has been passed making the manufacture or importation of the drug into Canada an

¹⁵⁴ Thomas Hood (1799 – 1845) was an English poet and author of *The Bridge of Sighs*, which is misquoted in the article. The original poem begins: “One more Unfortunate / Weary of breath, / Rashly importunate, / Gone to her death! / Take her up tenderly, / Lift her with care; / Fashion’d so slenderly, / Young, and so fair!”

¹⁵⁵ From CHARACTER OF CHINATOWN AGAIN OCCUPIES ATTENTION OF COUNCIL. (1908, July 28). *The New Westminster Daily News*, p. 1.

offence, which act will come into effect at the end of three months, but if Chinese or others will be able to procure the drug, the act of smoking it will be no offence.

“There is only one place in this city which has a license to sell opium, and I don’t know of any other place where opium is smoked, but if a person goes there to smoke they have to send to a licensed place in order to procure opium.” [...] Ald. Gray said he would like to ask if there were any places where opium could be secured. He [...] knew of one place where opium was obtainable.

The chief said he had taken all the steps he could to obtain convictions in Chinatown, and had employed persons who were opium fiends to get it, and at only one place was it sold. There were places where the horn-shaped boxes which the Chinese use to contain the drug were obtainable. The Chinamen who retailed opium had to procure it from the local manufacturer. Ah Foo had the only place where opium was obtainable for the public. Every Chinaman who smoked the drug had his own outfit. A raid had been made on Foo’s place and all the opium found there seized.

“Both prisoner and witness”¹⁵⁶ (August, 1908)

Lured by a supposed friend to a Chinese opium den and there abandoned, where the police found her virtually a prisoner, her clothes hidden by the Chinese keepers of the joint, this was the fate of Lillian Sabert, who admitted from the witness stand to-day that she was a married woman recently from Seattle, and more recently from Victoria.

She was both prisoner and witness, prisoner to answer to a charge of vagrancy, and successful as a witness in her own behalf in defeating the law on technicalities.

This technicality was rolled up in \$12. Because that amount was found in her hidden clothes when finally the police recovered them from behind a concealed door, she was acquitted, Mr. J. A. Russell¹⁵⁷, her counsel, successfully arguing that with that amount of money she could not legally be held, nor legally convicted under the section under which she was charged, as a vagrant “found wandering about and without visible means of support, etc.”

When repeatedly asked by Mr. Kennedy to give the name of her friend, she said at last:

“What if I refuse? You cannot draw blood from a stone.”

“The court – I can order your committal for contempt of court.”

Then Mr. Russell held conference with her.

“I have the name and I will give it to the crown if that is satisfactory,” he said.

All she would say was that his first name was Charley and that he was a barber on Cordova street.

The police are considering his case.

The opium den is two doors east of the Great Northern depot on Pender street.

¹⁵⁶ From PRISONER IN A LOCAL OPIUM DEN. (1908, August 27). *The Province*, p. 1.

¹⁵⁷ Joseph A. Russell of the firm of Russell & Russell. In 1908 he lived at 1960 Robson St.

The woman said: “My friend went there to smoke, but I didn’t. I never smoked opium in my life. He left me there.”

“Against a blank wall”¹⁵⁸ (August, 1908)

Detective Green¹⁵⁹ stated that he and Detective Scott¹⁶⁰ had had suspicions of a Chinese establishment near the Great Northern depot for some time. They had gone into the place two or three times but had found nothing. They literally came up against a blank wall. Detective Green said that on their last visit he became suspicious of the blank wall, which had newspapers pasted all over it. Detective Scott had a long bladed jack-knife and with it he made some investigations and found a crack in the wall which, on being further scraped into, proved to be the edge of a door. Tearing the paper away he again put the knife to use and lifted a bar on the other side and the frail paper covering soon gave way and a door opened. In the room thus revealed lay a woman, who gave her name as Lillian Sabert. Asked where her clothes were she said that they had been taken away by a Chinese “boy.” Detective Green then went down a narrow passage and came to another newspaper covered wall. Experience had made him wise and the knife soon revealed another door. In a cupboard behind this door were the woman’s clothes. [...]

When put in the box this morning she said she had come here from Seattle with a man. She was going to marry him, but declined to do so after arriving here because she was told that the fact that she had a husband in the United States was a bar against her marrying again in Canada. [...] She said that his name was Charley and that he worked in Walker’s barber shop on Cordova street. [...] She said that she had been working in a photograph gallery in Seattle. She had thirty dollars when she came here and Charley had much less. She had been paying for her keep. He was an opium smoker and asked her to go to an opium parlor and watch him smoke.

The magistrate said that as the woman had money earned in a photograph gallery when she came here, he had to dismiss the charge of vagrancy against her.

Two Lung Lee¹⁶¹ (September, 1908)

A shuffling of felt-shod feet sounded in the back alley of One Lung Lee’s laundry¹⁶² not three blocks from the city hall¹⁶³. The elongated Lee, standing over the

¹⁵⁸ From SECRETS OF A CHINESE DEN. (1908, August 27). *The Vancouver World*, p. 1.

¹⁵⁹ Probably James E. Green, a police officer living at 264 Front E. in 1908, but possibly John P. Green, the assistant superintendent of the B. C. Detective Agency, who lived at 1675 Park Drive.

¹⁶⁰ Detective Dvid Scott lived at 247 Georgia in 1908.

¹⁶¹ From HOW TWO LUNG LEE GOES TO BARGAIN-RATE HEAVEN. (1908, September 26). The Province, p. 25.

¹⁶² Not a real name. It is taken from an anonymous (?) racist poem that starts, “A happy ‘Chink’ is One Lung Lee / He runs a little laun-der-ree.” A version of the poem illustrated by American cartoonist Ray I. Hoppman can be found at ONE LUNG LEE. (1918, March 11). *The Anaconda Standard*, p. 9.

¹⁶³ In 1908, City Hall was at 401 Main St. The laundry referred to could be Bee Wah, at 36 Powell, or Kwong Wing, at 270 Pender St. E., both just under three blocks away.

pride of his heart, the great copper boiler jammed with washee from the homes of Anti-Asiatics, had slammed on the lid and was now bending over Two Lung Lee, there, bent double in his low-lying bunk in a never-ending frolic with angelic cousins of his heavenly dreams.

The never ending dreamy frolic ended there. One Lung spoke in his own tongue in his own way¹⁶⁴ to this effect:

“Get up and help me with washing blankets, quickly. You hit the pipe much too often. Now a new law will soon come in, and opium will be no more. I’m very glad. It’ll save my cousins. But for the government, you’d die soon.”

The inhuman almond eyes of the sleeping dreamer, closed two hours, opened wide and Two Lung comes back to earth and the washee with a fiendish speed.

Day and night in Little China there are Two Lungs by the score in this heavenly-hellish recreation, a race against time and law, the law that was put in the federal statutes on July 20 and that is to come into effect in seventeen weeks.

Then Vancouver’s two opium factories will have gone out of business and the fermented juice of the poppy may not be purchased in the city, the province or the Dominion under penalty of imprisonment for three months or a fine of from \$50 to \$1000 or to both fine and imprisonment.

There were two reasons why the government postponed until January 21 the effect and operation of the law passed last July. First, consideration for the opium factories here, in New Westminster and in Victoria, for there are no opium factories in any other part of Canada, the East having always obtained its supply from British Columbia.

The second reason was a kindly, even a humane, consideration for the opium-fiend, to give him a chance to “taper-off” in his indulgence.

But to-day in Little China, this period of warning, which is benefitting the owners of the opium factories by giving them an opportunity to dispose of their enormous supplies, is having its evil effect upon their many native patrons, for they are buying the drug at bargain prices and are “tapering off” under these all too favorable conditions, at a rate that even alarms their countrymen after the manner of One Lung Lee.

But while many are “tapering-off” by over-indulgence, there are perhaps as many who are daily lessening the number of their pipes, preparing for the rapidly approaching day for their last legal lawful smoke and dream.

Then opium can only be imported into Canada “for medicinal purposes” as the act plainly states, and then only for use by chemists and druggists duly licensed under the laws of British Columbia and the other provinces.

This will mean that all the Chinese druggists, so called, and there are nearly a dozen in Vancouver, will be barred from importing opium, even as a drug, for not one is qualified or licensed under the laws of the province. That fact was plainly brought out in the recent commission of enquiry here before W. L. Mackenzie King.

¹⁶⁴ Translated to standard English from the original racist phonetic spelling. Since this is meant to be “in his own tongue, in his own way,” the broken English makes no sense.

It was upon his report upon the social condition of Chinatown, while reviewing the Chinese riot claims, that the government acted in passing the anti-opium law.

So with the dreamy drug barred even to the celestial druggist, the only way that the opium fiend will be able to indulge in an illegal pipe dream will be by smuggling it over the border. But if he be bold enough to attempt this he will likely fail to evade the eagle eye of the officers, a failure that will mean a long term in the pen.

“The Chinamen who will have to hang up their pipes when this new law becomes effective will get no sympathy from the old land, for the Chinese government has for years been co-operating with the British government to lessen the imports of opium from India,” said a leading celestial to-day. “If Canada had a trade treaty or any other treaty with China, this law would have been passed years ago.”

It will mean a loss to the opium factories here, in New Westminster and Victoria of approximately half a million dollars a year. The local firm of Hip, Tuck Lung & Co., according to evidence at Mr. King’s inquiry, made profit last year of \$180,000 while a second firm admitted a profit of \$100,000. It is estimated that upwards of five thousand pounds of the weed has been sold monthly throughout the Dominion for several years past. Most of the supply came from British Columbia via India and Hongkong.

The Chinese dealers have always claimed that the British government was primarily to blame, for it controls the world’s supply, making an enormous profit from the double tax on the drug imported from one part of the Empire to another, with a profit on the final sale, apart from the many impositions in the form of licenses. Vancouver has for more than twenty years exacted \$500 for every license.

According to the Chinese themselves less than 50 per cent. of their own race in Canada do not use opium in any form. About 40 per cent. periodically hit the pipe and about ten per cent., or less than 2000, are fiends. There are perhaps a score of white men and women of Vancouver’s underworld who are slaves of the weed.

It is said that many Hindus in Canada chew it, a practice which the Chinese declare would kill them if they attempted it. The Chinese much prefer to drift to the heaven of their dreams through the fumes than the juice. They have but three months more for their cheap return trips.

May Doyle and Nell Robertson¹⁶⁵ (September, 1908)

Somewhere in the wilds there is liable to be found another wild man. The last time the local police saw him he looked like one of [the] Wright Brothers’ aeroplanes – just ready to shake the dust of the earth off its feet. He was, according to the officers who had the intention of arresting him, making about comet speed – dressed in his night clothes.

¹⁶⁵ From BROUGHT GIRLS TO OPIUM DEN. (1908, September 30). *The Vancouver World*, p. 1.

The police found two girls, May Doyle¹⁶⁶ and Nell Robertson¹⁶⁷, of Victoria, in an opium dive at the rear of a house on what used to be Dupont street. Both girls had been smoking the drug. They were sensible enough to tell who had brought them from Victoria and to tell the hotel where he was staying. Some Chinaman must have run from the opium den to give him warning because just as the police got to the hotel he fled through the back door, dressed as above stated.

Chun Yuen, the proprietor of the place where the girls were found, was taken in by the police. At court this morning he wanted a lawyer to defend him and was remanded. The girls were also remanded as they will be needed to give evidence when the wild man is caught.

The police believe that they are on the eve of breaking up a blackguarding system that has been interchanging white girls between Vancouver and Victoria for Chinese opium dens.

“Painted, powdered visitors”¹⁶⁸ (September, 1908)

Mr. Cecil Killam¹⁶⁹ – I would like to apply for bail for the accused.

The magistrate – Oh, I don’t think it will hurt either of the defendants to remain in jail until their case is heard to-morrow.

The defendants were two haggard-looking female denizens of the underworld charged with vagrancy in its worst possible form within the covers of the code, the painted, powdered visitors of the worst opium den in Chinatown, the famous den of one Chew from which the detectives recently rescued a woman lured there by a “friend” to be the prey of Chinamen. Because of the fact that money was found in her hidden clothes the case was held not to come within the meaning of the section under which she was charged, that being “visible means of support.”

At a late hour last night the detectives gathered in the two women of the underworld, who appeared in court to-day, in the last place left to find them, under a trapdoor beneath a bed in a cold and coal-black basement. Their flight and plight was in striking contrast to the simultaneous appearance of a Celestial smiling behind a load of fruit.

Chew and the women will have their trial to-morrow. Chew’s den, which must go out of business on January 21 when the federal anti-opium law becomes effective, is in an alley off Pender street near the Great Northern hotel.

¹⁶⁶ Possibly Miss May Doyle of Goderich, a frequent visitor to British Columbia. “Miss May Doyle, daughter of Judge Doyle of Goderich, Ont., is in the city and the guest of her aunt, Mrs. William Walsh, Earls court, Georgia Street. Society. (1907, January 5). *The Province*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁷ Possibly the same Nell Robertson who attended St. Ann’s Academy in Victoria in 1910.

¹⁶⁸ From IN VERY BASEMENT OF THEIR LIVES. (1908, September 30). *The Province*, p. 10.

¹⁶⁹ In 1908, Cecil Killam was a partner in the firm of Killam & Parris. His office was at 600 Hastings W., and he lived at 1717 Davie.

“The first prosecution”¹⁷⁰ (October, 1908)

The first prosecution under the new federal anti-opium act was a partial success, being the committal for trial of Chan Chuen, the almond-eyed proprietor of the lowest opium den in [Vancouver’s] Chinatown, from the basement of which two white women were rescued by the detectives on Tuesday night.

After testifying that they had indulged in the pipe, the charge against both of vagrancy was withdrawn, both however being bound to appear as witnesses against Chan, who was committed for trial at the assizes which open next week¹⁷¹.

Chan is the first celestial to face the new act passed in July, which was immediately operative against retailers, but not against the manufacturer or the wholesale dealer. Its operation was suspended against the latter until Jan. 21st to enable the disposal of the opium stocks on hand in this city, Victoria and New Westminster, that disposal being, of course, to parties outside of the Dominion.

J. K. Kennedy¹⁷² produced the act in court to-day for the first time. The penalty for selling opium by retail since July is a fine of from \$50 to \$1,000, or imprisonment for three months, or both.

The tale of Belle Walker¹⁷³ (November, 1908)

At last night’s meeting of the Moral Reform Association a well known local lady, who resides on Pendrill street, and who has been interested in the moral reform movement for some time, made a rather startling assertion. [...] This lady, who believes in deeds as well as words in moral reform work, was much interested in the case of Belle Walker, a white girl who was found in a Chinese opium joint some time ago and sentenced to a term of imprisonment on a charge of vagrancy. Believing that she could induce the girl to reform, this lady had made arrangements whereby Belle Walker would be given employment at her own home on Pendrill street until such time as she could communicate with her relatives and find a permanent home.

The day of Belle Walker’s liberation arrived, however, and she did not put in an appearance. This led to inquiries being made by the lady and it was found that the

¹⁷⁰ From LAW AGAINST OPIUM. (1908, October 2). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 10.

¹⁷¹ There are no further reports on this case, as it was not a trial by jury. “[T]he trial of Chong Soon on a charge of supplying opium to white girls in his den in Chinatown is set for Thursday. The Chinaman was given the usual option of a trial by jury, but he elected to take speedy trial.” ONE DAY SHOULD END WALKER TRIAL. (1908, October 5). *The Vancouver World*, p. 3.

¹⁷² A prosecuting attorney for the police court, and gun enthusiast. He once gave the following advice in a lecture to law students: “Another point upon which I would like to advise you [...] is upon selecting the right judge for your trial. It is well known that some judges are much more severe upon certain crimes than upon others, and it is your duty to your client to study out their weak points and take advantage of them for your client.” TIMELY HINTS TO YOUNG LAWYERS. (1911, May 11). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 24. The previous year, at the Vancouver Gun Club, “J. K. Kennedy shot only 100 times and had an average of 87.” TOTAL SCORE MADE BY MARKSMEN OF GUN CLUB. (1910, October 6). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 12.

¹⁷³ From WHITE VICTIMS ARE PURSUED. (1908, November 6). *The Vancouver World*, p. 2.

Chinese owners of the den where the Walker girl had been found, had made many ineffectual efforts to communicate with her during her term of imprisonment. They had sent presents of fruit, flowers and sweets and twice tried to secure permission to see the girl. But the matron frustrated all attempts by the Chinese to secure communication with her.

It is alleged that Chinese were on watch near the local jail for two days prior to the girl's liberation, men being changed regularly every two hours. Anyway, Belle Walker did not come to the home on Pendrill street which was waiting for her, as she had promised, nor to the home of another local lady who had made her a similar offer.

That the Chinese induced the girl to again resume her life of shame may be judged from the fact that information was secured by the local police today that Belle Walker went straight over to New Westminster after her liberation and became an inmate of a Chinese opium den there fully as notorious as the one in which she was found here. Her presence was soon discovered, however, and the place raided by the New Westminster police. Just three days ago Belle Walker was again sentenced to a term of six months in the provincial jail at New Westminster.

“I never meant to do it”¹⁷⁴ (November, 1908)

Harry Field, alias Peter Morganbeser, who pleaded guilty to nine charges of passing worthless cheques, and obtaining jewelry and goods with them¹⁷⁵, appeared for the last time this morning and heard his fate. The aggregate sentence imposed by the police magistrate was 24 years and 6 months, but as several of his three-year terms will run concurrently he will actually serve only six years in jail.

Field whimpered a little, when asked what he could say in his own defence, and said it was all a put-up job.

“I never meant to do it,” he said, “and if they hadn't taught me to smoke opium it would never have happened. I wouldn't have come here if I thought you'd be so hard on me. I've always been a respectable character before.”

The court reminded him dryly that by all indications he was no shorn lamb, misled from the path of virtue, but an experienced crook, who would have to answer grave charges in Washington and Oregon, as well as Winnipeg when Vancouver was done with him.

“They taught me the opium habit,” he repeated, “and I never would have took all them things if I hadn't just filled up with it on November 7. I have a wife and two children, and they'll have to starve now.”

¹⁷⁴ From TWENTY-FOUR YEARS FOR DIAMOND THIEF. (1908, November 18). *The Province*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁵ “Field is 23 years old and has a wife and two small children. [...] In Vancouver Field gave cheques in payment for the diamonds. His cheques were dishonored today at the bank, though he had a small amount to his credit. One firm gave him \$500 worth of goods and another \$300. Others were for valuables worth smaller amounts. Field had been doing business with the same stores for a week, paying by cheques which had always been honored. The Vancouver firms expect to get back their goods.” LEFT CHEQUES FOR DIAMONDS. (1908, November 10). *The Province*, p. 1.

Field's wife appeared at the police station yesterday. She is in woe-be-gone and destitute circumstances.

“It could not be proved”¹⁷⁶ (September, 1909)

Tong Chung and Ching, Chinamen accused of keeping an opium joint, were dismissed in police court as it could not be proved that they were selling the drug in one of the attics of Chinatown.

Ching was called to give King's evidence and did it so well that he cleared both himself and his companion. After numerous police officers were called to tell what they knew of the defendants, Magistrate Williams¹⁷⁷ suggested, as no case had been made out against the accused, that Ching be called. Ching by an interpreter was told that if he would give a truthful statement the charge against him would be withdrawn. He very carefully then stated that he didn't know anything in particular except that it was his first visit to the place and he went there only for a night's lodging.

A quantity of opium pills found on Ching's person were identified by Ching not as opium pills but as a sort of medicine to kill the opium habit. He said that after being a smoker for some years he had decided three weeks ago to swear off, and he hadn't whiffed a smoke since.

“In some unaccountable manner”¹⁷⁸ (November, 1909)

Lee Sing, a Chinaman, was this morning committed for trial by Magistrate Williams, following a hearing of a charge of enticing a white woman into an opium den at 131 Pender street east, and there selling her enough of the drug to render her unconscious. The girl, Nellie Anderson, stated to the court that she had left home, and she and two girl friends went on a drinking bout together. She was drinking for

¹⁷⁶ From THREE WEEKS' ABSTINENCE. (1909, September 8). *The Province*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁷ Adolphus Williams (1844 – 1921). His judgments were not always popular. “Unless the official head of Adolphus Williams, Police Magistrate of the city of Vancouver, is cut off and served with dainty trimmings as a peace offering to the Socialists, the Government majority in the local Legislature at the next session of the House will not be forthcoming”. SOCIALISTS SAY MAGISTRATE SHOULD BE FIRED. (1904, October 24). *The Province*, p. 1. “Whereas the decisions of Magistrate Williams have become a stench in the nostrils of decency as exemplified by his conviction of the boy Finlayson, and sentencing him to a term of six years, in spite of the fact that no crime had been proved against him; in his conviction and therefore placing the stamp of criminality on the boy Leach for stealing, when in fact the boy had committed no theft whatever, and there was no shadow of evidence against him; in his persistent convictions and penalizing of street-speakers of one kind, while street-speakers of another kind are unmolested; and whereas such a course would make it appear that justice is not being administered with an even hand to all parties alike; and whereas these decisions, which are contrary to all right and reason, are not mere incidents, but have characterized his course since taking office; therefore be it resolved that [...] Magistrate Williams is wholly unfit for the office he occupies, and we demand his dismissal by the authorities responsible for his appointment”. DEMAND DISMISSAL OF POLICE MAGISTRATE WILLIAMS. (1909, May 18). *The Daily Province*, p. 20.

¹⁷⁸ From GIRL WAS ENTICED TO OPIUM DEN. (1909, November 26). *The Province*, p. 1.

three days, and its effect made her despondent. She claimed she did not know where she was going when she directed her steps toward Chinatown.

In some unaccountable manner she finally found herself in the opium joint where there were three Orientals. They induced her to smoke and prepared the opium “pills” for her. She was in the place about an hour, smoking the most of the time, before Detectives McLeod¹⁷⁹ and Thomson rescued her, and arrested Lee Sing, who seemed to be the proprietor of the joint.

The entrance of Miss Anderson to the den fortunately had been witnessed by a white man who informed the detectives. When they burst suddenly into the joint the Anderson girl was found scarcely able to walk from the effects of the drug. Lee Sing, himself, half stupefied with opium, was lying on a bunk rolling a “pill,” and two other Chinamen were lying together on a bunk oblivious to their surroundings. The whole place reeked with opium. The room was a small, unsanitary place fit for no human habitation.

Miss Anderson made a straightforward statement to the court, and blamed her presence in the opium den to drink¹⁸⁰. She was not punished and promised to behave in future.

“For being temporarily in charge”¹⁸¹ (December, 1909)

For being temporarily in charge of an opium joint and permitting a white woman to smoke opium, Lee Sing, a Chinaman, was this morning fined \$10, or 30 days’ imprisonment, by Judge McInnes.

The woman to whom Lee Sing was said to have sold the opium last month was one Nellie Anderson, who stated that, when dazed with drink, she stumbled into this opium joint in Chinatown, where the police found her. She smoked four pills and claimed that she paid for them. The evidence showed that the opium outfit had belonged to a man now dead, and that Lee Sing was in temporary charge. The evidence of several Chinamen was that the opium was given to the woman and that she did not pay for it. The Chinaman paid the fine at once.

“A cleverly-designed hiding-place”¹⁸² (January, 1910)

Five white opium-smokers were caught last night in a cleverly-designed hiding-place behind a false partition between rooms in a building at 551 Carrall street¹⁸³ in Chinatown. The police believe that the men arrested can throw light on the recent burglaries and holdups, if they will.

¹⁷⁹ Donald McLeod. In 1909 he lived at 1256 Howe.

¹⁸⁰ “Holiday drunks in the police court this morning contributed \$49 to the city treasury. [...] Nellie Anderson was fined \$20 for creating a disturbance late last night”. Holiday drunks. (1909, September 7). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 2.

¹⁸¹ From WHITE WOMAN IN OPIUM DEN. (1909, December 4). *The Vancouver World*, p. 1.

¹⁸² From SECRET DOOR LED TO CHINESE OPIUM DEN. (1910, January 8). *The Province*, p. 2.

¹⁸³ The address of Kwong Mang Sang & Co., merchants.

Some time ago the police received information alleging Lee Wo and Wong Wing kept an opium establishment. Detectives visited the place several times, hunted all over the house without meeting with success in their search, which was for white men. Yesterday they received positive information that white men were in the place, and, armed with a search warrant, Sergeant McRae, Detective-Sergeant Jackson and Detectives McLeod and Thomson broke in. They did not find a soul. Gathering up some smokers' paraphernalia and about a pound of opium, they were preparing to depart, when they heard a sound as if some one was trying to muffle a sneeze.

Instead of departing they remained perfectly still. Then they heard voices which seemed to be coming from afar. The voices sounded like they might be from the adjoining room, but when this was investigated the room was found to be empty. So the detectives began to sound the walls. Then the hiding-place was discovered by the hollow sound from the tapping of the detectives' knuckles on the partition.

The wall was all papered carefully and it was some time before the blind door was located. When it was opened five smiling white men were brought forth. They gave their names as Charles W. Wood, Charles E. Allen, Edward Gibson, Charles Ohren and George Harris, alias "the Silent Kid."

All but Harris are from the other side of the line. Harris, who is known as the "Silent Kid," lives in Vancouver and has been in trouble on numerous occasions before. His parents are respectable people and Harris is not his right name¹⁸⁴.

The raiding party then inspected the hiding-place. It was found to be cleverly devised and explained the failure of the police before to find anybody. There were two partitions between the rooms. The false partition was carefully papered the same as the rest of the room. When the door was closed not the slightest break in the paper occurred, and any one not familiar with the door would not guess it existed. It was by the merest chance the detectives found it.

The police are convinced the five captives know something about the recent safeblowings, burglaries and holdups. None of the men will confess such knowledge, however.

In police court this morning all of the white men asked to secure counsel. The Orientals had already engaged Mr. J. W. De B. Farris¹⁸⁵. The news of the raid and the arrest of the Chinamen traveled fast through Chinatown last night.

This opium joint was the most lavishly furnished of any place in Chinatown and considerable money had been spent in an endeavor no doubt to make it as attractive to white smokers as possible.

"It would be unsafe"¹⁸⁶ (January, 1910)

Lee Wo and Wong Wing, Chinamen, charged with running an opium joint at 581 [sic.] Carrall street, were found guilty by Acting Magistrate South, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labor.

¹⁸⁴ His true last name was said to be McDonald.

¹⁸⁵ A partner in the firm of Macdonell, Killam & Farris. In 1910 he lived at 1776 Davie St.

¹⁸⁶ From CONDUCTED OPIUM DEN. (1910, January 17). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 18.

Charles Allan and Charles Ohron, two young white men who had been found in the place, were also sentenced.

“I had your sentence reserved for medical examination,” said Mr. South. “The doctor tells me that it would be unsafe to let either of you go, as you have not sufficient self-control to keep away from this habit. I will sentence you to two months’ imprisonment each.”

Umbrellas in the front, opium in the back¹⁸⁷ (January, 1910)

Loo Kah, the oriental found in an opium den at 546 Carrall street, by the police, was committed for trial in the police court yesterday. The evidence of the officers showed that Kah had conducted an umbrella repair shop in front of his premises, behind which were the rooms used for smoking. Several Chinamen had purchased opium from the accused, according to witnesses. A sum of money was also found in the till and on the Chinaman’s person when arrested.

“They could do more for the man”¹⁸⁸ (January, 1910)

In the speedy trials court this morning Loo Gar was brought up for sentence on the charge of having opium in his possession prepared for smoking, and the Chinese Reform Association pleaded, through counsel, for an opportunity to try to cure him in their hospital for confirmed opium seekers, into which the prisoner had expressed his willingness to enter. The treatment would occupy four or five weeks, and they believed they could do more for the man in helping to break his habit than could be done in prison.

Judge McInnes did not agree. He said that on account of the unfortunate condition of the prisoner, he had given more than ordinary thought to the sentence he should pass, and he had reached the conclusion after mature consideration that it would be for the prisoner’s good as well as to serve other ends, which must be borne in mind in these cases, to sentence the man to six months’ imprisonment, without hard labor. He had more confidence that he would recover under the treatment of skilled medical men than at the hands of possibly well meaning friends of his own. If he should be under any misconception in that view proper representations could be made to the department of justice.

Lee Chung, who pleaded guilty to a similar offence, but who was not the wreck the other man presented, was sentenced to four months’ hard labor. Mr. Pollard Grant appeared for the prisoners.

¹⁸⁷ From COURT OF THE CADI. (1910, January 26). *The Vancouver World*, p. 16.

¹⁸⁸ From CAREFUL DEALING WITH OPIUM WRECK. (1910, January 31). *The Vancouver World*, p. 23.

“A monstrous thing”¹⁸⁹ (February, 1910)

The first opium joint case [in Victoria] since the amendment to the act was dealt with this morning, when William Bayntum¹⁹⁰, a barber, was sent to jail for three months, being convicted on a charge of frequenting an opium joint at Theatre alley. For his defense Bayntum said he was a barber employed at a barber shop on Johnston street. In cross-examination he admitted being in possession of a key of the opium joint. The magistrate said it was a monstrous thing that a man employed in a city barber shop should go back and forth to an opium joint of which he possessed a key.

Ju Ket, the keeper of the house, pleaded guilty and was sent to jail for one year. Two pipes and a number of articles used in the joint and produced in court as evidence, were ordered confiscated.

“Allow him a small quantity”¹⁹¹ (July, 1910)

Looking for suspicious characters reported to be frequenting another house nearby, Detectives Green¹⁹² and Scott¹⁹³ accidentally stumbled across an opium den [owned by Mah Sing] at 543 Carrall street¹⁹⁴, at 3 o'clock on the morning of July 25. On gaining admission to the house they found two men, Charles E. Allen and Victor Lenning, who were charged at the police court this morning with vagrancy. When the officers entered the rooms they found lamps and pipes usually used in opium smoking. The lamps were hot and smoke still issued from the pipes.

Mr. Killam, who appeared for Allen, contended the charge of vagrancy laid against Allen was not proved, and quoted a late decision of the high court, which decided that where a man has sufficient money on his person for present needs no charge of vagrancy can be maintained. He objected to the charge being amended to “frequenting” or being an “inmate” [of the opium den,] as the man was only once in the place. His Worship agreed and Allen was discharged. [...]

Mah Sing, who could not make the interpreter understand him in his own language, managed to enlighten the court in good English that he did not sell opium to Allen or Lenning, but His Worship considered all the circumstances surrounding the cases were corroborative and proof of the charge that the sale of opium had taken place and sentenced the Oriental to six months' imprisonment with hard labor.

Mah Sing told the magistrate, “him pretty sick, him going die soon,” and in consideration of the sudden stoppage of his opium supply, the police were instructed to allow him a small quantity.

¹⁸⁹ From CHINESE THIEF GETS SIX YEARS IN JAIL. (1910, February 8). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 12.

¹⁹⁰ Probably the August J. Bayton listed in the 1910 directory for Victoria as being a barber living and working at 580 Johnson St.

¹⁹¹ From DETECTIVES RUN ACROSS OPIUM DEN. (1910, July 28). *The Vancouver World*, p. 2.

¹⁹² Detective James E. Green lived at 134 6 Ave. W. in 1910.

¹⁹³ In 1910, Arthur J. Scott lived at 928 Pender St. E.

¹⁹⁴ The address of Kim Lung Tai.

“An opium smoker for 25 years”¹⁹⁵ (July, 1910)

John Manson, who said he has been an opium smoker for 25 years, Henry Lawrence, another victim of the habit, both of whom were arrested in an opium joint with Ma Ton Lee at 34 Theatre alley, last night, were sentenced upon conviction of frequenting an opium joint to serve two months in jail. Ma Ton Lee, who admitted being in charge of the place temporarily, but denied proprietorship, received six months with hard labor. Ernest Lambert, a waiter, who was in the joint at the time, and is a friend of Manson, was not smoking, and was not known as a frequenter. He was arrested but discharged this morning, no case being called against him.

The raid was made by Sub-Inspector S. L. Redgrave¹⁹⁶ with Sergt. Albert Walker¹⁹⁷ and Police Constable Lawrence, who produced in court one of the most complete opium joint layouts that the police have obtained, containing pipes, lamps, scales and the usual accessories, and also a quantity of cocaine.

Ma Ton Lee’s defence was that he had taken charge while the proprietor had gone out to get lunch. The two men sent to jail confirmed this evidence. Manson said he had been an opium smoker for 25 years, and was not aware it was against the law. Lawrence, a young man of sickly appearance, said he smoked to protect his lungs, and had been breaking off the habit too fast and had become ill.

Sergt. Walker said he had known the joint for a year, and Sub-Inspector Redgrave, in evidence as to the material found in the joint, said he had seen every joint in Victoria, and that there are dozens of them.

“Mah Sing has come up in the world”¹⁹⁸ (August, 1910)

Mah Sing has come up in the world since last he passed through the hands of the Vancouver police. Seven years ago he was arrested for stealing firewood, now he has received a six months’ sentence for being the proprietor of an opium joint.

At 543 Carrall street, according to the evidence of the detectives in the police court, there is a three-storied building, of which the entire second flat is given over to the accommodation of opium smokers. Sing couldn’t steer clear of the selling accusation, and he was sentenced to six months.

Belle Walker and her husband¹⁹⁹ (August, 1910)

Three months in jail, on a charge of vagrancy, was given to Belle Walker, who claims to be the wife of Joseph McGrath, a theatrical man with headquarters at the

¹⁹⁵ From IN POLICE COURT. (1910, July 30). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 1.

¹⁹⁶ In 1910, Stroud L. Redgrave lived at 953 Fisguard St.

¹⁹⁷ The 1910 directory does not list an Albert Walker, but has an entry for Robert H. Walker, sergeant of police, living at 2409 Douglas St.

¹⁹⁸ From SOLD OPIUM. (1910, August 1). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 14.

¹⁹⁹ From SEATTLE SOCIAL DERELICT JAILED. (1910, August 9). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 16.

Detroit hotel, Seattle, by Acting Magistrate C. J. Prior²⁰⁰ in the police court this morning, after the accused had used every means in her power to avoid a jail sentence and with tears in her eyes had pleaded to be sent back to the United States, which she claimed as her native land.

Belle Walker was picked up two days ago in a hop joint in Theatre alley, Chinatown, by Detectives O'Leary²⁰¹ and Carlow²⁰², who this morning told the court that the woman was of depraved habits and an opium fiend.

"I am an American, and I don't think this is fair," said the accused when the detectives were telling what is known of her history in Victoria. "I want to be sent back to my friends in Seattle, where I have relatives. My husband is there and my sister."

The accused said she had formerly followed the theatrical profession, but the evidence of the detectives, and the woman's appearance, was proof that she had drifted from respectability to depravity. She had been known here for two years off and on, and last fall was warned to get out of town by the police, a warning she took. She averred she came to Victoria last week to get her trunk, but she had not taken the warning of Chief Sergeant Walker to leave town. Instead she had frequented the joints of Chinatown and refused admittance to the police prior to her arrest.

The woman cross-examined the detectives, and must have expected a long term in jail, for she appeared relieved when sentenced to three months. The acting magistrate told her she would be out of the way of the opium habit and would be taken care of in jail and three months confinement in prison would give her a chance to break away from the habits she had formed.

"Too much red tape"²⁰³ (February, 1911)

John Mount Langley, chief of police at Victoria since 1900, said that prior to the passage of the Opium Act there were eighteen or twenty opium factories in Victoria, but all are now closed. Last year there were three convictions under the act, two Chinese being sentenced to one year's imprisonment and one to six months. Half a dozen whites and eighteen or twenty Orientals have been convicted in the last two years as "frequenters." Since the passing of the act there has been an occasional "joint" started, but there are a number of opium smokers who the authorities cannot touch under the act. There does not seem to be any shortage of supply. We have reason to believe one old Chinese supplies the opium but he will not inform. I suggest it should be a penalty to have opium in the possession and that it should be made an offence to smoke opium. This would reduce the evil 75 per cent. The chief said there was too much red tape in starting prosecutions at present. He advised that a police officer should be empowered to take instant action when opium smokers are found in joints. "We have no authority to prosecute unless we can prove opium has been offered

²⁰⁰ Charles J. Prior. In 1910 he rented a room at the Union Club.

²⁰¹ Detective Harry J. O'Leary lived at 823 Broughton in 1910.

²⁰² Ezra C. Carlow, city detective. In 1910 he lived at 944 Johnson St.

²⁰³ From COMMISSIONS OF LEE MONG KOW. (1911, February 10). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 9.

for sale.” He thought drastic measures should be used to prevent the importation of opium.

“The lethal drug is still being used”²⁰⁴ (August, 1911)

The lethal drug is still being used in Vancouver. In a raid on an opium den on Thursday night the police arrested Gee, the Chinese proprietor, and A. C. Lische, Ed. Connors and Ed. Phipps²⁰⁵, who were smoking dope papers. At the police court this a.m. the case was laid over. Gee was admitted to bail in \$1000 and the others in \$100 each.

Jessie Williams, found in a Chinese den and charged with vagrancy, was supplied with counsel by the Chinese promoters of the white slave traffic. The magistrate decided that she would be allowed to go on condition that she return to the home of one of her brothers, who resides near Vancouver. She was “conducted” to the Chinese den by a man known to the police as the “Silent Kid.”

“Imprisoned in an opium den”²⁰⁶ (September, 1911)

Carl Lauder, a messenger boy, and Tom Sing, a Chinaman, were each sentenced to five years’ imprisonment by Judge McInnes for luring a white woman, Mrs. Meyers, into the Chinese quarter [of Vancouver] and keeping her imprisoned in an opium den for four days. The police learned by chance that a white woman was being kept in the house and raided the place. During her imprisonment Mrs. Meyers was given nothing to eat except an occasional glass of milk.

“A rendezvous for opium smokers”²⁰⁷ (September, 1911)

Located directly back of the [Vancouver] City Hall is [a] shack which is the home of two Chinamen. The floor of the hut is not over six feet by ten feet, with absolutely no ventilation save through the door. It is cluttered up with two bunks, a stove, a table and many worn out utensils gleaned from the garbage piles of the city. Piled around the outside of the shanty is more unsightly rubbish. Further away, but nearer the City Hall, is the dumping ground for all the swill and refuse of the place.

How many persons actually live in this shack is not known, as the inmates come and go so often that at no time are there more than two persons on the ground. It is to be supposed, judging from the opium pipe and smoking outfit noticed on one of the bunks that the place is a rendezvous for opium smokers of the locality.

²⁰⁴ From COURT OF THE CADI. (1911, August 12). *The Vancouver World*, p. 7.

²⁰⁵ This may be Edith Phipps, who lived at 600 Robson with her husband and a lodger, but whose entire family has no occupation listed in the 1911 census. It would be unusual, admittedly, for the newspapers to fail to specify that ‘Ed.’ was a woman.

²⁰⁶ From FIVE YEARS’ IMPRISONMENT. (1911, September 1). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 3.

²⁰⁷ From FILTHY CONDITIONS OF LODGING HOUSES. (1911, September 30). *The Province*, p. 34.

“The raids were made simultaneously”²⁰⁸ (October, 1911)

Twenty-six Chinese, collected in opium dens in [Victoria’s] Chinatown last night by officers of the detective department, were presented in the police court this morning to answer various charges under the drug act which became law in May last. Of the twenty-six, twelve were dealt with and the remainder set over until this afternoon.

Opium worth \$1,000, opium pipes valued at \$500, much paraphernalia used by the opium smokers and keepers of joints, was secured in the raid and distributed about the court room this morning. It will all be confiscated and destroyed, in accordance with the provisions of the act.

The raid was made in Theatre alley and Fan Tan alley, five joints each giving up their quota of opium smelling humanity into the arms of the law. The patrol wagon made three trips to and from the city lock-up to convey the prisoners and the material gathered.

Consternation spread through Chinatown when the raid was made last night, for it signifies the doom of the opium joint there. The police have for three months past given continued warnings to the Chinese that the law was in operation and that after due time police activity could be expected. The police adopted this measure for a double purpose, the second being that the officers might become familiar with the identity of the different Orientals engaged in the business.

The raids were made simultaneously so that the alarm could not spread from one joint to another and give those warned the time necessary to close down before the police arrived. Suddenly descending upon the dens in the two alleys, the capture was complete, and the peaceful, beautiful dreams of the opium smokers were rudely turned in a babbling and chattering that made those in the haze of the poppy scent believe something had happened to the opium.

Rudely awakened from the vision of a Celestial heaven containing all the luxuries and other things the Chinese heart desires and bundled just as rudely into the patrol wagon with the lingering dream still hovering about them, was the fate of the twenty-six, nine of whom are now serving sentences varying from two to six months.

Ah Ling was the first to answer this morning, and he was sentenced to one year for being the keeper of an opium joint. His sentence, however, was altered to six months because the magistrate found that there are different penalties prescribed in the code for offenders taking police court and higher court trials. Ah Ling, when called back and told he was “in” for six months only, beamed as if he had been found not guilty and given \$1,000.

For the sum of \$40 last week a complete opium joint well fitted, provided with bunks, lamps, scales, pipes and other accessories, and with a good clientele could have been purchased. Chin Dow, when accused of being the keeper of an opium joint pleaded he was innocent because he had last week sold out for \$40. His business there

²⁰⁸ From POLICE RAID DENS AND SEIZE OPIUM. (1911, October 6). *Victoria Daily Times*, p. 20.

when the police arrived last night was in looking after the business until the purchaser arrived to take over possession. Chin Dow departed through the door with six months residence at Hillside avenue in front of him.

In Wong Duck's place eight men were found, five of whom were smoking. The police seized \$90 worth of opium and a number of pipes. He got six months. The eight occupants found there were next presented and various excuses were given. One had gone there to buy potatoes, another to find a friend, and another to pay a bill. Six of the eight were fined \$20 each with the option of going to jail for one month. Two whose excuses were accepted were discharged. Duck Yuen, another keeper, who has engaged a lawyer, was remanded until to-morrow and allowed bail in \$1,000.

“Behind a small counter”²⁰⁹ (October, 1911)

Duck Yuen, the Chinaman who was on Friday charged with being the keeper of an opium den, and remanded until Saturday, was yesterday found guilty of the charge and sentenced by Magistrate Jay²¹⁰ in the police court to six months at hard labor. Detectives Heather²¹¹ and Handley²¹² stated that when they entered the den occupied by the accused in Fan Tan alley, he was standing behind a small counter and in the act of cleaning out an opium tin. Six other Chinamen were there at the time, and three of them were smoking the drug. The opium, pipes and other paraphernalia used in the den was shown in court as evidence against the accused.

“Police had allowed him to run the place”²¹³ (November, 1911)

Duck Yuen, a Chinese merchant of Chinatown, and until recently the keeper of the show place in opium joints in Victoria, where the police used to take visitors to see the sights, was yesterday afternoon liberated by Judge Lampman²¹⁴ from a six-month term in jail, and instead was ordered to pay a fine of \$25.

The sentence had been imposed by the police magistrate, who found the accused guilty of keeping an opium joint. From this he appealed, and his honor yesterday held that although accused was undoubtedly guilty, yet the manner in which the police had walked in and out of the joint for months, taking in visitors and allowing the Chinese to continue smoking in their presence was sufficient to lead the foreigner to believe he was not infringing the law, and then to suddenly jump on him

²⁰⁹ From Opium Den Keeper Sentenced. (1911, October 8). *The Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 7.

²¹⁰ George Jay was also the judge of the Small Debts Court. In 1911 he lived at 1436 Elford.

²¹¹ Victor Garfield Heather (1881 – 1949) lived at 1231 Pandora Ave. in 1911. He resigned from the police force in 1921. “Detective Heather joined the Police Department in 1906 as a patrolman, and five years later was transferred to the plain clothes department. The resignation will date from February 11, when Mr. Heather will leave for Vancouver to enter into business with two brothers.” Detective Heather Resigns. (1921, January 27). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 9.

²¹² In 1911, Detective William H. Handley lived at 859 Queens Ave.

²¹³ From CHINESE ESCAPES SIX MONTHS JAIL. (1911, November 29). *Victoria Daily Times*, p. 13.

²¹⁴ Judge Peter Secord Lampman (1867 – 1940). In 1911, he lived at 1700 York Place.

and send him to jail for six months without a warning was not the intention of the law.

If the accused had letter paper in his joint, said his honor, he would have probably printed at the head of it, "Under the Noble Patronage of their Highnesses the Police," or something like that, for they were in and out of the place continually even after they had told him it was illegal to keep the joint open.

The joint was established at 25, Fan Tan alley, and was the show place and the largest joint in Chinatown. People had been taken through, and Detective Heather told the accused he was operating against the law on the occasion of one visit. The detectives said they believed that an arrest could not be made without a warrant, and because of that belief had never arrested Duck Yuen.

Judge Lampman remarked that in the past Chinese had been allowed to gamble in Chinatown, and that although white men had been arrested and fined, the police had not prevented the Chinese from carrying on gambling houses.

Until the amendment of the opium act last year the Chinese had been allowed to smoke and sell opium, while white men had been punished. The Chinese, therefore, said his honor, had been left under the belief that they would not be molested. All along they had been on good terms with the police.

"I am with you in agreeing that the opium trade should be stopped," said Judge Lampman to C. L. Harrison²¹⁵, appearing to resist the appeal, "but under the circumstances I do not think the accused ought to go to jail." Mr. Harrison replied that the joint was the biggest in Victoria, and that opium smoking had been openly carried on. The act, he said, provided for six months' imprisonment or a fine of \$100. As the joint was the largest in the city he thought a fine of \$100 was insufficient punishment and that the man should therefore go to prison.

"The Oriental takes his law from the policeman," replied his honor, "and the police had allowed him to run the place."

Mr. Brandon, appearing with Mr. Tait²¹⁶ for the appellant, said he wished to complain that after accused's arrest his abode had been entered and robbed. His boxes had been opened and things and money and his bank book stolen. The city prosecutor, however, told his honor that the money found on accused when arrested was still in the possession of the police awaiting the decision of the court, and was to be turned over to him at the end of his sentence, had he been called upon to serve it. The pipes and other materials found when the arrest was made were considered confiscated and destroyed. The accused paid his fine of \$25 while in the court.

"An opium fiend and a perjurer"²¹⁷ (October, 1911)

Perjury is a very serious crime, and when proven is generally visited with a very heavy penalty, but leniency was extended to Frank Jones yesterday afternoon,

²¹⁵ In 1911, Claude L. Harrison lived at 1321 Fort St.

²¹⁶ James S. Brandon and David S. Tait, partners in the firm of Tait & Brandon. In 1911, Mr. Brandon lived at 2523 Government St. and Mr. Tait lived on Douglas Road.

²¹⁷ From AN OPIUM FIEND AND A PERJURER. (1911, October 12). *The Vancouver World*, p. 24.

who was found guilty of the crime, and he was only sentenced to three months' imprisonment. Leniency was extended to him because he was an opium fiend, a young white man who since sixteen years of age has been smoking the drug.

He was charged with perjury by swearing in the police court with much persistency that he did not tell Detective Crew²¹⁸, of the city police force, that he smoked opium, that he did not go to a Pender street opium joint specially to smoke, and that he never used the word opium in his answers to the detective. But the very next morning when he appeared in court he had a little pellet of opium in his pocket.

The burden of the defense was that the prisoner was what was generally known as an opium fiend, and when under its influence was scarcely responsible for what he said, whether on oath or otherwise.

Judge McInnes²¹⁹ thought it would be in the prisoner's own interests if he was given a term in jail.

“Sam will labor gratis”²²⁰ (October, 1911)

The local police have not yet relinquished their endeavors to eliminate as far as possible, the forbidden habit of opium smoking in Chinatown, and raids in that district have been numerous of late. The latest of these escapades into the drug dens was made by Mounted Sergeant Beckton, Inspector Clayards²²¹ and P. C. Ireland²²², and as the result of their delvings, there was a police court case yesterday.

The chief offender was a Celestial named Sam. He faced the charge of being the keeper of an opium den at 522 Fisguard street. [...] Sam will labor gratis, within the precincts of a prison wall for the next six months. Lung, another Chinaman charged with being a frequenter of the den, was found guilty and fined \$20.

The evidence of the three officers was corroborative. They stated that when they entered the den, Sam and another Chinaman were lying on a bunk, and a tray containing the usual paraphernalia was by their side. When they saw the officers they both jumped up quickly, and Sam blew out the light in the small lamp, used for heating the pile of opium. The only other light in the room was a small candle. While the accused had not been caught in the act of using the drug, yet the room was filled with the fumes of opium. The circumstantial evidence had much to do with aiding his conviction.

²¹⁸ Samuel O. Crew lived at 132 Lorne W. in 1911.

²¹⁹ The Hon. W. W. B. McInnes, county court judge, lived at 1919 Robson St. in 1911.

²²⁰ From MADE OPIUM RAID. (1911, October 19). *Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 7.

²²¹ William H. Clayards, who in 1911 lived at 739 Pembroke.

²²² In 1911, John Ireland lived at 1287 Gladstone Ave.

“Monosyllable Sam”²²³ (November, 1911)

Monosyllable Sam, a Chinaman with pronounced predilections in favor of opium (for personal consumption or free distribution) found himself yesterday afternoon, after going through the travail of two convictions and two appeals, in the same position as he was after the first of the interesting series of legal events, face to face with three months' imprisonment.

Several weeks ago Sam was arrested by the police, tried and convicted of operating an opium den in the city, and sentenced to a term of three months' imprisonment for the same. He decided to appeal the case. While the appeal was pending he was again arrested, tried and convicted on a charge of having opium in his possession, and sentenced to a term of three months' imprisonment, to run concurrently with the previous sentence.

Both the appeals came up before Judge Lampman in the county court on the 7th November. After hearing all the evidence in the former case the judge decided to quash the conviction on the latter case, that of having opium in his possession (which apparently proved to be undeniable). After reserving judgment until yesterday, he upheld and affirmed the verdict, and sentence of the lower court, with the result, as stated above, that Sam will have to undergo three months' imprisonment in any event.

It was contended by the defence that it was not proper to rearrest a man on another charge, and bring the evidence of the original offence to prove the second case, but Judge Lampman held that as the cases referred to, the running of an opium den, and the having of a quantity of the poppy leaf in possession, were under two distinct enactments the officers of the law were acting within their rights. Another peculiar feature of the Sam appeals is that the costs of both were fixed at the same amount - \$25 – and as each side won once, honors were even in the matter of expenses. After the judgment was returned Sam was conveyed to the lock-up in the police patrol, which was requisitioned from headquarters for his special benefit, much to the disgust of his many friends, who lined the lobbies of the courthouse during the hearing of the case.

“Quite homesick”²²⁴ (October, 1911)

In police court yesterday morning, on behalf of Gin, a Chinaman charged with being the keeper of an opium den situated at 546 Fisguard street²²⁵, Mr. D. F. Brandon requested the magistrate to remand the case until Tuesday next, and allow the accused to go on his own recognizance. He said that he would plead guilty with that understanding. He told the court that his client was sick, quite homesick, and

²²³ From CHINAMAN GETS A THREE MONTHS' TERM. (1911, November 30). *Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 8.

²²⁴ From SIX MONTHS FOR OPIUM DEALER. (1911, October 27). *Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 5.

²²⁵ Right between Sing Lo groceries and the Asiatic club at 545, and Man On Co. Ltd., contractors and merchants, at 547.

had desired to return to his native land, where he would remain. The prosecution objected to any remand, and the magistrate agreed that there was no necessity for further delay. Mr. Brandon changed his plea to that of not guilty, and the case proceeded.

After hearing the evidence from Detectives Murray and Hutchinson²²⁶, the court convicted the accused, and in reply to Mr. Brandon's further plea for leniency remarked that he could not act differently than he had in the previous cases of similar nature, and then pronounced a sentence of six months.

“Did protest too much”²²⁷ (December, 1911)

It was with conscious pride that Lee On declared his complete conversion from his former opium using habits. He deprecated the efforts of his captors to search his person and when informed that along with his fellow countrymen, Gick Sun and Fi Jim, he would be incarcerated on a charge of being a frequenter of an opium den he emphatically and with many protesting gestures affirmed his abhorrence of the drug, the stuff of which Celestial dreams are made. But Lee On's protestations came too soon. As his pockets were being emptied, their contents, at first, appeared to bear out his claims. First a bottle of Chinese medicine, generally supposed to be a preventative of the return of the habit, was brought to light. To it Lee On pointed as evidence of the truth of his turn from the broad path leading to opium destruction. But shamefacedly he saw his claim shattered when almost immediately there followed from his capacious pockets a package of cocaine powders, a quantity of prepared opium for smoking and a package of “Yen Shee,” made from tailings of opium pipes and prepared for eating. But while Lee On had the dream ingredients he was lacking in coin of the realm, his partners, Gick Sun and Fi Jim, possessing all the visible currency to the amount of \$150. All three were arrested early in the morning in a cabin off Theatre Alley by Detectives Murray and Hutchinson.

1912 – 1914

“The most loathsome spectacle of all”²²⁸ (February, 1912)

Conditions prevailing in the cities of China are familiar topics of the returned missionary, who will dwell at length upon the awful condition of the slums, the armies of the unwashed and the prevalence of vice in the shape of opium smoking and gambling, in the empire across the seas. Would you believe that the same condition of affairs is in existence in the city of Vancouver, in our Chinatown, which constitutes a considerable quarter on Pender street between Canton and Shanghai alleys?

²²⁶ In 1911, Frank R. Murray lived at 1421 Vancouver. John W. Hutchinson lived at 1222 Douglas.

²²⁷ From *Did Protest Too Much*. (1911, December 21). *Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 7.

²²⁸ From VANCOUVER'S CHINATOWN HAS BECOME A PLAGUE SPOT. (1912, February 10). *The Vancouver World*, p. 42.

Whether you believe it or not, the vice is there, and if you will go there some day you may see with your own eyes what I saw with mine on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this present week.

My guide on practically all of the expeditions into the dives was an opium smoker himself and therefore well known to the Chinese population. His name I withhold according to the terms of our agreement – suffice it to say that he was once a well known pugilist, having at one time been a training partner of Stanley Ketchel²²⁹, who was himself a smoker.

Shortly after 4 o'clock on Monday afternoon we turned off Main street and passed up to the door of one of the first houses. My guide, without the formality of knocking, turned the handle of the door and plunged into the dark interior. As I meekly followed a sickening whiff of garbage was wafted upon an eddy of the stagnant air and without delay we lit cigarettes as a protection against the possibility of contracting contagious disease that might be floating in the polluted atmosphere. Entering one of the narrow corridors and following its twistings and turnings by the light of a small electric hall light, we were able to see the door of an interior apartment. My guide gave a peculiar knock at this portal and we were admitted after a short explanatory conversation in the Chink lingo.

An apartment possibly fourteen feet by twelve, with a ceiling scarcely eight feet in height, lighted dimly by one electric 16-candle-power light, there lay on couches arranged Pullman fashion, thirteen Chinamen engaged in the several occupations of smoking opium tobacco, or gorging themselves with bowls of meat and rice. It was a most repellent sight.

The premises were not so filthy as the men themselves, however, but the cook stove, which was installed in an alcove close by, presented a decidedly unappetizing appearance, littered as it was, with dishes which had evidently not known acquaintance with a wash rag for some time. The squalor of the surroundings was accentuated by the evident traces of the untimely end of some fowl, but a short time previously. Passing through this apartment we entered another hallway passage where apportioned off in small rooms under the eaves, were individual apartments, where the hardened smokers could hit up the pipe in solitude. My guide shoved back one of the little sliding doors in order to show me one of the individual dens, and I beheld stretched out in a space barely large enough to accommodate his length a man completely under the influence of the drug. He twisted this way and that in his visions, while the caricature of a smile graced his lips, and he mumbled soft gutturals to himself as the hallucinations became more and more vivid.

Beside the sleeper lay a complete opium outfit, while in his twitching fingers he still held his pipe, an expensively decorated appendage of bamboo with silver inlay.

We drew the curtain on the old fiend and proceeded with our investigation of the house in which no one hindered or asked any questions, which fact I attributed to the influence of the drugs which the occupants had very evidently been partaking of more or less. [...]

²²⁹ Stanislaw Kiecal (1886 – 1910), a middleweight boxing champion who was murdered at age 24.

The most loathsome spectacle of all remained for us to see on Wednesday afternoon between the hours of five and six o'clock when in company with a city official we entered a sinister doorway on Pender street East and descended into the subterranean apartment which constitutes the most vile opium joint in operation in the city. The sickly sweet aroma of the drug filled our nostrils as we descended the worn staircase; a knock at the door and the exchange of a few words between my companion and the proprietor and we entered the big cellar-like apartment. Lying on couches arranged all along the walls and in rows in the centre of the place lay at the very least fifty Chinamen, the majority of them smoking opium. Farther along in a remote corner were two white women reposing on couches, apparently stupefied by the drug as indicated by pipes and opium paraphernalia which lay beside them on the couches.

Filthy blankets enveloped many of the recumbent forms which were for the most part fully clothed, having discarded nothing but their boots and headgear. In one corner lay a white haired old Chinaman on a pallet of straw and matting. He was smoking the dross of opium, that being the cheapest and strongest form in which the drug may be procured. This man, we were informed, was a woodcutter who worked for a portion of the year at his trade, spending the remaining portion in one long debauch, interspersing his application to the pipe with a bowl of rice at occasional periods, and leaving the precincts of the dive only when his supply of hard earned cash was exhausted.

Observing a number of valuables such as watches and jewelry lying around, we inquired of the attendant if he was not afraid of these being stolen, to which query he appeared surprised, replying in broken English in a rather indignant manner, "These men no steal."

Though hard to correctly estimate it would not be an exaggeration to say that this place would accommodate fully forty more people than were in it at the time of our visit. The small hours of the morning is the most favorable time to view the place.

Other accessories of the joint worthy of passing mention were the rooms where the pipes and opium were stocked, and the kitchen. The former was an elaborately fitted apartment set apart from the rest of the place by tongued and grooved board partitions. The kitchen was not masked in any way, the range and a set of shelves serving both as kitchen and pantry.

"They are pals"²³⁰ (February, 1912)

There is nothing beautiful about the outward aspect of either Edward Spencer or Patrick Wilson. Both are criminals, and, according to the police, hardened criminals, but they are "pals," and for a pal, either was willing to take a chance of a long term. They did their best to do a good turn, each for the other, and both were caught.

²³⁰ From PASSES OPIUM PILL TO "PAL" IN DOCK. (1912, February 24). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 3.

Spencer was let out on suspended sentence on Thursday morning, and a few hours later was caught by a jailer in an attempt to pass a hack saw through the bars of the cell to Wilson. After a violent struggle with Jailer Moffett, who came off much the better for it, Spencer was put back into the police station, but in a separate cell.

Yesterday morning both appeared in police court, Spencer coming up on a charge of being in possession of instruments for jail breaking. He stood up in the dock and lied manfully, saying Wilson had the saw long before he himself had been released from the station house. His story fell on somewhat incredulous ears, and Magistrate South committed the man for trial.

As Spencer stood up to hear the court's decision, he looked down suddenly. Wilson was beside him, gently tapping his leg. The sudden movement was noticed by Sergeant Gray, who sprang forward, just in time to intercept a large opium pill destined for Spencer's comfort where he is going until the time for trial. It was all done in a moment, and Spencer was led away, alone and opium-less.

The pill which Wilson tried to transfer was estimated to be about eighteen grains. Even the most confirmed "smoker" cannot eat more than two grains at a time. There were many hours of forgetfulness of the grim workings of the law in the round ball of "dope," many hours when Spencer might have dreamed of liberty and beautiful lands where all is made pleasant for the traveller.

The ancient and much abused adage concerning honor among thieves was proven again. Spencer is a small man and much the worse for wear. His face bears the sickish pallor of the opium eater, and heavy rings of blue black encircle the shifting eyes. Wilson is not a man to be picked out of a crowd as having anything of the hero about him, but he at least tried his best for a pal who had tried to give him a hand in trouble. [...]

Spencer tried to help Wilson, so Wilson tried to help Spencer. There was no possibility of freeing Spencer from the police entirely, but Wilson tried to free him for a few hours at least. To an opium fiend the dread of the law is not half so formidable as the dread of being deprived of the means of satisfying the internal craving for the "dope." It is meat and drink; it means more than freedom, a home or a wife. Nothing can take its place, for the desire for anything else is gone.

Wilson is awaiting trial on a charge of housebreaking. Spencer, who had gone free, now awaits trial on an equally serious charge, attempted jail breaking. Perhaps they will forget each other in the drudgery of prison labor, but when they are free again, Spencer and Wilson will still be "pals."

From opium tin to opium pills²³¹ (February, 1912)

Believing that the source of the opium supply to the local Chinatown had been discovered in the arrest of Jock Quin Sun, a Chinese merchant who was caught at the wharf last week with twenty-three half-tael tins of opium in his possession,

²³¹ From OPIUM SUPPLY OF CHINATOWN FOUND. (1912, February 19). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 19.

Magistrate Jay this morning found the Chinese guilty and fined him \$300. The opium has been confiscated and will be burned.

Jock Quin Sun offered for a defence his interest in the business of Sing Lee & Co., Chinese druggists, and said he was bringing the opium for use in the druggist business to make opium pills for sale in cases of sickness among Chinese. He said that the pills were sold in bottles of 40 for 25 cents, that one tin of opium (half a pound) would make 60 bottles, and that the quantity of opium found in his possession would make 1,280 bottles of opium pills at 25 cents per bottle, a total value of \$320.

He was caught leaving the Vancouver boat with the opium and in explanation of how it came to be in his suit cases he said a Chinese at Vancouver owed him \$316.85 and that as witness was about to go to China for a trip he went to Vancouver and told the Chinese debtor that he wanted the account paid. He had been unable to get the money as the Chinese professed to be very poor, but when offered the 23 tins of opium he decided to take it and square on the account although the 23 tins were only worth \$299.

A difference of opinion existed among Chinese as to the value of the opium in court. The police had it valued last week and the Celestial estimate is that it is worth \$400 to \$480. The supply has been very short in Victoria for several months, and Jock Quin Sun mentioned this fact when telling the court of his debtor in Vancouver. He said as opium was scarce he thought he might settle the matter, as he could get no money from the man. The man in Vancouver could not sell it, as Chinese there are quitting smoking, and it would be good in the Chinese drug business.

The magistrate remarked that while it was impossible to get blood from a stone, it was evident that opium could be got from a Chinese. When the amount of the fine was named a claim was put in by another Chinese for half the sum. He was called as a witness for the prosecution and said he had got on to the fact that opium running was taking place. He has done some gumshoe work and advised the police with the result that the arrest followed.

A Chinese known as Dr. Mar Art²³², who has a Chinese drug store at 1614 Government street, said he had known the accused 36 years, during which time both had been in business in Victoria selling drugs. He said opium was now difficult to get, but that he had some crude opium which he kept for pill-making and sold medicinally.

²³² Dr. Mar Art had been an officer of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association in 1900 and 1902. He was "a druggist and one of the leading merchants in the city. He has been here twenty-four years and is manager of the Dan Yock Tong. [...] Mar smiled and confessed that he gambled himself sometimes; that Celestials of means, like whites of means, played for the fun of it, but with chips instead of money. [...] His business was larger formerly than it is now." LEONARD TAIT GIVES EVIDENCE. (1910, April 1). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 3.

“In the hope of getting half the fine”²³³ (February, 1912)

A tall Chinese who gave information to the police regarding the carriage of opium from Vancouver to Victoria by the Chinese druggist Jock Quin Sun, was early at the police court this morning in the hope of getting half the fine of \$300 ordered by the magistrate yesterday.

The act provided that it is in the discretion of the magistrate to pay half the fine to the informant, and knowing this the Chinese was up today to collect, but Magistrate Jay reduced the amount to be paid to the informant and awarded him \$100. He will receive this sum if no appeal is taken. If the appeal is successfully taken he will get nothing, and if the higher court [...] reduces the amount of [the fine], the Chinese detective may get but half of the amount.

An aristocratic Chinese named Loy, with finger nails over an inch in length, replied, when charged with smoking opium, that he had been smoking opium for the last 35 years and that it was necessary to him. He was fined \$20, and Joe, who was caught smoking last night, was fined \$20.

The frequent raids on the Chinese opium dens are responsible for a shortage in opium pipes in Chinatown. Whenever a raid is made and convictions follow the pipes are burnt. For some time the quality of the pipes confiscated and destroyed has been noticeable as getting poorer and only old broken ones now appear to be left.

“His favorite weed”²³⁴ (June, 1912)

Magistrate Shaw sentenced a Chinaman to three months with hard labor this morning for stealing lead pipe belonging to the city. The pipe was left in the vicinity [of] his house and he used it for the benefit of his own edifice. The Chinaman has all the appearances of an opium fiend and when he was being removed to the cells he stooped to pick up a plug of opium which a sympathizing countryman had dropped in his way. The constables, however, stopped him and he went upstairs without the consolation of his favorite weed.

“Sailing through the window”²³⁵ (December, 1912)

Following two colored women who were said to have robbed Thomas Coyle in an alley east of Main street, Patrol Sergeant Monroe and Constables Johnson and Urquhart last night discovered their quarry in a room on Main street, found the room filled with opium fumes and empty bottles, discovered two men in the room and one under the bed.

²³³ From STOPPED TRADING IN LIQUOR TO INDIANS. (1912, February 20). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 7.

²³⁴ From CHINESE PRISONER POUNCES ON OPIUM. (1912, JUNE 18). *Vancouver World*, p. 20.

²³⁵ From ARREST WOMEN WHO ARE CHARGED WITH THEFT. (1912, December 6). *The Vancouver World*, p. 14.

As the police went into the room they saw an opium pipe go sailing through the window and later they found it in an alley, broken into little bits.

The occupants of the room were taken to the station. Their names and the charges laid against them are: Mrs. Susie Denney, theft from the person; Mrs. Davidson, vagrancy; Francis R. Kennedy and B. H. Chandler, inmates of an opium den, and Roy Denney, opium in possession.

Coyle said that the two women set upon him as he walked up the alley between Prior and Union streets east of Main, and took \$12 in bills from his pockets, replacing them with thick slips of paper.

This morning the women were arraigned in the police court on various statutory charges preferred against them and their cases remanded until tomorrow.

“Armor-plated doors”²³⁶ (April, 1913)

Electric alarm systems, “ice chest” doors four inches thick, with iron bar reinforcements, together with a complete lack of knowledge concerning the rudiments of the Chinese language, were some of the obstacles which Detectives Quirk²³⁷ and Scallion²³⁸ succeeded in overcoming last evening, when they raided the first armor-plated opium joint yet encountered by the local police. Muscle and brawn were the prime factors in overcoming the first mentioned obstructions, but a deep-rooted cunning, acquired after months of experience with the Celestials, accounted for the surmounting of the last. In all, over \$200 worth of opium and its accompanying implements of joy, together with nine pleasure seekers, were hauled to the police station.

Deciding that the occupants of several rooms on the first floor of this building would bear close watching, the detectives started out on their task about 11 o'clock. Without a warrant, axes or dynamite they were obliged to trust in chance for an opening and chance served them well in the person of Loo Kee, the proprietor.

He was seized in the hall after leaving his room and a few moments' conversation convinced him that the best plan would be to repeat in Chinese exactly what the officers requested him, gently but firmly, to do. The first door opened to him

²³⁶ From OFFICERS ENCOUNTER ARMOR-PLATED DOORS. (1913, April 4). *Vancouver Sun*, p. 4.

²³⁷ In 1912, Richard S. Quirk lived at 133 Lorne W., Vancouver.

²³⁸ Gerald Scallion resigned in 1918 to take up farming. “Joining the force as a patrolman in 1912, Detective Scallion was appointed to the plain clothes squad a year later. [...] His athletic ability has made him a valued addition to the force, he having helped to make the Vancouver department famous on the coast for the number of all-round athletes it has had among its members. While a member of the Halifax police force, which position he occupied for four years previous to coming to the coast, Detective Scallion carried off the all-round athletic championship of the Maritime Provinces. The officer has decided to take up farming near Regina.” DETECTIVE HAS RESIGNED. (1918, March 1). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 15. The 1921 census lists a 38-year-old Gerald E. Scallion, farmer, originally from Nova Scotia, living near Regina. He lived with his 32-year-old wife, Annie and their three children, Gerald D., 8, Carolina, 7, and Dorothy, 6. Annie was originally from the United States gaining Canadian citizenship in 1911. All the children were born in B.C.

all standing, and so did the second “armor plate,” but at the third, suspicion was created among the inmates and the heavy obstacle closed with a metallic clang.

It was not quick enough, however, as the number twelve boot of Constable Quirk was in the gap. A few lusty shoves and pushes, a few excited but nevertheless interesting remarks, both in Chinese and English, a combined jar and the inner citadel was gained. The collecting of the evidence occupied but a few moments’ time and Constable McLeod and Driver Davis formed the guard of honor which conveyed the peeved guests to the police hotel on Rue de Railway.

This is the first place as yet equipped with all modern conveniences to prevent arrest, as heretofore the Celestials have left the armor plating to the gambling joints.

“The perplexing problem”²³⁹ (April, 1913)

What to do with a Chinaman in the last stages of consumption and addicted to the opium habit was the perplexing problem which confronted Magistrate Jay in police court this morning. A medial practitioner said that the man would not live through a month’s sentence in jail and that he ought to be sent back to China or out to the country. The man was afflicted with two severe coughing spells in court, and it was finally decided to let him go. He said he used the opium to alleviate his pain.

The unfortunate was arrested in a room at the end of a long narrow corridor and up a secret stairway at the rear of 526 Cormorant street²⁴⁰. Another Chinaman and two white men were fined \$25 each for frequenting. R. L. Baugh-Allen²⁴¹, solicitor for the Chinaman, showed that he rented the premises and argued that he could not be charged with frequenting.

There was a strained moment in court when one of the white men referred to a third white man who had [been] caught.

“Where is the other man?” asked the magistrate.

“He is out on bail,” explained Detective Sergeant O’Leary.

“Then why was he not called?”

“He has left town, I think,” said O’Leary.

City Prosecutor Harrison and Inspector Perdue²⁴² held a hurried consultation and then the prosecutor created a mild sensation by stating that the man was a member of the department.

“Not a regular member,” continued Mr. Harrison. “Just a man employed for this purpose.”

The matter was dropped.

²³⁹ From DISCHARGED DYING VICTIM OF OPIUM. (1913, April 21). *Victoria Daily Times*, p. 10.

²⁴⁰ The address of Wing Lung & Co.

²⁴¹ Richard L. Baugh-Allen, a solicitor for Tait, Brandon & Hall. In 1913 he lived on Esquimalt Rd.

²⁴² In 1912, George M. Perdue lived at 625 Superior.

“A flying jump”²⁴³ (May, 1913)

In an attempt to evade the clutches of Detectives Scallion and McLaughlin then engaged in raiding an alleged opium joint at 253 Keefer street²⁴⁴, Chin Sing, a diminutive but athletic Celestial, at 9:45 o'clock last evening crawled through a slightly enlarged stovepipe hole in the outer wall of a room, crept over two roofs, and then made a flying jump to a ledge of a building some twenty feet below, finally being hauled back to the arms of the law. The sudden separation from the ledge was accomplished by a violent heave, landing Chin in a surprised heap in the hands of the officers.

He was placed under arrest as the inmate of an opium house and taken to the “bastille,” where bail of \$100 being furnished, he was allowed his liberty until court time this morning.

“The way comedians do”²⁴⁵ (May, 1913)

An impromptu act was put on at the Chinese Theatre on Pender street last night when Detectives McLaughlin and Scallion chased an alleged opium smoker through the theatre and on to the stage where they placed him under arrest. Sing, as his name is, was waiting in his own room a few doors from the theatre until it was time for him to come on the stage. While waiting he was having a relaxation in the way of a smoke. The police say it was opium he was smoking.

Anyway, Detectives McLaughlin and Scallion thought they smelled opium and started in to Sing's room. Sing left by the window and took the old familiar route to the theatre. He did not have a chance. Fugitive, pursuers, small boys, barking dogs and tame rats tore through Chinatown the way comedians do in freak moving pictures. After performing the sensational arrest act the detectives left the theatre and their unwilling assistant in the performance left with them.

“To break off the opium habit”²⁴⁶ (June, 1913)

Two opium cases were heard in police court this morning and fines imposed.

Yip Chung was charged with having opium in possession, pleaded not guilty and was defended by W. C. Moresby²⁴⁷.

Detective Murray said that noon on Wednesday he searched a shack in the rear of 544 Fisguard street²⁴⁸. In a pocket of a coat belonging to Yip Chung he found a small tin box containing opium pills, which defendant said he was eating.

²⁴³ From DETECTIVES SUCCESSFUL IN CAPTURE. (1913, May 15). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 1.

²⁴⁴ The address of Sang Lee & Co., grocers.

²⁴⁵ From PUT ON “NEW STUNT” IN CHINESE THEATRE. (1913, May 28). *The Province*, p. 14.

²⁴⁶ From FOUND WITH OPIUM. (1913, June 28). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 20.

²⁴⁷ William C. Moresby of the firm of Moresby & O'Reilly. In 1913, his offices were in the Belmont building and he lived at 624 Trutch.

²⁴⁸ The address of Yick Lung & Co, merchants.

C. W. Birch, city analyst, deposed that he had analyzed the pills and found that they were compounded of pure opium and yeng-shee.

Yip's story was that he was trying to break off the opium habit by taking these pills, this being a well known method in China.

City Prosecutor Harrison asked how long he had been taking this "medicine."

Yip replied that he had been taking the pills ever since he came to Victoria three months ago.

Mr. Moresby argued that there was evidence, uncontradicted by the crown, that the drug was being used as a medicine in this case.

Magistrate Jay held that the using of opium as a medicine was only allowable under a physician's prescription, and he imposed a fine of \$15 and \$2.50 costs.

See Foong, arrested at the same time and place by Detective Turner, was charged with being in possession of opium prepared for smoking. Unlike the other man, he had not been able to procure bail or engage counsel.

Detective Turner produced the shell of opium which he had seen defendant take from his pocket and hide under a blanket, and also a paper bag containing yeng-shee, the scrapings from the bowls of pipes.

City Analyst Birch²⁴⁹ said the opium in this case was the pure drug.

A fine of \$25 and \$2.50 costs, or a sentence of two months in jail, was imposed.

Opium or coffee?²⁵⁰ (July, 1913)

"I find that imposing a fine in these cases does not have the effect that either this court or the Chinese consul desires," said Magistrate South this morning in sentencing three inmates of an opium den to jail for thirty days. His worship intimated that in future a jail sentence would be meted out in all similar convictions.

In the case of Chung Yen, Mr. Elmer Jones²⁵¹ put up a most strenuous fight for his client. He questioned Detective McLaughlin at great length in regard to his capture and his knowledge of opium, to which the detective answered without hesitation. When Detective Ricci was called the lawyer tried a practical test of that officer's experience of opium. The drug was found on a piece of paper, prepared for smoking. Picking it up Mr. Jones pretended he was examining it, and hastily exchanged the real "hop" paper for one of similar size and color, on which was smeared a preparation of ground coffee.

"Now, are you sure that this is opium?" demanded the lawyer, shaking the coffee paste at the detective.

"Why, yes – let me smell it, though," hesitated Ricci, and then having made the "nasal test," looked in disgust at Mr. Jones, and replied, "Naw, that's coffee."

²⁴⁹ Charles W. Birch. In 1913 he lived at 1572 Vining St.

²⁵⁰ From HIS NOSE TOLD HIM "OPIUM" WAS COFFEE. (1913, July 7). *The Province*, p. 1.

²⁵¹ In 1913, Elmer Jones, barrister, lived at 7 Gilford Ct. and had his office at 16 E. Hastings.

“Cocaine to cure it”²⁵² (September, 1913)

City Analyst Birch gave the police magistrate the result of his analysis of the drug found on On Lee when the Chinese was arrested by Detective Turner in his shack in Theatre Alley on Thursday afternoon.

There was no doubt about the drug being cocaine. Mr. Birch said it was hydrocarbonate of cocaine, the usual form in which it was sold as being more solid than the alkaloid itself. There were five or six grains in the packet handed him by the detective, and this was sufficient for a great many doses.

Detective Turner told of finding both cocaine and opium on the accused.

On Lee had the usual excuse of Chinese who are found with any of these drugs, that he had it for use as medicine. He got it from Lee Chung and Lee Chung got it from On Ow. Where the latter secured it he was not able to tell the court.

“I got the opium habit and the doctor gave me cocaine to cure it,” pleaded the accused.

The magistrate remarked that he would have to get another drug to overcome the cocaine, and thought that one month in jail would be about the thing to do it. It will not be On’s first term for the same offence.

“A wrong policy”²⁵³ (February, 1914)

It is very questionable if general public opinion will decidedly approve the reason given by the board of police commissioners at their meeting on Tuesday for refunding the fine of \$50 imposed by the courts on Detective McLaughlin²⁵⁴ for having made an “unwarrantable search” of a store in Canton alley belonging to a Chinaman. It was pointed out with many expressions of satisfactions by the members of the board that during the past year \$10,000 in fines for the use of opium by victims of the habit had been collected by police and the fact that the detectives had done such good work, in this connection, was considered good grounds for remitting the penalty against Officer McLaughlin. Such grounds are wholly subversive of all discipline and tend as well to imperil the security of the public which it is the first duty of the police to guard. We have no doubt whatever that Mr. McLaughlin is a capable and conscientious officer and had the fine imposed on him been refunded in consideration of his general good work and ability, but coupled with such a resolution a warning been given against an excess of duty which infringed upon private rights, no one, perhaps, would have objected.

But the action of the commissioners in remitting the penalty because there had been many convictions, obtained against Chinamen, which had netted the city thousands of dollars, must be regarded not only as an intimation to the police that, not the suppression of crime, but the collection of fines against offenders, was the

²⁵² From DRUG VENDOR JAILED. (1913, September 8). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 11.

²⁵³ From A WRONG POLICY. (1914, February 12). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 6.

²⁵⁴ George McLaughlin lived at 341 Hawks Av. in 1914.

most desirable result of their official labors, but also must be looked upon as a direct incentive to the commission of such “unwarrantable” acts as procured for Officer McLaughlin punishment by the courts. In short, what the commissioners have done by basing their remission of Detective McLaughlin’s fine on the large receipts of the police court, is to give assurance to the police that they will be protected in the commission of unlawful acts if the receipts from their raids upon illegal establishments justify it.

We do not think the public will endorse such a policy as that adopted by the board. It should be the duty of the police commissioners to impress the members of the force with the fact that their duty is to suppress and, as far as it is possible for them to do so, to eliminate crime and vice, not to collect money for the civic treasury by mulcting offenders; that it is the security and moral health of the community they are responsible for, not its financial condition. That is the view the public will take, we imagine, and it will be the general sense of the community, too, that in performing their duties, the members of the police force should show the utmost desire to protect and in no way to outrage private rights. The police are the servants, not the masters, of the public, and they cannot too thoroughly realize that fact. Wherever that fact is fully realized public security is increased and crime will diminish.

The death of Loue Kin²⁵⁵ (February, 1914)

“Loue Kin came to his death by accidentally falling off the roof of a building situated in Shanghai Alley,” was the verdict of the jury empaneled by Coroner Jeffs to enquire into the death of the Oriental, who was found early last Friday morning lying on the sidewalk outside of an opium joint which had been raided a few minutes before by Detectives Scallion and Denning²⁵⁶.

That the deceased had been pushed off the top of the house while trying to escape from the officers by Detective Denning, was the weird story told by Bo Sing, who admitted that he had been smoking opium for half an hour prior to the raid, but although several other Chinamen gave evidence, which was intended to strengthen the accusation made by Bo Sing, their versions of the affair did not tally, and only corroborated the evidence of the detectives.

Detective Gerald Scallion, one of the officers most active in effecting the arrest of “hop-heads” and Chinese gamblers, declared that it was he and not Denning that had followed the Orientals who had attempted to escape on to the top of the building, and that he had seen only the one man, Bo Sing, whom he arrested and brought to the police station, where before Magistrate South yesterday morning he pleaded guilty to smoking opium and was fined.

²⁵⁵ From CHINAMAN KILLED IN EVADING DETECTIVES. (1914, February 25). *The Province*, p. 3.

²⁵⁶ Detective Frank E. Denning resigned in 1922. “Detective Frank E. Denning, for twelve years a member of the Vancouver police, and for the past nine years in the detective department, has tendered his resignation. [...] Detective Denning joined the force on February 22, 1910, after serving five years with the Matabele police, South Africa, in which colony he was born in 1875.” Detective Frank E. Denning. (1922, September 13). *The Province*, p. 4.

In company with Detective Denning, Scallion declared he had raided the room, and found that a false roof was constructed in such a manner that several men could comfortably sit and smoke opium in an upper chamber so formed. This was reached by means of a trapdoor.

When the officers arrived, having had information that the place was an opium den, they found the door of the room locked, and while they were engaged in forcing their way into the place they could hear the noise of men scrambling on to the roof through a skylight.

Closely followed by Denning, he climbed into the upper room and went out on the roof, where the witness said, he could see Bo Sing running in the direction of a bridge over the space between the building that he was on and the roof of another. He gave chase and captured the Celestial on the causeway.

“I did not see another Chinaman on the roof,” said Scallion. “Bo Sing, I had observed through a peek hole before we entered the place. He was smoking ‘hop’ and it was he that we wanted. I immediately took him back to the room, where Denning was. Denning had stood looking through the skylight, and while he could see me he was never at any time on the roof, and could not have pushed the man over. I did not know until long after that a man had fallen off the roof.”

Detective Frank Denning, the man accused by Bo Sing, corroborated the evidence given by Detective Scallion, and repeated that he had not been on the roof. He could see Scallion chase the man, and he witnessed the capture, but he did not see a third man on the roof at all. A low parapet ran around the edge of the roof, over which it would be easy to fall.

Coroner Jeffs, in reviewing the evidence for the benefit of the jurors, remarked upon the fact that Bo Sing had been smoking opium to within a minute of the time that he was captured, and could not have a clear memory of the events of the night. He pointed out that while the Chinaman declared Denning to be the man who had thrown Loue Kin off the building, the evidence of the others including several Orientals who were in the room, was to the effect that Denning was never on the roof at all.

Mr. A. J. Garrett appeared on behalf of the relatives of the deceased Chinaman, while Mr. J. K. Kennedy cross-examined the Chinamen who testified.

Recently several anonymous letters have been received by Chief of Police MacLennan threatening him with death if he did not take Detectives Scallion and Denning off the Chinatown squad. They, with Detective George McLaughlin, have been particularly active in suppressing gambling and opium smoking, and as a consequence have made themselves obnoxious to a certain element in the Oriental quarter. Not only has the chief been warned, but threats have been made to “get” these officers, and it is thought by some that the accusation yesterday was a move in that direction.

Within the past few months many letters of an intimidating nature have been received at the police headquarters. One of these defies the authorities, and declares that “you will be hit over the head with an iron bar if you come here.” It continues that the C. A. L. M. Society will continue to smoke opium, gamble and kidnap white

girls despite the efforts of the detectives and police. It is couched in the filthiest of language, and abounds in threats of dire vengeance if the policy of the police is continued. The signature is C. A. L. M. Society.

“Yours truly, C. A. L. M. Society”²⁵⁷ (August, 1913)

This is the only other reference I have found to the C. A. L. M. Society.

An attempt was made yesterday at a meeting of the police commissioners by the Chinese, through one, Charlie Fook Kee, to “get back” at Detective McLaughlin, who is the special “Chinese” detective, has been especially active for the past few weeks in cleaning out the opium and gambling dens.

Assisted by counsel, the Oriental stated to the board that Detective McLaughlin had broken into his place of abode several nights ago, and, after searching the premises, struck him, pushing him out into the alley, where he searched him. He claimed that the detective had assaulted him in a brutal manner for no provocation whatever.

A decidedly different story was told by the detective, who was present at the investigation. In company with Detective Scallion, he had searched the premises of 11 Canton alley²⁵⁸, where the informant holds forth, expecting to find opium there. He had announced that he was a police officer and proceeded to search for opium. The informant swore at him, questioning his right to search without a warrant. The detective simply pushed him aside, the push constituting the alleged assault. This statement was corroborated by Detective Scallion, who, luckily, was at the heels of Detective McLaughlin throughout the raid.

The commissioners were convinced that the story of the detectives was correct and decided to take no action in the matter.

“If the Chinaman is not satisfied, he can take the matter up in the courts,” was the advice of Mayor Baxter.

Just to show the abuse that the police are subject to, Actin Chief McLennan produced the mildest of three letters which he had received, possibly from the Chinese and possibly not threatening his life if the raids were not stopped. It read in part:

“McLennan and Mulhern: Last night your strongarm squad raid chuk-luck joint. You not smart enough catchem our classy bunch. What can you do with us, you hobo. Some time you come round we intend to hit you over the head with clubs. All you catchem is some stupid old chink that not savey. We not frightened to tell you where we are: part of our bunch live opposite Great Northern depot. You come down some night and ask for C. A. L. M. society and see what you get. We have good time, get white man for sucker, catchem his money in chuck-luck. Come see us some night. Yours truly, C. A. L. M. Society.”

The most indecent and abusive language padded the threatening missive.

²⁵⁷ From PLACE NO CREDENCE ON SERIOUS CHARGE. (1913, August 15). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 11.

²⁵⁸ The address of Sun Tai Chong & Co., merchants.

Bo Sing's sentence²⁵⁹ (February, 1914)

Bo Sing, the Chinese opium smoker, who gave evidence at the inquest into the death of Loue Kin on Tuesday afternoon, and attempted to lay the blame for the deceased Oriental's death on the detectives who conducted the raid, was this morning sentenced to three months in jail, it being the second conviction for smoking "hops" registered against him in the past six months.

"A curious assortment of junk"²⁶⁰ (March, 1914)

Detectives Scallion and Denning found a curious assortment of junk when they raided an alleged opium smoking dive at 16 1-2 Canton alley last evening. In addition to the layouts belonging to the five Orientals, the officers found in the place several revolvers, ammunition and a quantity of Chinese preserves. Buried in the preserves were two small animals – preserved – which appeared to be guinea pigs. One of the Chinese was charged with carrying a revolver and the other with being in an opium den.

"The twelve month term may prove a god-send"²⁶¹ (April, 1914)

Sing, a Chinese cannery foreman who has been in British Columbia for 26 years, was yesterday sentenced by Judge McInnes to twelve months in prison on a charge of receiving a gold watch belonging to Mr. W. H. Grassie²⁶², a jeweller, and a silver spoon belonging to the Hotel Elysiu²⁶³m, knowing them to be stolen property. Sing protested that he had bought the watch four years ago for \$14, but it still bore Mr. Grassie's price tag on it.

The twelve-month term may prove a god-send to Sing in so far as his health is concerned. The evidence of the police showed that he is a confirmed opium user, and his death-like aspect supported that belief. For the next twelve months he will not be able to get hold of the deadly drug. At the time of Sing's arrest by Detectives Scallion and McLeod, he was smoking opium in a resort on Canton Alley.

Snitching²⁶⁴ (July, 1914)

Five Chinese were arrested by Detectives Denning and Scallion in a raid on an opium den at 280 Pender street last night. Three were held as inmates, one as a

²⁵⁹ From Local Brevities. (1914, February 26). *The Province*, p. 20.

²⁶⁰ From Local Brevities. (1914, March 13). *The Province*, p. 24.

²⁶¹ From OPIUM SMOKER SENTENCED. (1914, April 7). *The Province*, p. 7.

²⁶² Walter H. Grassie's store was at 318 Cambie. In 1914, he lived at 639 Cambie.

²⁶³ At 1142 Pender W.

²⁶⁴ From ANOTHER OPIUM DEN IS RAIDED BY POLICE. (1914, July 31). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 4.

smoker and one as a keeper. The police are determined that the use of opium shall be stopped and are following up every clue which may lead to detection of its use. In their search, they are assisted by the Chinese themselves, who make a practice of “snitching” on one another. When a Chinaman betrays the location of a den owned by a rival and the den is raided, the rival waits his chance and gets his revenge by giving information against his betrayer at the first opportunity.

“No more cash bail”²⁶⁵ (August, 1914)

No more cash bail will be accepted by the police for offenses, and the consequence is that numbers of gentlemen with liquor appetites will not be able to get off so easily as heretofore. In the past it had been the custom to allow drunks, Chinese gamblers, opium smokers, painted women and the other forms of prisoners whose offenses are not actually criminal, to put up a certain sum of money and depart. In most cases they failed to appear for trial and their bail was estreated²⁶⁶. In future, however, they will have to secure two bondsmen to go before a magistrate and sign various papers. Magistrates and bondsmen are not easily secured after nightfall, so that many an aching head will be forced to seek solace against the cold bars of a cell rather than in the usual John Collins which toppers affect after a previous night’s debauch.

²⁶⁵ From NO MORE CASH BAIL, STATES MAGISTRATE. (1914, August 25). *Vancouver Sun*, p. 6.

²⁶⁶ Forfeited or surrendered.

Grace Cooper

The bicycle incident²⁶⁷ (October, 1900)

It was found necessary yesterday afternoon to remove Miss Grace Cooper, who was charged at the police court with misappropriation of a bicycle, to the city hospital, she being in a terrible condition owing to the use of morphine. The bicycle incident appears to have been the result of the delusions common to those who use the drug.

Theft of ink and mucilage²⁶⁸ (December, 1901)

Grace Cooper, the young woman who is well known about the city as an opium fiend, was to-day sentenced to three months' imprisonment by Magistrate Russell for stealing ink and mucilage from the Ferguson block.

"A deplorable case"²⁶⁹ (September, 1902)

Grace Cooper, an unfortunate woman who is addicted to the morphine habit, was arrested by the police last evening on a charge of having stolen a number of small articles from the office of Dr. Jeffs, Hastings street. The woman's case is said to be incurable, and she was only recently released from the provincial jail after having served a sentence of six months. Her physical condition was considerably improved during her stay there, but upon being released she again gave full vent to her old passion for drugs, and when arrested last night was in a most deplorable condition.

"The unfortunate morphine kleptomaniac"²⁷⁰ (September, 1902)

The case of Grace Cooper, the unfortunate morphine kleptomaniac, arrested for petty theft, was heard by Magistrate Russell²⁷¹ yesterday. It was ordered that she should go to New Westminster for another term.

"A terrible warning"²⁷² (July, 1903)

If anyone desires to see a terrible warning against the use of morphine he or she should visit the poor woman Grace Cooper, who is now at the police station. A more pitiable wreck it would be hard to imagine. She was at one time a fine looking girl, but had trouble some years ago over a multiplicity of suitors, one of whom

²⁶⁷ From MORPHINE TO BLAME. (1900, October 4). *The Province*, p. 1.

²⁶⁸ From GRACE COOPER'S SENTENCE. (1901, December 9). *The Province*, p. 1.

²⁶⁹ From A Deplorable Case. (1902, September 23). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8.

²⁷⁰ From Sent to Westminster. (1902, September 24). *The Province*, p. 10.

²⁷¹ In 1902, Joseph Russell was a partner in Russel & Russel and rented a room at the Hotel Vancouver.

²⁷² From Terrible Example of Havoc Wrought by Morphone. (1903, July 7). *Vancouver World*, p. 4.

commenced a breach of promise suit against her. She will likely be sent to the provincial jail for another term.

“Not proved”²⁷³ (March, 1904)

Grace Cooper, an opium fiend, was sent up for three months for vagrancy. She was also charged with theft, but this was not proved.

“She had no possible intention of going”²⁷⁴ (July, 1904)

Grace Cooper, a young woman who has given the police much trouble in years gone by, was this morning committed for six months in the Provincial Jail. A week ago she came before Magistrate Williams charged with vagrancy. At that time she promised if she were given her liberty she would immediately return to her mother in Montana. The police were satisfied that she had no possible intention of going home, yet she was given a chance. Yesterday afternoon she was still in town and was endeavoring to get a new supply of opium when the police nabbed her. Her case was disposed of very quickly when she was brought before the court this morning.

“Society at the jail”²⁷⁵ (July, 1904)

The ceremonies in connection with the laying of the corner stone of the new jail wall yesterday were, if not very impressive, at least unique. Outside of a few members of the police force, the only other guests present were members of Jailer Miller’s “house party.” Robert Borland, boss of the chain gang, was master of ceremonies, and instead of the usual bottle he substituted a bottle of mucilage. At the appointed hour the guests gathered around with uncovered heads, as Mr. Borland reverently cracked the little bottle of liquid gum over the corner stone, saying “I declare this stone well and truly laid and sorra a sucker’ll ever git over the wall.”

Mr. Arthur Quinton had sung²⁷⁶—

“Farewell, my own;
Light of my heart, farewell!
For crimes unknown,
I go to my dungeon cell.”

“Ginger,” the best-known visitor at the resort, was accorded the honor of placing the first shovelful of mortar on the stone, and the ceremony was over.

²⁷³ From LIBEL CHARGE IN POLICE COURT. (1904, March 1). *The Province*, p. 1.

²⁷⁴ From SIX MONTHS IN JAIL. (1904, July 15). *The Province*, p. 1.

²⁷⁵ From SOCIETY AT THE JAIL. (1904, July 28). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8.

²⁷⁶ From the Gilbert & Sullivan operetta, *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

Among those present were “Ginger,” Arthur Quinton, Kwong, Mr. King, (colored gentleman). “Miss” Grace Cooper was unfortunately indisposed, but was able to view the ceremony from her window.

“They blame the officer in question”²⁷⁷ (September, 1904)

A prominent officer is the subject of complaint. [...] Several weeks ago the officers rounded up a number of streetwalkers. There is a girl named Lizzie Cook, whose parents live at Cumberland; two girls named Martha and Lizzie Roberts, who live away up in the East End and who have given the police lots of trouble during recent years; and Grace Cooper, an opium fiend. Miss Cook is said to have been the young party who wrote the complaint, while the others added their picturesque autographs.

They blame the officer in question, who is one of the executive officials of the force, with having used certain ungentlemanly language towards them a few days ago. They quote the language in full. It would be unpublishable, even if any one had any desire to ventilate the details of the young women’s complaint.

“The truth of the statements”²⁷⁸ (September, 1904)

The police commissioners met in special session yesterday afternoon to investigate certain charges against Sergeant Keeler Fulton which had as their basis a letter signed by certain inmates of the city jail. [...] The letter was signed by Grace Cooper, Martha Roberts and Lizzie Cook. All the parties concerned were before the commission at the meeting yesterday.

The chief said that as far as he understood the matter, it arose from the closing of the windows in the female ward, an action necessitated by complaints that opium and cigarettes were being smuggled into the jail through the windows. At that time the jail wall had not been built, and it was an easy matter to let down a string through the bars and haul things up, or even throw small things through the window from the outside. It might be remembered that Lee Livingston, an opium fiend, who was up before Magistrate Williams last week, stated that he had got opium during his three months’ imprisonment. Anyhow, the windows were closed, and as the weather was warm the women complained, and one afternoon despatched Jailer Deptford to bring in the chief. As the chief was out, Sergeant Fulton went in his stead, and it was then that the women alleged that he used the vile language given in full in their complaint.

Grace Cooper and Martha Roberts both affirmed the truth of the statements of the letter, saying that Fulton had used the vile language charged. The third girl, Lizzie Cook, would not confirm their statements, however.

²⁷⁷ From A NEW SENSATION AT POLICE STATION. (1904, September 12). The Province, p. 1.

²⁷⁸ From SERGEANT IS EXONERATED. (1904, September 13). The Vancouver Daily World, p. 3.

Sergeant Fulton denied using the language imputed to him. He said that he had merely told them that if the windows were closed, it was through their own fault, and whatever was wrong was due to their own actions.

The commissioners, after considering the matter, dismissed the charge, completely exonerating Sergeant Fulton.

“In the presence of the women”²⁷⁹ (October, 1904)

The Commissioners turned their attention to [...] a dispute between Jailer Deptford and the matron of the jail, Mrs. Raymond. The former complained the latter had made certain charges of negligence of duty against him and had conspired to get him discharged. [...] The Commissioners decided that they would hear what evidence touching on these matters could be gathered from some of the female prisoners. The first witness was Lizzie Cook, a young woman from Cumberland, who was convicted on a charge of street-walking.

She was at first very averse to talking, but finally the information was elicited that all the matron had asked the female prisoners to say was that Jailer Deptford had allowed people to come and see them during their meal hours. She had never wanted them to swear that he had been interfering with them. She [...] said that Officer Deptford had always acted like a gentleman in the presence of the prisoners, and the matron had never asked them to swear anything else. He had gone in with the matron once to search for opium. [...]

“I suppose all the female prisoners smoke down there?” suggested the Mayor.

“Well, we all smoke when we can,” coyly admitted Miss Cook, but, she added in a regretful tone, “we can’t always get it.”

Chief North added to the merriment that followed the last remark by stating that a few weeks ago some of the female prisoners had attempted to smoke a strong cigar and it had made them sick. Miss Cook volunteered the information that her taste inclined to cigarettes, whereupon the Mayor jocularly advised her to try a clay pipe instead.

Grace Cooper was next called and her evidence corroborated that of the Cook girl. The matron wanted them to swear nothing further than the jailer had allowed visitors to come in to them at meal times. She said that when they called out to Officer Deptford from the wicket saying they were surprised to see him around again, it was only because they had understood that he was tired of the position of jailer, and they thought he had gone on outside duty. She added that she had always found both Officer Deptford and the Chief of Police act like gentlemen in the presence of the women.

²⁷⁹ From FIRST ROUND OF INVESTIGATION. (1904, October 5). The Province, p. 7.

“Jail – then marriage”²⁸⁰ (December, 1904)

There is a brand-new sensation in jail society.

Miss Grace Cooper, the acknowledged leader of the prison set, is to be married immediately on her release from durance next week.

This morning a parcel of wedding presents arrived at the police station. According to rule, the jailer looked them over, and was astounded to find all kinds of finery. There was a new dress of something that looked suspiciously like cream organdie, an imitation sealskin, and half a dozen smaller articles that naturally make up the perquisites of my lady’s boudoir.

Grace looked over the collection with great satisfaction. It was then that she announced the upcoming nuptials, and told the officials that the happy event is to occur just as soon as she gets out.

This afternoon Miss Cooper scrubbed out the chief’s office, and it will probably be the last time she will be required to undertake menial labor. She was attired in a blue print wrapper, and her petite feet were encased in very high-heeled slippers – the latter a gift from the bridegroom-to-be. These were the only portions of her new outfit she could conveniently wear while scrubbing.

“Things aren’t turning out half bad for me,” said the young woman as she industriously mopped the floor. “It isn’t everybody who can hop out of jail into the arms of a loving husband. Out of the frying-pan into the fire – well, I don’t think.”

Great secrecy is maintained at police headquarters regarding the identity of the happy man. Chief Detective Mulhern vouchsafed the information that he was a prosperous young man in business here, and that he would make the girl a good husband.

With five months’ abstinence from narcotics Miss Cooper has improved wonderfully in appearance, and her health appears to have been completely restored by the jail treatment. She has lived in Vancouver many years, and her life, while always unfortunate, was never vicious.

“Love’s young dream is o’er”²⁸¹ (February, 1905)

Love’s young dream is o’er, and another touching romantic story has come to a sad finish. Grace Cooper is not the worst-looking girl in Vancouver when she is cleaned up and properly dressed. When she came to Vancouver first she was handsome, and old-timers will remember her pathetic appeal for protection against a man who insisted in trying to induce her to marry him. Whether she took dope then or not is not positively known, but she certainly does now. Not long ago she was finishing a term in jail. Jail regimen had been good for her, and she was looking well. A young man provided her with a trousseau and married her when she came out. He says that for two weeks she was a lovely girl, a charming wife, and did everything she

²⁸⁰ From JAIL – THEN MARRIAGE. (1904, December 3). *The Province*, p. 1.

²⁸¹ From Love’s young dream. (1905, February 13). *The Province*, p. 3.

could to make his home a happy one. Then she went back to the cocaine, and affairs culminated last night when she was found wandering around rooming-houses crazed with cocaine and making herself a nuisance. She was a trembling wreck this morning and could not stand up in the dock without hanging on to the railing. She was remanded to to-morrow.

“Incorrigible dope fiend”²⁸² (March, 1905)

Grace Cooper, the incorrigible dope fiend, was not yet able to appear. All efforts to get her to quit using the morphine injector have failed, and the police are in doubt as to what is the best thing to do with her.

Run out of town²⁸³ (March, 1905)

Grace Cooper, the dope fiend, really and truly left the city on Saturday afternoon.

²⁸² From *MEDIOCRITY REIGNED*. (1905, March 18). *The Province*, p. 8.

²⁸³ From *GUILTY BY PROXY*. (1905, March 27). *The Province*, p. 3.

Jennie Marshall

“An unfortunate creature”²⁸⁴ (May, 1902)

An unfortunate creature, Jennie Marshall, an opium fiend, was sent to Seattle last night at the expense of the city. The woman was a complete wreck, as was attested by her trembling hands and nervousness in the police court, and was gathered in by the police on Monday evening. She is said to have friends in the Sound city, and Chief North thought that was the best place to send her to.

Jennie Marshall creates a disturbance²⁸⁵ (August, 1902)

A woman named Jennie Marshall, a representative of that shady class which has a more congenial environment in Seattle than in this city, will spend three months at hard toil in the brick castle on Topaz avenue presided over by Warden Johns. That was the penalty imposed on her this morning in the police court for stealing. She implored the magistrate to let her go back to Seattle, and said she would never come to Victoria again.

The woman is a confirmed dope fiend. She looked and acted like it this morning, while last night she created a disturbance at the police station, delivering herself of an almost phenomenal torrent of abuse. She was charged with the theft of a hat and a number of articles from Mrs. Howard Cameron, wife of the proprietor of the Market Exchange²⁸⁶, Fort street. She had been staying there several days, and on Saturday, Mrs. Cameron missed the articles from her room. The police were notified, and yesterday Detective Palmer and Constable O’Leary went up to the house. When accused of the theft the Marshall woman at first denied it, but subsequently she admitted the offence, and showed the police where she had hidden the stolen goods – the Albion saloon bar²⁸⁷ on Yates street.

This morning she admitted her guilt. Asked if she had anything to say, she pleaded with the magistrate to let her return to Seattle. “If you’ll let me go,” she said, “I’ll never come here to bother you any more. I wasn’t in my right senses when I took those things, and the owner has them back again. Please let me go.”

She was destined, however, to spend a period in a more palatial institution than the general run of residences in Seattle. Detective Palmer²⁸⁸ drew the magistrate’s attention to a little incident not hitherto made public, but it shows that

²⁸⁴ From DAILY CITY GOSSIP. (1902, May 28). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8.

²⁸⁵ From SHADY CHARACTER GOT THREE MONTHS. (1902, August 25). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 5.

²⁸⁶ The Market Exchange Saloon at 99 Fort Street, which offered furnished rooms for rent and had existed in some form since 1867 (when it replaced Wilcox’s Hotel). In 1902, Howard Cameron had only recently taken over from William Christie, the proprietor of the Exchange in 1901.

²⁸⁷ The Albion Hotel (and Saloon) at 12 Yates St. In 1902 it was owned by James and Thomas McManus.

²⁸⁸ In 1902, Thomas Palmer, city detective, lived at 43 First St.

the woman is an undesirable of the most objectionable type. She came here a short time before Coronation Day, and signalized her arrival by stealing a valise from a lady passenger, who was on the same boat, and who was visiting friends in the city. The thief left her own valise in the place of the other, which it somewhat resembled. The police were informed of the theft and the detectives got to work. They hunted the town and bit by bit found the missing articles, which had been disposed of in various places, some of it for opium, with which to satisfy the woman's unnatural craving. The valise was also recovered, but a small hand satchel which was with it was never found. The lady being on a visit here, did not desire to institute proceedings, and the Marshall woman consequently escaped.

While the detective was giving the particulars, he was several times interrupted by the prisoner, who said the valises were exchanged by mistake. "It wasn't my fault," she repeated several times. She was sentenced to three months' imprisonment at hard labor.

"Three months?" she asked. "Where, in jail?"

"Yes, in the provincial jail," replied the chief. She was then taken back to the lock-up.

Escorted to Seattle²⁸⁹ (November, 1902)

Jennie Marshall, the woman who has been serving a three months' sentence in the provincial jail for stealing some articles of clothing from the house of Mrs. Howard Cameron, Fort street, was taken over to Seattle last night. She completed her sentence yesterday and was given in charge of the United States customs officer, who escorted her to the Sound city, where she will have to face another and more serious charge of burglary in company with a notorious crook named Duffy. The theft from Mrs. Cameron wasn't the only one traced to the Marshall woman by the Victoria police, for while coming here on the *Majestic* she stole a travelling satchel belonging to a lady who was on her way to visit friends in this city.

Jennie Marshall's other crime²⁹⁰ (November, 1902)

Chief Langley²⁹¹, who has been giving evidence in a case in Seattle, returned on Saturday afternoon. The hearing in which the chief was required as a witness was that of Jennie Marshall charged with burglary. The woman, who it is understood pleaded guilty, entered the house of a well known Seattle lady medical practitioner and stole a quantity of jewelry and clothes. She escaped to this city, but was here only a few days when she was gathered in for stealing some clothes from the party with whom she lodged. It appears that while she was in the toils a notorious character by

²⁸⁹ From Jennie Marshall. (1902, November 11). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 8.

²⁹⁰ From CASE OF INTEREST TO LOCAL MARINERS. (1902, November 24). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 8.

²⁹¹ In 1902, John M. Langeley, chief of police, lived at 223 Fort St.

the name of Duffy, who came over about the same time, called on the chief of police and asked for some money, remarking that he could tell him something he wanted to know. The chief gradually elicited from Duffy the information that the woman, Jennie Marshall, had broken into a house in East Seattle, and stolen some jewelry and clothes. The chief at once communicated with the Seattle police, and a detective and the owner of the stolen goods came over. Some of the clothes the Marshall woman was wearing were identified by the Seattle lady. As the Marshall woman had to serve a six months' sentence here, her case in the Sound city could not be proceeded with until her term expired.

Jennie Marshall, morphine fiend²⁹² (December, 1902)

Jennie Marshall, the crook, captured by Chief Langley in this city, and afterwards turned over to the Seattle police, was sent to Walla Walla prison on Friday to serve one year in the state prison. The Marshall woman was convicted of robbing the rooms of Mrs. Beverleigh, on Third avenue, early last summer, making away with several dresses which she sold, and with the proceeds bought a big supply of morphine and skipped to Victoria.

“The notorious Jennie Marshall”²⁹³ (February, 1905)

The notorious Jennie Marshall, so far as is known the only woman burglar ever convicted in the Pacific Northwest, is at the Seattle jail, held by City Detectives Hubbard and Freeman on a vagrancy charge. Her career has been one of the most sensational in the history of female criminals in the west.

Years ago she was a belle of Issaquah, but started her downward course when she became addicted to cocaine. Opium followed, and then she fell to the lowest depths ever reached by a female morphine fiend.

It was for the burglary of the apartments of Mrs. Dr. Beverleigh, Seattle, that she served her only term in the penitentiary, but her sentences in city and county jails would aggregate several years.

When Dr. Beverleigh reported to the police a few years ago that her apartments had been entered and a large amount of diamonds and silk dresses had been stolen, City Detectives Lane and Adams of Seattle obtained enough facts to lead them to success in capturing the criminal.

It was by working with notorious drug fiends of Seattle that the facts of the case were learned. Jennie Marshall was traced to Victoria, where she was serving time in jail. The dress she wore while a prisoner in that jail was one of those stolen from Dr. Beverleigh.

²⁹² From For Walla Walla. (1902, December 28). *The Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 8.

²⁹³ From PUNCTURED BY MORPHINE NEEDLE. (1905, February 24). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 11.

The woman admitted entering the room with a skeleton key while Dr. Beverleigh was asleep. She ransacked the place with the deftness of a trained burglar, and secured more than \$1,00 worth of valuables. She had been coached in her work by criminal companions, who told her just what to do.

About a year ago she finished her term in Walla Walla and returned to Seattle. She was run out of that city and came to Vancouver, and here Detective Scott arrested her on a vagrancy charge. She was sentenced to six months with hard labor. On finishing the term she remained about the city and was given another 30 days. This suggested a trip to Seattle to her and that she arrived there safely is evident from the fact that she is now in jail in that city. When arrested here in July she gave the name of Jenny Greenan and was in company with a man named Frank Greenan, who also received six months in jail. In Victoria Jenny Marshall did three months for theft in 1901.

The local detectives say that she was the worst victim of the "hypo" habit that ever fell into their hands, there being hardly a square inch of surface on her body that was not punctured by the morphine needle.

Ruby Piper

Violet Newell²⁹⁴ (July, 1908)

Another girl victim of the opium habit appeared in the police court this morning in Violet Newell, a young girl still in her teens, who was charged with vagrancy. Dressed in cheap finery, she showed in her appearance the effects of the drug.

Prosecutor Jones said the girl had been found in a Chinese den, where the Chinamen indulged in the debasing drug in a hole in the floor. The Chinese escaped this way when the place was raided. Detective Scott said the place was the filthiest from which they had ever taken a woman in Vancouver.

Messrs. Proctor, Richards and McGuigan were on the bench. Mr. Proctor, who presided, said the court did not think it would do any good to hand the girl over to a charitable institution. The sentence was three months imprisonment.

“Violent Violet Violates”²⁹⁵ (January, 1910)

Every effort had been made to reclaim Violet Newell. Violet is young and to some extent fair, but Violet’s ideas of ladylike behavior are very, very much to the bad. Kind-hearted people had argued with her, been kind to her, magistrates had given her fresh starts – in fact, no stone had been left unturned to reclaim Violet.

New Year’s Day Violet took a fresh grip; she made some really good resolutions and those who knew her and wished for her reclamation were hopeful that perhaps she would really make good. But, alas, Violet fell off with flashing lights Monday night. She was arrested under most objectionable circumstances, charged with vagrancy, and, yesterday morning in police court Magistrate Jay sentenced her to six months in jail.

“Alias Ruby Piper”²⁹⁶ (January, 1910)

Violet Newell²⁹⁷, alias Ruby Piper, the young woman who caused inquiry into her life a few months ago by affirming to the police at Nanaimo that she was the notorious Esther Mitchell, who some time back shot her brother at Seattle, appeared in police custody again this morning on a charge of vagrancy, and having pleaded with weeping eyes for a chance to go, was sent to jail for six months.

Violet Newell was found last night by Detective Heather and Constable Macdonald lying in bed in an opium joint in Chinatown. She informed the police she

²⁹⁴ From OPIUM VICTIM GETS THREE MONTHS. (1908, July 13). *The Vancouver World*, p. 16.

²⁹⁵ From VIOLENT VIOLET VIOLATES. (1910, January 19). *The Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 7.

²⁹⁶ From UNFORTUNATE WOMAN GOES BACK TO JAIL. (1910, January 18). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 8.

²⁹⁷ Mistakenly written as ‘Nevill’ throughout the original article.

had been in the room seven weeks without having been outside in the open air. The room was foul with opium.

The woman pleaded not guilty to the charge and said she had been ill and unable to work. This is her second conviction in Victoria. She has also been sent to jail from Nanaimo, Seattle, Tacoma and Vancouver. She wept bitterly when being taken from the court.

The woman is well connected, and when in jail gives no trouble to those in charge. She is not vicious but her word cannot be depended upon, and it seems impossible for her to keep away from opium.

“Esther Mitchell” at Nanaimo²⁹⁸ (August, 1909)

The echo of one of the most sensational crimes and scandals that has stirred the Pacific Northwest in the last few years was aroused here last night through a discovery of the provincial police. The pitiable figure of the still well-remembered crime, Esther Mitchell, the girl who shot her brother because he killed Elder Creffield, a leader of the religious sect calling themselves “Holy Rollers,” in Seattle two years ago last month, has been found in a Chinese den in the last stages of degradation and misery.

Notification received by the provincial police last night that a white woman was living with some Chinese in the latter’s cabin at Departure Bay, led to a quick investigation, and the resulting discovery. Proceeding to the place, the police came upon a white woman in a cabin of a Chinese, absolutely destitute, and clothed only in a much-begrimed underskirt and greasy sweater, a slave to the opium habit.

The woman was at once taken in charge by the police, and brought up in the police court as a vagrant – and in court she told the remarkable story of her identity and wanderings, which, if confirmed, will doubtless stir anew all the excitement which followed upon the shooting of Creffield and Mitchell two years ago, and the subsequent trial of Esther Mitchell.

To the court the woman claimed she is Esther Mitchell, the central figure in the startling crime enacted in Seattle. Briefly, it will be remembered that the start of this crime came when Esther’s brother shot Creffield because he believed the latter had ruined his sister, after getting her into the clutches of the fanatic sect of “Holy Rollers.” Following upon this crime, Esther Mitchell, instigated by devotees of the sect, it was alleged, shot her brother. After a sensational trial the girl was released on the ground of temporary insanity, and sent to an asylum.

According to the story told by the blighted wreck of womanhood in the cell of the city jail here, she, Esther Mitchell, first went to Portland after her release from the asylum, where she says, she remained a year, and from the Rose City went to Victoria, B. C., where she stayed until about two months ago. It is a fact, however, that she only escaped from the asylum six months ago. From Victoria, the woman says, she came to Nanaimo, where she was enabled to obtain the drug which she

²⁹⁸ From VICTIM OF OPIUM. (1909, August 12). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

craved by becoming almost the slave of the Chinese with whom she was found to be living.

The death of Violet Newell, alias Lim Toy²⁹⁹ (May, 1913)

Dying from tuberculosis, Violet Newell took her life under the name Lim Toy in 1913. Her story was uncovered by local newspapers over the course of three days.

Evidently realizing that she was hopelessly ill with tuberculosis and that she could live but a few weeks more, Lim Toy, a pretty Chinese-Italian girl, committed suicide last night by turning on a gas jet in a room at a Main street rooming house early last evening. Within reach of her hand the following note was found, leaving no doubt that the girl came to her death through self-destruction: "I commit suicide. I, Miss Lim Toy, kill myself. Please let China Free Masons know. I belong to China Free Masons or High Binders. Please notify Lim Lie Sing or Quan Ping."

The dead girl was but 18 years of age and was considered a beauty by her Oriental acquaintances. She was of both Italian and Chinese parentage and belonged to the Chinese Free Masons, something unusual as very few of the feminine sex are allowed to join. This fact goes to show that she must have been a person of some consequence among her people. It is thought that her family must have been of high birth or such honors as were accorded her would not have been hers.

When Quan Ping, who is referred to in the note, returned home last night about 7 o'clock from a visit to the Free Mason quarter, he was horrified to find the body of little Lim Toy on the floor with her head resting on a pillow and close beside her the gas range with the stop-cock turned wide open. As he opened the door he was met by the fumes of gas and, taking in the situation in a moment, he hastily summoned Dr. Shaw, but the latter could do nothing to save the girl's life, as the deadly poison had done its fatal work.

"Affairs of the underworld"³⁰⁰ (May, 1913)

According to evidence brought out at the inquest yesterday afternoon, Lim Toy, the pretty half-caste Chinese girl who committed suicide on Wednesday, had served a term in Walla Walla penitentiary for the murder of her brother, whom she killed in a crowded railway depot in Seattle following his shooting and fatally wounding Dr. George Brown, a minister with whom she was about to elope. This occurred in the American city three years ago, when the girl was barely fifteen years of age, and for her crime she was sentenced to life imprisonment.

A parole was granted, however, owing to her physical condition after she had served one year's time.

²⁹⁹ From LITTLE LIM TOY FINDS WAY TO END TROUBLES. (1913, May 6). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 4.

³⁰⁰ From ON PAROLE FOR MURDER OF BROTHER. (1913, May 7). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 1.

Following her release she had married a wealthy Chinese merchant and tong man, but later eloped with his cashier, ending her chequered career in his company in the squalid Winnipeg rooms. Further evidence brought out the fact that she was one of the most powerful influences in the affairs of the underworld on the Pacific Coast, being connected, it is believed, with the Black Hand or Mafia, the dreaded Italian society, as well as [being] one of the few woman members of the Chinese Masons.

Lim Toy was of mixed Italian and Chinese blood, although not plainly showing the marks of the Asiatic, and appeared to have been imbued with the natural characteristics of both races. Fear of the Italian society as well as her horror of the lingering death of the white plague³⁰¹ is supposed to have been responsible for the act, as one of the witnesses testified to the girl's finding a dagger and several Italian words painted on her door one morning not long before her death.

These signs reduced her to a pitiful state of terror, and she left the house but seldom up to the time of her suicide.

Although no relatives appeared at the inquest yesterday, it is believed that the girl has an aunt residing somewhere on Hastings street east, and the police are endeavoring to get into communication with her. An uncle, James Collins, resides in Victoria.

When only fifteen years of age, the chain of circumstances which were to end in death by her own hand, started their welding by the meeting of the young girl with Doctor George Brown, a minister in the sect of the Apostolic Faith, better known as the Holy Rollers. Attracted by the beauty which combination of the races gave the girl, then known by the name of Esther Mitchell, Brown planned to elope with her and to this end they met at the railway depot one day in midsummer. During the period the doctor had been courting the young girl, Henry Mitchell, her brother, looked upon his suit with disfavor, as he considered the girl far too young to be married, and had three or four times warned Doctor Brown to leave his sister alone.

On the day that they had planned to elope, they were surprised at the station by the brother, and in the subsequent quarrel, the hot-tempered Italian blood held sway, and Mitchell shot and fatally killed the minister standing by his sister's side.

Hardly had the smoke ceased curling from his revolver, [Esther,] only fifteen years of age, drew a gun before the officers who were holding her brother [and before they] could prevent the crime, shot him three times, inflicting wounds which caused his death a few hours later. She was practically cast out by her family, and stood trial on a charge of murder, being convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. The trial at this time was one of the sensations of the day. The case was even made more pathetic by her contracting the incurable disease, tuberculosis, and after many petitions had been circulated in her favor she was released on parole in 1910.

Immediately on her release from prison she married Chin Hin Sing, a prominent Chinese merchant and tong man of San Francisco and Victoria. He was one of the two Orientals asked in her last note to be told of her death. For over a year she had lived with Sing, and during that period was initiated as one of the few women

³⁰¹ Tuberculosis.

members of the Chinese Free Masons or hatchet men. It was through this connection and her almost complete return to the ways of her Chinese forefathers that she managed to gain her sway over the local Chinese underworld.

She was always, in addition, communicating with Italians of doubtful reputation, and is believed to have arranged deals and treaties between the hatchet men and the dreaded members of the mafia.

However, after a time, her life with Sing, the middle-aged merchant, appeared to pale, and she eloped with his head cashier, Quam Qing, a younger man. Leaving San Francisco, where they were then living, the runaway couple settled here in [Vancouver's] local Chinatown, but always appeared to be in fear of the vengeance of Vancouver. Here in Vancouver the deadly disease of which she was a victim was fast making its ravages more plain, and Dr. Shaw, a local physician, was treating her regularly. At all times she appeared to be very nervous, and in the witness box yesterday the doctor stated that he was not at all surprised at her deed.

Miss Josephine Cottingham, of 67 Hastings street west, former housekeeper at the Winnipeg rooms, told of the girl's finding the painted dagger on her door, after which she was immediately taken with a violent fit, ascribed to extreme terror. Since then she had but very infrequently ventured out, and seemed always afraid of some unnamed evil.

“Not the real Esther Mitchell”³⁰² (May, 1913)

Surprise was expressed in police circles yesterday when it was found that Lim Toy, the half caste Chinese girl who committed suicide here several days ago, was not the real Esther Mitchell, of the Mitchell murder case, but merely a girl who had claimed to be this woman in other Coast cities. This telegram from Oregon, where the real Esther Mitchell is now residing, was verified by the expert finger print system in vogue in Detective Anderson's identification department at the police station, where the finger prints of the girl were found classified.

According to this classification and additional information secured over the wire yesterday, the name of the unfortunate Lim Toy was Violet Newell, alias Esther Mitchell, alias Esther Campbell, alias Lim Toy, and was known under these aliases in the Chinese quarters of various American Coast cities.

Following the report of the inquest yesterday morning Detective Anderson thought if the girl was [the] paroled Esther Mitchell, the Walla Walla authorities should be notified, and consequently proceeded to the undertaking parlors to secure her finger prints. These obtained and properly classified, he found [them to be] identical with [those of] the girl Violet Newell, a well-known character in Chinese circles in Victoria several years ago. Communication with the Victoria police revealed the fact that she had been posing as Esther Mitchell in that city as well as Tacoma, besides informing people of her supposed identity here.

³⁰² From SHE POSED AS SLAYER FOR YEARS. (1913, May 8). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 1.

Miss Cottingham and the proprietress of the Winnipeg rooms, who testified at the inquest regarding her identity, appeared at the undertakers' yesterday and repeated their statements of the day before to Detective Anderson, asserting that Lim Toy had confessed to them she was the real Esther Mitchell.

Lim Toy was, according to the police records, well known in Tacoma's Chinese section as well as Vancouver and Victoria, and had once been the wife of Chin Sing, the wealthy Chinese merchant, later eloping with his cashier, whom she lived with until the end. She was of mixed Italian and Chinese parentage, and through her membership with the Chinese Masons, was regarded as a veritable "queen" of the Oriental underworld.

"Ruby Piper was not Chinese at all"³⁰³ (May, 1913)

Ruby Piper appears in the 1901 census. She was born in Manitoba on November 12, 1888. In 1901 she lived at 568 Harris with her widowed grandmother, Margaret McKenzie, and her grandmother's children, William J., Ruby D. and Margaret McKenzie. All were Scotch Presbyterians. Ruby's grandmother worked as a nurse, and the younger Margaret was a hospital assistant. William J. was a carpenter and Ruby D. was a tailor. Their combined incomes were \$2,300³⁰⁴ for the previous 12 months. Young Ruby did not work, but had attended school for 8 months out of the previous 12.

"Ruby Piper" is said to be the name of the young woman who committed suicide in the Winnipeg rooms on Main street on Monday. She was identified as Ruby Piper by Detective Anderson yesterday after the police officer took fingerprints of her and compared them with others in his possession at the police station. The police state that Ruby Piper was not Chinese at all, as was first supposed this week, although she had lived with Chinamen³⁰⁵ in Victoria, Tacoma and this city for years. She was about 21 years of age and was born in this city on Harris street³⁰⁶, according to reports made to the police. The girl was said to have gone wrong very early in life; at any rate she was known to the police here for eleven months prior to her death the other day.

She was given the Chinese name of Lim Toy and was also known at various times as Violet Newell. Recently she had called herself Esther Mitchell and led several persons, including the former landlady of the Winnipeg rooms, to believe that she was the Esther Mitchell of Holy Roller fame.

³⁰³ From GIRL SUICIDE WAS BORN IN VANCOUVER. (1913, May 8). *The Province*, p. 8.

³⁰⁴ Margaret earned \$400 as a nurse, William earned \$900 as a carpenter, Ruby D. earned \$400 as a tailor and young Margaret earned \$600 as a hospital assistant.

³⁰⁵ "I, Ng. Lee, hereby notify the public that I will not be responsible for any debts contracted by my wife, Mrs. Ng. Lee, otherwise known as Ruby Piper, from this date and forward. Nanaimo, Jan. 19, 1909. Ng. Lee." Join the Caple Library. (1909, January 21). *The Province*, p. 14. This was a few months before "Esther Mitchell" was discovered in a "Chinese den" near Nanaimo.

³⁰⁶ In 1896, she is listed as having passed her examinations in A. E. Fraser's class at Vancouver's East End School.

MORPHINE

1885 – 1894

The death of Jenny Willis³⁰⁷ (May, 1885)

There died last night in “No. 1, Broad street,” a woman by the name of Jenny Willis. The circumstances attending her death, which have, in the opinion of many, only been partially elicited, point to either of two causes – suicide or an accidental overdose of morphia taken medicinally. The house in which the unfortunate woman died, is known to the police and frequenters of such places, as a house of prostitution. All that is known about the woman, or the cause of death, is contained in the evidence given below. The jury, under the circumstances, could return no other verdict. Although there is very strong probability that the drug was taken intentionally, to put an end to a life of sin and shame, it is possible that the sad event may only have been the result of an accidental overdose, taken to produce sleep or relieve pain. In the examination all the material evidence may have been brought out. The witnesses answered unreservedly. But something more as to the woman’s past history and character might have been ascertained and it would have helped the jury in coming to an intelligent opinion.

An inquest was held into the cause of death this forenoon by Coroner E. M. Johnson, and the following jury: Thos. Harmon³⁰⁸, foreman, and J. J. Cumming, John McLeod, Thos. McHavfie, James J. McDonald, John Roberts. Having viewed the body the following evidence was heard:

Dr. Taylor³⁰⁹ examined:- Was in attendance on deceased in her last illness; first saw her about 7 o’clock on Thursday evening last; found her partially unconscious; the pupils of her eyes contracted, breathing heavy, congestion of the brain, pulse slow and full; concluded from the symptoms that she had taken an overdose of opium in some form; last saw her about six o’clock last evening, when she was in a state of coma and it was evident that if a favorable change did not take place soon she would die; on my second or third visit was shown about five grains of morphine powder, by Edward E. Johnson, alleged to have been taken from the bed; no marks on the paper to show where it was purchased; a small quantity of this would have produced the symptoms and cause death; thought deceased to be between 28 and 30 years of age.

In reply to the foreman witness said that he administered an emetic and injected atropia into the arm, as an antidote, and on the second visit the hypodermic injection was again administered. He understood that the law prohibited the sale of the drug unless there was a witness or a doctor’s prescription. His opinion was that death resulted from an overdose of morphine.

Edward E. Johnson, sworn: - My house is at Spokane Falls, W. T.; am a railroad man by profession; saw deceased on Thursday evening in the house where the body now lies; about 11:30 met Mr. Bennett on the street who told him that the girl was

³⁰⁷ From ONE MORE UNFORTUNATE. (1885, May 9). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 1.

³⁰⁸ Possibly Thomas Harman, a submarine diver who in 1885 lived at Pritchard house.

³⁰⁹ In 1885, A. M. Taylor had his office at Sehl’s building on Langley St.

dying, and at his request accompanied him to the house, where he saw deceased lying unconscious; helped to remove her from one room to another; saw Miss Fanny pick up a paper of powder from the floor at the foot of the bed (which witness produced); he showed it to Dr. Taylor, who told him to keep it; knew nothing further about the matter.

Miles Bennet, sworn: Am a purser on a steamboat, and was last engaged on the Idaho; knew deceased for eight years; deceased sent for witness and he went to see her on Thursday afternoon; found her sick and with head bound up; could not get an intelligent answer from her; Dr. Taylor was sent for; knew nothing about the powder further than he was told it had been found; did not know the deceased was addicted to the use of opium; her home is near Olympia, W. T.; she arrived in Victoria from New Westminster last Saturday; think she was in that city about a month; her age was about 35 years; witness came from New Westminster about three weeks ago; have telegraphed to her friends at Olympia; she was a married woman; knew of no trouble or worry that would induce her to commit suicide; her true name is Jenny Willis; her husband is alive; there is no separation between them, and she occasionally made trips away from home; met her in Seattle about two months ago for the first time in two years; have visited deceased at the house where she died; never provided any drug for her.

Fanny Lewis, sworn; I live at the house on Broad street where deceased now lies. She died yesterday evening at about a quarter to 9 o'clock; she was taken ill on Thursday about noon; she told me she had a headache. I found the powder on the floor of the room she occupied; think it fell there from the bed clothes; never knew deceased to use opium or morphine; knew her only since last Monday; told me she was in poor health and seemed very despondent; she told me this the night before she was taken sick; she was subject to fits, and if I heard her complain in the night time to bring her some water; I don't think she had been drinking before coming over here. I thought she was a little out of her mind. No person was in the house but her and myself on the night previous to her illness; I don't know whether she had any money or not.

Nellie Bennet, sworn:- I live in the house on Broad street where the woman died; knew deceased since last Monday; told me she had a chair pulled from under her coming down in the boat from the Sound to New Westminster which caused her to lie in bed a few days there; took her breakfast on Thursday and after went to her room; locked the door about ten minutes and came out; returned again shortly to her room; went to bed where she died; know nothing about the powder; did not use morphine to my knowledge; the house is mine; don't think she had money but that she had property close to Olympia; she had one trunk in my house, and believe she had another and a sewing machine on the wharf. When she came to my house she said she might stay a month and maybe not so long.

This was all the evidence. The jury then returned the following verdict: We, the undersigned jurors do hereby find that the deceased, Jennie Willis, came to her death on the 8th day of May, 1885, at a house on Broad street, in the city of Victoria, from an overdose of morphine, by whom or how administered there is no evidence to

show. We also beg to add the following rider: That the utmost exertion of the police should be used to stop the indiscriminate sale of poisonous drugs.

“Of the most disgraceful character”³¹⁰ (May, 1885)

The unfortunate woman’s husband was telegraphed the state of affairs, and replied that he was unable to come over. Arrangements have been made for the burial of the remains by the woman with whom she has for so long made her home. Her husband was at one time a hotel-keeper in Olympia. She has for the past eight years been on intimate terms with [Miles] Bennett, who is also a married man, having a family in San Francisco.

The circumstances of the whole sad case are of the most disgraceful character, and brand the man who was seducer and friend as a heartless scoundrel, and unworthy the toleration of a respectable community.

“They screamed”³¹¹ (February, 1888)

The two men, Clarke and Daure, who were arrested yesterday afternoon on suspicion of being concerned in the robberies at the residence of M. Young³¹² and at the Victoria Loan Office, are both confirmed devotees of the drug morphine. When arrested they were both eating the drug, and upon being searched at the barracks instruments were found in their possession for injecting the morphine into their bodies. After being locked up in the cells their craving for a further supply of the drug became so strong that they screamed, kicked at the doors, and kept up the uproar for some hours.

“Returning animation”³¹³ (September, 1888)

On Sunday evening, between 6 and 7 o’clock, residents on the upper end of Pandora avenue were considerably startled by the report that a lady residing in a cottage near Cook street had ended her life either by accident or design with a dose of poison. People living in the immediate vicinity of the cottage upon entering the premises were terrified to see the woman stretched upon a bed and apparently lifeless. Her limbs were perfectly rigid and she had every appearance of a corpse. The family were nearly crazed with grief, and those who were present say the sight was one long to be remembered – the woman extended on the bed, and surrounded by weeping relatives making fruitless efforts to restore vitality to the body from which, apparently, the last spark of life had fled. Medical assistance was procured without

³¹⁰ From The Suicide. (1885, May 10). *The British Colonist*, p. 3.

³¹¹ From Morphine Fiends. (1888, February 25). *The Colonist*, p. 4.

³¹² Possibly Michael Young of Young Bros., on Michigan St.

³¹³ From A POISONING CASE. (1888, September 25). *The Colonist*, p. 4.

delay, and in a brief space of time Dr. F. W. Hall³¹⁴ arrived. A hurried examination revealed to the doctor that the woman had taken an overdose of morphine, and that if her life was to be saved, prompt and energetic measures would have to be resorted to – in fact, a few minutes' delay would prove fatal. A powerful emetic was administered, and other means adopted to restore life. These efforts were fortunately successful, and in a few moments the apparently lifeless woman showed symptoms of returning animation, which were followed by a violent fit of vomiting. Under the directions of Dr. Hall, the patient was then seized by the gentlemen present and forced to walk about. She was not permitted to remain still a moment, and despite her entreaties to be allowed to sleep she was taken outside the house and walked up and down for the space of nearly two hours. By this time the effects of the drug had passed away, and all danger was over, although the lady was still quite weak and languid. Yesterday she was somewhat better and had nearly recovered her usual health.

The relatives and friends of the unhappy lady are very reticent over the affair, and refuse to furnish any particulars of the poisoning, which, they allege, was accidental. It has been ascertained, however, that the lady, who belongs to a highly respectable family in Washington Territory, only arrived in this city on Saturday evening to reside with her relatives on Pandora street. Fifteen years ago she had married a man with whom she lived happily until a few months ago, when it transpired that the husband had been married before, and the first wife not only put in an appearance but claimed the husband from whom she had been ten long years separated. Nothing loth, the worthless fellow consented, and the discarded wife, driven nearly crazy by the conduct of one whom she had for so long looked upon as her lawful husband, was induced by a so-called medical man to take a certain amount of morphine. This practice once begun soon became a habit, and the unhappy lady was never without a liberal supply of the drug. On Sunday she complained of being more low-spirited than usual, and in consequence took a far larger dose than she had ever done before, with the result above stated.

“A second poisoning attempt”³¹⁵ (September, 1888)

It is alleged that the lady who resided in “Rose” cottage on Pandora avenue, and whose attempt to commit suicide by an over dose of morphine, was frustrated by the timely aid of a medical man, made a second attempt to end her life yesterday. “The act was again discovered before it was too late, and with assistance of a doctor the unhappy lady was again restored to consciousness. It is learned, however, unless other means are adopted to restrain her, she will yet succeed in her object, as she has been heard to say more than once, that she was tired of living and would like to end her troubles in the grave. The entire family vacated the cottage last evening and

³¹⁴ Of Drs. Hall & Hall, physician and surgeons, with offices at the Theatre building on Douglas St. In 1887, Dr. F. W. Hall rented a room at the Grand Pacific Hotel.

³¹⁵ From A Second Poisoning Attempt. (1888, September 29). *The Colonist*, p. 4.

secured passage on the steamer T. J. Potter for Seattle. It is the opinion of the medical man who twice saved her life, that the woman is a confirmed opium fiend.

The death of John Walker³¹⁶ (March, 1889)

Yesterday afternoon the police were notified that John Walker, barkeeper of the Beehive Saloon³¹⁷, Fort street, was lying dead in his bed at Mr. J. Levy's Restaurant³¹⁸ and Lodging House, Government street. The officers went to the restaurant, burst open the door of Walker's room, and there found the body as reported. [...] A morphine injector, with a sponge saturated with the drug and partly filled bottle, were found in the room, and the presumption is that the unfortunate man, who was known to be in the habit of using morphine hypodermically, had overdosed himself, with the result that death ensued.

Mr. Levy states that deceased had been missing since Wednesday morning. At 2 a.m. on that morning he partook of a meal in the restaurant and went out, taking the key of his room with him. His movements had always been uncertain, and as he did not put in [an] appearance during the day, either at the restaurant (where he was a steady boarder) or at the saloon where he was employed, it was supposed that he had gone to Vancouver.

Yesterday afternoon about 4 o'clock the Chinaman who attends to the bedrooms at the Arcade, went to Walker's room, but found the door locked. He peeped through a small aperture in the door, and saw Walker lying in the bed quite dead. He at once reported his discovery to Mr. Levy, who in turn notified the police. [...]

The deceased John Walker was well known in Victoria and Vancouver. He was for some time employed at the Colonial Hotel³¹⁹, Johnson street. From there he went to Vancouver and resided there for about seven months, when he returned to this city and obtained employment with Mr. Cowie at the Beehive. He had no relatives in this city; was aged about 33, and was a native of the United States.

“He seemed to be in good spirits”³²⁰ (March, 1889)

A second report provides additional information about John Walker.

At 5 o'clock last evening Officers Thomas and Mitten³²¹ burst open a door in the Arcade Restaurant and discovered the body of John Walker, whose death was caused by an overdose of morphine. The narcotic was purchased in Vancouver and was used by the deceased to alleviate pain caused by rheumatism. [...]

³¹⁶ From FOUND DEAD. (1889, March 29). *Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 4.

³¹⁷ At 48 Fort St. on the corner with Broad Street. James Cowie was the proprietor.

³¹⁸ Joe Levy's Arcade restaurant at 124 Government St.

³¹⁹ Thomas Tugwell's Colonial Hotel was located at 33 Johnson St.

³²⁰ From FOUND DEAD. (1889, March 29). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 1.

³²¹ In 1889, Thomas Mitten lived at 117 Yates St.

John Hayes³²², barkeeper, said: On Monday last John Walker was in the Bee Hive saloon, Fort street; he made the remark that he gave himself a couple of squirts [of morphine] last night. Mr. Cowie asked him if he used a syringe. He said he had rheumatism in his legs; could not get any sleep and had to use it, and that he had used morphine quite a while. Left him at the post office about seven o'clock Tuesday evening; he seemed to be in good spirits and said if witness knew of a job deceased would be at the saloon the next day. He volunteered the statement about using morphine. He was a moderate drinker; do not think he intended to take his life. [...]

The poison produced was purchased in Vancouver. Morphine cannot be purchased except in the presence of a witness, and the purchaser signs a poison book.

Morphine in New Westminster³²³ (June, 1889)

The free sale of morphine to anyone who wishes to buy it is having a bad effect on many persons who are inclined to the habit. Instances of its common use and the evil effects arising out of it are frequent, even in Westminster, though the hospital records show that the other cities of the province are still more burdened with the morphine fiend than the Royal City.

A week ago an Irishman, speaking a beautiful brogue and professing sufficient religion to warrant his canonization without waiting for death and after results to entitle him to the degree, was admitted into St. Mary's hospital and placed in the free ward. Just what he was suffering from could not be fairly decided on, but he was in a very bad way, and so the good sisters kept him. A few days ago the sisters decided to give the poor man a change of clothing, for his own were in a very bad condition and not as clean as the rules of the hospital prescribed. After the change was made, one of the sisters found in the cast-off clothing a bottle of morphine, but she had scarcely made the discovery when the man came rushing into the room and demanded it. The sister refused to hand the drug over, upon which the man, who all had looked on as a saint, turned on the sister and heaped the most cowardly abuse on her. The sister, however, was not easily frightened and stoutly refused to return the vile drug. The man left the hospital and reported the case to a magistrate, who sent word to the effect that the drug would have to be handed over. This was done and the man left, reviling the house that had clothed and fed him.

Another case is that of a lady almost crazed by the effects of morphine, breaking from her friends at midnight and rushing like a madwoman down town to get some more of the drug. She was caught, however, in time to save her identity from being made public.

Cases of this kind are frequent, and it is time some restriction was put on the sale of the drug.

³²² A bartender at the Colonial Hotel.

³²³ From *Morphine Fiends*. (1889, June 19). *The Daily British Columbian*, p. 4.

“This rose-colored dream”³²⁴ (August, 1889)

Imagine an instrument about the size of a pencil case constructed somewhat after the fashion of a wasp’s sting, and fitting into a tiny case which will go with ease into the muff³²⁵, the waistcoat pocket, or the bosom of the dress. The instrument itself may be of gold, and the case may be fashioned like a jewelled scent bottle or other trinket, and hang suspended from a chatelaine³²⁶ with the most innocuous air. This is the injector, and a slight punctuation of the skin with the waspish point is sufficient to enable the required quantity of the magic liquid to be discharged into the system. Nor is the term magic always an exaggeration, for not more magical was the effect produced by the pills which the travelers swallowed in the cave of Monte Cristo than that which results from the injection of morphia. It must be, however, observed here that there are three distinct stages of morphia absorption, and all of them brief in duration, the last one briefest of all.

During the first stage the results are purely pleasurable, they being a draught of fresh life into jaded limbs. The faculties receive a sudden stimulus, the callous sense of pleasure is sensitive once more, the vision of the world cast on the mental eye is drawn in rosy lines, the whole appreciation of things earthly is that of one who is prepared to drain the cup of life to the bottom and enjoy it to the full. The subject lives in a glamorous sense of vague happiness, her half-closing eyes reveal the state of exquisite lassitude which laps her limbs, she feels that her one true enemy is exertion, she is too happy to trouble anything, all that she asks is that her friends should be happy around her, even as she is happy. Her hold on eternity lessens as her desire for it decreases. “Why take thought for the morrow?” would run her new reading of the text. “Sufficient for the day is the happiness thereof.”

In time, however, a change comes o’er the spirit of this rose-colored dream. Its continuity becomes broken by dreadful periods of reaction, during which the victim is oppressed by all the horrors of intense melancholy and weakness, and from which relief can only be obtained by continual repetition of the process of injection. The baneful habit acquires a firmer hold by counter-irritations. It is so easy to drive away the blue devils that are making themselves apparent, to check the reaction which has begun to set in, to change the dark shadows which are clouding over the vision of life into the rainbow hues of the morning, to transform the victim of “melancholy, the prospective suicide,” into the laughing child of pleasure whose creed is that of the half-pagan Leo X.: “Let us enjoy what God has given us.” So easy – but only by the constant use of the fatal drug; and as the former slight injections have lost their power larger doses of the stimulant must be launched into the system before the desired effect can be produced.

The result, however, of the increase in the quantity injected is to develop the feeling of lassitude until in time – such a brief period! – it completely overpowers the senses and the victim becomes practically lost to the world. She lives in a rose-colored

³²⁴ From THE MORPHIA FIEND. (1889, August 25). *Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 5.

³²⁵ An old-fashioned hand-warmer, traditionally made out of fur.

³²⁶ A literal key-chain (thin chain for keys and other small items) attached to a woman’s belt.

world of her own, in which happiness reigns supreme, and which she would not leave if she could; for her re-entry into the life she has forsaken can only be accomplished by passing through a period of intense mental and bodily torture. She knows that she is slipping to extinction in a soulless, mechanical way, like a clock which inevitably runs down when its motive power is exhausted; but her appreciation of abstract ideas has become blurred; life has lost its meanings, death its terrors. Better it is, she thinks, so far as she compares her condition at all, to fade slowly and happily out of life without a thought or a care to check the last brief period of existence than to face the struggle by which alone she could be saved. Indeed, it is doubtful whether, even if she could be kept by force from the use of the stimulant, she would not feel its loss so acutely that she would die in horrible agonies almost as quickly.

By a curious perversion, therefore, of the original object, it has been reserved for modern science to bring into existence and use the dream of the ancient poets – the drug which conferred happiness unchecked and unalloyed. Were it possible, however, to analyze the mental condition of the victim during the hours of reaction, it might be possible to realize also tortures of the damned in medieval hell.

“Too late”³²⁷ (March, 1890)

The Umatilla³²⁸, which sailed yesterday for San Francisco, carried among her passengers a young woman named Gertie Grant, who is in the last stages of consumption and a slave to the deadly morphine habit. The unfortunate young woman, who is but 24 years of age, goes back to her home in San Francisco to die, where her parents, who are well to do and respectable, reside. The story of her fall is the common one, and dates back to five years ago when the first step from the path of virtue was taken. In time she acquired the morphine habit, which together with fast living has brought her to her present state – a physical wreck.

A short time ago, her brother, who is employed on the Umatilla, learned of her whereabouts and beseeched her to reform and accompany him home when all would be forgiven, but in vain. On his next trip he implored her to go with him, and this time she yielded, and yesterday the journey homeward was begun. She has wasted away and is now but a shadow of her former self, and is conscious of the fact that she has but a few months more to live³²⁹. But she is resigned and patient, and said yesterday to an acquaintance: “If I only could live over again, how different it would be,” and her gentle tone of voice and sincere look from the kindly and brilliant eyes told of the lesson learned, alas! too late.

³²⁷ From GOING HOME TO DIE. (1890, March 31). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 4.

³²⁸ A steamship belonging to the Pacific Steamship Co. that sailed the west coast from 1881 to 1918.

³²⁹ She died on April 1. “GRANT – In this city, April 1, Gertrude A. Grant, a native of San Francisco, aged 24 years.” (1890, April 4). *The San Francisco Chronicle*, p. 3. Gertie Grant is buried at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Colma, California.

“At one time a respectable girl”³³⁰ (June, 1890)

Late on Thursday night a medical man was hastily summoned to a house of considerable notoriety on Broad street, where a young woman, an inmate of the place, was supposed to be dying from the effects of poison taken with suicidal intent. After considerable hard work, the doctor pronounced his patient free of danger. The dose she had taken was morphine, of which she is a habitual user. Only about a month ago she had made a similar attempt to end her life, and her purpose had been thwarted by medical skill. She was at one time a respectable girl here, and was married in public³³¹ at the Forester’s picnic last year, subsequently drifting into a life of dishonor.

“He deserted her in her trouble”³³² (December, 1891)

On the rough bed in one of the small cells of the women’s ward, at the Provincial jail, a young woman lay, yesterday, with wide-open, staring eyes, and thin, bony hands peacefully crossed upon her breast. The clear sunlight streamed through the dark-barred windows and the open door of the cell, and softened the lines of the quiet face, and caressed the still hands. Bolts and bars were cast aside; the prisoner was dead.

“Frances Stevens” was the name given the unfortunate girl in the warrant of commitment, upon which she was received at the jail, on the 16th inst., and the coroner’s jury who went through the formalities of an inquest found that “Frances Stevens” came to her death through the habitual use of morphine. Her name was not Frances Stevens, but what mattered it? She had adopted the name to preserve her own from shame, and the jail authorities and police had no desire to disregard the wishes of the dead.

The girl at the time of her death was not more than 18 years of age. She was a native of Victoria, and her mother and stepfather still live here, though neither relative nor friend came to her side when she was dying, or when she was dead. It was Mrs. John who tenderly cared for the frail sufferer; brought her her own clothes

³³⁰ From Suicide Again Attempted. (1890, June 28). *Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 5.

³³¹ “The marriage at the Forester’s picnic at Victoria on Saturday was quite an excitement for the ladies. [...] Mr. Percy Harcourt and Miss Grace May Trachler, both of the Capital, and the former a member of the A. O. F., presented themselves as willing to fill the breach, and at 6 o’clock Bishop Cridge was sent for, a license procured and made out. The crowd could not have numbered less than 6,000 as the carriage containing the bride and bridegroom drove through the gates to the ring. They were escorted by the committee to the canopy erected for the celebration, and were met by the Bishop under the Union Jack. The ceremony was performed with all due solemnity, and the bride bore herself well throughout her trying ordeal. When the Secretary called for three cheers for the newly made bride and bridegroom after the ceremony, the outburst of applause could have been heard miles away. The bride, thanks to the courtesy of several ladies who supported her, was not at all nervous. Large numbers of small children scattered flowers over the path down which the couples walked to their hack. They drove away followed by loud applause, everybody being well satisfied that a marriage had been celebrated as promised.” Marriage in Public. (1889, August 5). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

³³² From DEAD IN THE JAIL. (1891, December 24). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 8.

to put on – she had nothing more than a thin dress, a pair of stockings and soleless shoes when arrested – and when she was dead, crossed her lifeless hands, and placed in them a bunch of fragrant wild flowers. It was the doctor who talked to her during the last hours of her wasted life, and listened to the story which in fragments she told.

She commenced the use of morphine about six years ago, and the drug soon made her a slave, dragging her down to the lowest depths of shame and degradation. Her family long ago disowned her, and lately the girl has been living with a man named Stevens, whom, the police say, she has supported with the wages of her shame, and to whom she sent for aid when she was arrested as a vagrant and sentenced to pay a fine of \$25 or go to jail for three months in default.

“He’ll get the money to help me out, if he hasn’t got it,” she said, and Jailer Muldoon hunted up this man in whom she had confidence.

But, like the majority of his kind, he deserted her in her trouble. “She got herself into the scrape,” he observed, “I haven’t got any money to spend getting her out.”

And so she died, with none endeared to her by the ties of blood or friendship at hand to speak a kind word, while outside the dark walls of the building that held her prisoner, old and young joined in the preparations for the day that ushered in “Peace on earth, good will to men.”

“Well looked after”³³³ (June, 1892)

A young fellow who has been drinking rather heavily of late to drown his troubles, as he said, this morning attempted to put an end to his life by taking a dose of morphine.

Between 8:30 and 9 a. m. today he went into T. R. Morrow & Co.’s Drug Store and requested to be served with 20 grains of morphine. The clerk asked him for his medical certificate, but the young fellow said that he had left it at home and wanted the morphine at once as he was troubled with an old sore. The clerk, who knew the man well, thinking all was right, supplied him as requested.

About an hour or so later the young fellow went into a saloon and called for a drink. He was then quite sober. While this was being prepared, he took from his pocket the packet containing the morphine [and] tore off one end, evidently with the purpose of pouring it into his drink. The bar-tender saw what he was doing and refused to serve him, at the same time asking him to give up the packet. This he refused to do. The bar tender called out to another man who was standing near by and told him what was the matter. He insisted upon the young fellow giving up the poison, which after some resistance he did. The packet was handed to Constable McKinnon, who happened to be in the office of the hotel at the time. The young fellow was allowed to go his own way, and went from the hotel to his room, when,

³³³ From Attempted Suicide. (1892, June 13). *The Nanaimo Free Press*, p. 4.

fortunately, he was well looked after by a gentleman who is rooming in the same block.

“He could get all he wanted”³³⁴ (June, 1892)

A young man the day before yesterday endeavored to purchase a bottle of morphine at one of the drug stores in town. Having no doctor’s prescription he was refused. The young man informed the druggist that he could get all he wanted by sending to Victoria, so that there was no good done in refusing him, but his request was not granted. Yesterday the young man entered the same store again and showed the proprietor a large bottle of morphine which had just arrived from Victoria. He said that he had telegraphed down and without any delay the poison had been sent. He also informed the druggist that he was a confirmed morphine fiend, he had been using it constantly for the past five years, and showed the marks on his arm where it had been injected. If druggists can sell poison of this description in the way we have mentioned, without asking any questions or requiring the signature of the purchaser, the law to prevent the sale of poisons is of but little use.

“A gentleman of leisure”³³⁵ (August, 1893)

Teddy North, a gentleman of leisure, who has been expressing his fancy for a free-and-easy life with considerable gaiety lately, very nearly shuffled off this mortal coil last evening at 11 o’clock at 61 View street, where he had been calling on some friends. Teddy sought exit from this vale of tears by means of a phial of morphine, or mistook the stuff for something else, the said receptacle containing enough of the opiate to lull a dozen able-bodied men to everlasting slumber. The lunatics of the house found Mr. North lying on a bed in a comatose condition and the bottle at his side. Dr. Leitch was called, and a little later Dr. Fraser. The physicians found the patient exhibiting all the symptoms of advanced morphine poisoning, and they at once began the most vigorous efforts to save his life. The stomach pump was put to work but although in a half-conscious state the victim fought like an unbroken bronco and it took two strong men to help muzzle him with the only available instrument at hand, a mouth-organ, appropriately enough. When this article of modern house furnishings was firmly inserted between the swiftly moving jaws of the patient, good progress was made with the pumping machine. The two burly citizens aforementioned then, by direction of the physicians, set Mr. North on his feet and trotted him up and down in a manner that was eminently sudorific and calculated to put all hands in training for a prize fight. He was then slapped, thumped, pinched, punched, switched, rolled, pulled, hauled, squeezed, shaken, bumped and generally threshing machined until consciousness began to put in an appearance in his half-closed optics. Next he was treated to a good hot bath, and the circulation at length

³³⁴ From A Morphine Fiend. (1892, June 17). *The Nanaimo Free Press*, p. 1.

³³⁵ From WELL SHAKEN AFTER TAKEN. (1893, August 8). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 5.

began to “get a move on,” and Mr. North several times inquired what he had done to merit such a terrible slugging as this. When it was apparent that the morphine had been fairly well jostled out of him, and that there was no chance of the deadly drug playing any underhand games, Teddy was left to himself. He was around as usual to-day at his customary haunts.

This is another instance of the reckless manner in which poison is served out to all and sundry by some³³⁶ drug stores. As already stated, there was enough morphine in the phial to kill a dozen men, and what North took would undoubtedly have finished him but for the timely arrival of the medical men. The law distinctly prohibits druggists serving customers with deadly drugs without proper information being supplied as to the application which is intended to be made of it. As matters now stand anybody can buy, without any trouble whatever, poison enough to put a whole regiment into the past tense.

1895 – 1904

“From the frying pan into the fire”³³⁷ (May, 1895)

In some way the erroneous notion has come to prevail that, in treating the morphine habit, cocaine is of great value, counteracting the effects of the morphine. Proceeding on this principle, numberless quacks have claimed ability to cure the morphine habit. The unfortunates whom they have succeeded in deluding are perhaps cured of the morphine habit, but in its stead they become cursed with a vice far more ruinous than all their former ills. Cocaine may counteract the effects of morphine, but when the action of the cocaine is exhausted the system demands greatly increased quantities of morphine, and this in time produces a desire for more and more cocaine. To use cocaine for curing the morphine habit is like jumping from the frying pan into the fire.

“A fit of melancholia”³³⁸ (September, 1895)

On Friday night of last week a woman named Cora, who resided in a house on Dupont street, took a dose of morphine during a fit of melancholia. A physician was called, the poison was pumped out, the woman partially rallied and was taken to St. Paul’s hospital. Her heart was weak and did not react and she died at 4 o’clock on Sunday morning. The evidence, taken at the inquest, held by W. J. McGuigan, M. D., coroner, this morning was as follows:

Dr. H. E. Langis, being sworn, said: My name is H. E. Langis³³⁹. I am a medical practitioner of the City of Vancouver. Last Friday evening about 7 o’clock a hackman

³³⁶ Word added in a correction made in the issue of Aug. 9.

³³⁷ From THE COCAINE HABIT. (1895, May 13). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 6.

³³⁸ From HEART DISEASE. (1895, September 16). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 4.

³³⁹ A physician with McGuigan & Langis. In 1895, he rented rooms on the Douglas block.

called on me and told me I was wanted at 129 Dupont street and to take with me what was necessary for a supposed case of poisoning. I went at once and upon going into the house found the deceased, Mamie Ackerly, in the toilet room, helpless, and supported by another woman and trying to vomit, but could not do so. After enquiring I was told that she had taken two bits' worth of morphine. I had her transferred to her room at once and examined her. I found all the symptoms of morphine poisoning. I gave her hypodermic injections of antidots and applied the stomach pump. I walked the woman for about four hours to prevent her from sleeping, and about 11 o'clock I was requested to take the woman to the hospital. I did so. [...]

I called again on her at 1 p. m., Saturday, and was told that she had been awake at intervals. When I called she was awake and answered all my questions rationally, and I conversed with her for about 15 minutes. She told me she did not remember anything that had happened the night before. I left her with the knowledge that there was hardly any danger from the morphine poisoning. [...]

I was informed about 6 o'clock on Sunday morning that she had died at 4 a. m. I considered that death had been produced by the heart disease, and had been accelerated by the overdose of morphine, which she had taken.

Some of the inmates of the house informed me that she had taken two bits' worth of morphine, which I would consider was about 15 grains. I was told besides that she was a fiend (to morphine). [...] She had been perfectly willing, when I was there, that I should do anything to bring her through. For instance, when I applied the stomach pump, she introduced the stomach tube herself and kept it in position until the contents of the stomach came out. I was told that she used to get her morphine from a friend in the East. She admitted to one of the inmates that she had taken morphine, and when I questioned her she intimated the same to me by sign. [...]

Della St. Clair, being duly sworn, stated: I live at 129 Dupont street³⁴⁰. I knew the deceased for the last two or three months. I knew nothing about her habits. I do not know if she ever bought any morphine at any time. I just came into the house when deceased informed me that she had taken a dose of morphine. One half hour previous to my arrival she said: "I have taken 25 cents' worth of morphine." She did not say where she got it. I saw nothing to show where she might have got the morphine. She came up to my room to tell me she had taken morphine. She was then ill; sick at the stomach and faint like. I have no idea where she got the morphine. I do not know whether she took the morphine in mistake or not. She was at times inclined to be melancholy. She was out that afternoon. She did not drink to any excess whatever. I know of no one in the house who was more intimate with her than myself.

The verdict was: The deceased came to her death from heart disease, accelerated by a dose of morphine.

Lately it has been shown with painful clearness at the police court that there are young girls in this city starting on a course similar to that of the poor woman

³⁴⁰ In the 1895 directory, this is listed as the residence of Miss Lottie Mansfield, a dressmaker born in the United States in 1869. As of the 1891 census, she shared the house with Mabel Dixon, a musician, and Minnie Avery, a South American typewriter (her job involved typing out documents).

referred to above. Let her fate be a warning. Suicide or death as a refuge is the inevitable fate of all women who stoop to folly and learn too late that men betray. Cora – or to refer to her properly, Mary Louise Ackerly, lived a short life – 24 years – and a seemingly merry one. How long she was depressed by the melancholy that led to her final rash act the Omnipotent only knows. Her parents live in Chicago. The landlady of the house in which she lived has paid all the cost of giving the unfortunate one a decent burial and her friends literally covered the coffin with flowers.

“A druggist’s experience”³⁴¹ (September, 1895)

“A good deal is written about the imprudence of physicians in prescribing morphine, but not half as much as should be,” said a druggist to a Word man the other day. The slaves of that drug are on the increase. They have no trouble in procuring it if they have the money to pay for it. It is a safe proposition that a large proportion of morphine users, especially women, have been led into the habit by the bad judgment of their physicians.

Let me give an instance: A woman in this neighborhood was ill with an exceedingly painful disease. Her doctor wrote a prescription containing morphine. She is a sensitive, nervous woman of a type common enough, and readily responded to medicine. I thought she was well, when in the course of a few days she sent the prescription to me to be renewed. A week later it came again, and in less than a week after that the servant brought it a third time. I had her leave it and sent for the woman’s husband. Why did his wife require the prescription so often? I asked him. He didn’t know, but she had told him she couldn’t do without it. Did she know it contained morphine? He did not, and was horror-stricken. He was confident that his wife was ignorant of the presence of the drug, to whose effects she was beginning to yield. I am satisfied also she knew nothing of it. I fixed up a little scheme with the husband. I prepared the prescription, leaving the morphine out. It was sent back once afterward and that was the end of it. That woman was rescued without knowing how near she had been to slavery.

Another case: I filled a prescription for pills containing a considerable percentage of morphine for a young married woman. She experienced the effects of the drug, not knowing what it was, and, of course, sent it to be renewed several times. I got hold of her husband, pledged him to aid and substituted quinine pills. The cure was complete. There are many other instances, however, where women learn the nature of the stuff they are taking, and before they realize it are its victims.

Brandy or morphine?³⁴² (March, 1896)

Habituated as I am to distressing letters of all kinds, I am shocked at the number of confessions I receive from morphomaniacs. The evil is rampant among our

³⁴¹ From A DRUGGIST’S EXPERIENCE. (1895, September 28). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 4.

³⁴² From The Morphine Habit. (1896, March 11). *The Chilliwack Progress*, p. 1.

women. Many write saying, “It must be brandy or morphine, which do you recommend?” and I say brandy. It sounds awful, it reads awful, it writes – I have no word strong enough for what it writes. It means, dear woman – you who have always been so good to me when I have kicked over the traces and broached the forbidden subjects – it means, this morphine or brandy habit, loss of all moral feeling, an easy habit of lying a dreadful irritability, a shocking distortion of all that is right and sane. I am often asked if there is no private cure for the morphine or the drink habit (so many women simply will not go to these homes), and I am powerless to answer. I wonder if there is not something people could get in a private way which would cure them of the drink or drug habit. I know of nothing but strength of will and earnest prayer, but I beg – through these columns of a woman’s paper – for information regarding a private and permanent cure for these dreadful and deplorable habits.

“She died of poison”³⁴³ (September, 1897)

In the case of Mrs. Piper, the coroner’s jury have returned a verdict that “deceased came to her death by poison, administered or taken while under the medical care of Dr. S. A. Metherell³⁴⁴.” [...]

Dr. Poole swore he was called to see deceased, and when he came in Dr. Metherell told him to hurry up as it was a case of morphine poison. Dr. Metherell was not, he thought, in his normal condition. He used drugs a great deal.

A sister of deceased deposed that she did not believe her sister took a dose of chlorodyne before going to see the doctor.

Dr. J. S. Hall gave evidence that he was called to see deceased and she then showed symptoms of having taken an overdose of chlorodyne, and the eye indicated the presence of morphine.

Dr. Metherell stated that deceased called on him for treatment, telling him at the same time she had taken over twenty drops of chlorodyne. She was in great pain and he injected morphine, he thought twice, putting the patient in his own bed. He then went to see another patient. She was in reach of his drugs. When he came back she was unconscious.

More on Mrs. Piper and Dr. Metherell³⁴⁵ (September, 1897)

Mrs. Mary Piper, a dressmaker, died on Monday morning. [...] The deceased obtained a divorce from her husband a year ago, and lived with relations on Harris street. She carried on her business as a dressmaker over Hesson & Irving’s grocery store, on Hastings street for some time, but at the time of her death rented rooms over Sutherland’s drug store on Westminster avenue. Her brother is Mr. McKenzie,

³⁴³ From SHE DIED OF POISON. (1897, September 2). *The Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 8.

³⁴⁴ Samuel Albert Metherell (c. 1860 – c. 1900).

³⁴⁵ From A SUSPICIOUS DEATH. (1897, September 1). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 7.

an employee in the B. C. Iron Works, who states that he was not aware anything was the matter with the deceased on Saturday when he last saw her.

Dr. Metherell was highly indignant at his arrest and was extremely violent when being searched at the police station. In fact he nearly succeeded in doing Officer McIntosh serious injury, and had to be thrown down on the floor and held by two officers while the third searched him. In his pockets were two bottles, one containing morphine and the other cocaine, besides a number of syringes for administering the noxious drugs.

In his pocket was a type-written letter addressed to "Auntie May" and signed "Alex." The writer said he felt lonely, and states that he would send a buggy for her if she could not walk. The writer also asks her to correct any rumor circulated that he was mad, as that was not so, he being as sane as any man.

"Dr. Metherell caused quite a furore"³⁴⁶ (February, 1937)

Dr. Metherell appears to have died around 1900. He may be the same Samuel Albert Metherell whose cenotaph in Ontario (Dr. Metherell's birth province) records he "died on Feb. 27, 1900 and [was] buried at sea on the west coast of Africa". Before he died, he managed to scandalize Vancouver's medical community with his low prices.

In pioneer days of Vancouver the sparse population, with continuous arrival of young medical men from the East eager to make their fortunes, gave an excuse for an occasional cutting of prices. In 1899³⁴⁷, there arrived a new physician in Vancouver, Dr. S. A. Metherell, a handsome chap with a glossy black beard. It was in days long before motorcars and the prosperity of medical men was sometimes indicated by the splendor of the turnout of horse and carriage.

Dr. Metherell caused quite a furore on Cordova street and Westminster avenue (Main street) by the magnificence of his equipage. But the sensation of his appearance on the street was as nothing compared to the jolt which the other doctors received when he boldly announced in a two-column display advertisement in the News-Advertiser that hereafter he would attend confinements for \$10. For a time he did a land-office business.

Dr. Metherell died within a year, but this event had nothing to do with his cutting of prices against his fellow-practitioners.

³⁴⁶ From Fees in Obstetrics. (1937, February 9). *The Province*, p. 4.

³⁴⁷ This is inaccurate. Dr. Metherell was advertising services at Rooms 4 and 5 of the Dunn Block, on 14 Cordova Street, as early as 1894. He charged \$1 cash for advice and medicine, \$1.50 for a visit and medicine, and \$10 for "accouchements" (attending a birth). He appears to have moved to Vancouver in October of 1893, after serving as a physician for the Nelson & Fort Sheppard Railway.

“It is likely that he will pull through”³⁴⁸ (April, 1898)

Jack Saville, a young man, who arrived in this city only a short time ago, took an overdose of morphine yesterday and when passing the Badminton hotel³⁴⁹, at about 3:45 in the afternoon fell on the grass and had to be taken to the police station. When picked up by officer McIntosh he was practically unconscious, except that he clung to the morphine bottle in his hand with a convulsive grasp. His left arm from the wrist to the elbow was covered with blue marks where the drug was injected. Though in a very shake condition to-day it is likely that he will pull through under the care of Dr. Maclean.

“Suffering intense agony”³⁵⁰ (April, 1898)

Up to a late hour last night the bunco man³⁵¹ who assisted Williams to rob Mr. Henry, of Stockton, Man., had not been arrested, and when the prisoner appears in court this morning he will likely be remanded for a couple of days. During his confinement in the police station Williams is suffering intense agony and has warned the jailer that unless he is soon provided with morphine he will not be found alive. He is a morphine fiend and declares that he has for some time past been injecting a full bottle into his system every day.

“Not quite so nervous”³⁵² (April, 1898)

John Williams, the alleged bunco man from Seattle, [was] before Mr. Justice Walkem yesterday afternoon and [...] elected to be tried by a jury at the next assizes.

Williams' condition was somewhat different from what it was while he was in the police court and would indicate that he had since received some morphine. He was not quite so nervous yesterday, nor did he exhibit much desire to harm anyone. On the contrary he was friendly and inclined to be entertaining.

When the charge was repeated to him he put his head forward and turning one of his ears towards His Lordship enquired:

“What did you say, Judge – that I was charged with stealing \$20 or winning it?”

After he left the court room he said to the officer who had him in charge that he guessed it was all up with him.

“I had a hunch the night I got on that boat to come over here,” he continued, “that I would fall into it. I've been doing business for fifteen years and you might say this is the first time I've been good and well caught. But then why was I caught? The

³⁴⁸ From OVERDOSE OF MORPHINE. (1898, April 6). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8.

³⁴⁹ At 603 Howe St.

³⁵⁰ From Up to a late hour. (1898, April 9). *The Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 2.

³⁵¹ Con man.

³⁵² From WILL TAKE A JURY TRIAL. (1898, April 16). *The Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 5.

other guy got away – I thought you fellows boasted that no one could get off this island. I would like to have my chance over again; I wouldn't do a thing but lead you [on] a merry chase around that bay. As for that old geezer who lost his money and then said I stole it, I would just like to pull his old whiskers out by the roots and then let me ever get a chance at that woman, I'll give her a rap on the head that will finish her. That's a business where I'm onto myself." [...]

Since Williams' arrest the chief of police has received information which convinces him that his prisoner has a very bad past.

Williams found guilty³⁵³ (June, 1898)

John Williams, a Seattle bunco man, charged with stealing \$210 from Jas. A. Henry, a Manitoba farmer, was found guilty. Henry was lured into holding the stakes in a dice game in the Empire hotel and induced to show how much money he had on his person. As soon as he did this Williams snatched the money and ran.

"On suspended sentence"³⁵⁴ (October, 1898)

The only prisoner to be disposed of at to-day's session of the police court was J. N. Jackson, who was accused of passing a bogus cheque for \$40 on Schwahn Bros.³⁵⁵ The man was badly mangled in an accident some years ago and has spent many months in hospitals since. He has become addicted to the use of morphine and is not quite right in his head when under the influence of the drug. He refunded the money to Schwahn Bros. and was allowed to go on suspended sentence.

"The morphine fiends are the worst"³⁵⁶ (November, 1898)

It requires a visit to the Salvation Army Rescue Home before one can fully realize the work that is being carried on there. [...] Captain Patterson³⁵⁷, the officer in charge, in conversation, said: [...] "The poor fellows who suffer from drink are not the worst that we have to deal with. The morphine fiends are the worst. Poor fellows, some of them have contracted the habit of their own accord, but others have been led to it through its being used on them when undergoing surgical operations. We have a terrible time with some of these, though it is pleasing to say that they are not at all numerous. The drug seems to have a terrible power over them. When it is taken away from them they will get down on their knees and beg for it. We have had one lately, and we have been doing the best we can for him, but he goes out and gets the drug elsewhere, and that is a bar against all our efforts, and yet I think the man would

³⁵³ From VICTORIA ASSIZES. (1898, June 2). *The Province*, p. 1.

³⁵⁴ From NOT RESPONSIBLE. (1898, October 3). *The Province*, p. 7.

³⁵⁵ August and Fred Schwahn had their business at the Atlantic Hotel on 61 Cordova St.

³⁵⁶ From MAKING NEW MEN. (1898, November 8). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 3.

³⁵⁷ William Patterson. In 1898 he lived at 160 Water St.

like to reform. He realizes what a curse it is to him. It seems a pity that people should supply him, but maybe he gets what they call chewing opium down in Chinatown.”

“A drug fiend is easily detected”³⁵⁸ (May, 1902)

“Dope fiends?”

“Yes, that is what we call the victims of drug habits,” said a police official. “Drugs have developed a modern class of criminals. The number is increasing rapidly from year to year. Criminologists are making a special study of them and I am inclined to believe that their care is one of the problems of the future.

“A drug fiend is easily detected and if we do not observe him, as such, when he is brought to the station, we soon find him out when he is locked up. Their features are very striking. Their faces have a pale, lean look, and their eyes are decidedly sunken. We always search such people very carefully so as to get all the dope they have on their persons. They are cunning about it, sometimes, and conceal the dope in the lining of their clothes.

“We have been very fortunate, however, in not having to care for that class of men when they are in a serious condition. When the victim is not in a too serious condition we let him scream for his drug for a while. He appears to be in the worst conceivable agony. He is taken with cramps, and will tear his flesh, pull his hair out, and do hundreds of other things. The victims then are more like animals than men. They will do anything for dope. They will mimic any kind of an animal that you name if they think that will influence you to get them their drugs. I have seen fellows get down and growl like a dog. They will stand on their head or go through any other performance.

“If there are two victims of the drug in one cell they hate each other more than can be imagined when they are not under the influence of the drug.

“After the victim gets the drug he is the nicest fellow you ever saw. He feels like a king, and he can tell the most romantic story you ever heard.

“Crime and the use of drugs go together. When a man becomes a drug fiend he loses whatever sense of honor and shame that kept him from being a criminal and he is deterred from crime only by fear. Even his sense of fear is overcome by the influence of the drug to which he is a slave. Everything is rose color to his mind and he forgets all about such things as policemen and prisons. A victim will always lie about himself. If he was a thief or a criminal before he contracted the habit, he will say the drug made him a criminal. If he was a drug fiend first, he will usually lie the other way.

“The most popular drugs among the fiends are morphine, cocaine and opium. When they have used dope for some time they generally use morphine and cocaine together, for one drug alone is not strong enough for them. The hypodermic injection is the principal method in which the victims use it. I have known cases where the skin of the slave was so thoroughly pierced with holes that he could hardly find another place in which to insert the needle. [...]

³⁵⁸ From USE OF DOPE GROWS. (1902, May 10). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 11.

“The jail is the best place to cure the drug fiend. I have seen a number of them go away absolutely cured. When we have released them, I have heard them say: ‘I don’t want that any more,’ or ‘Throw it away,’ when we have offered them the dope which we took from them when they entered the jail. We have had several during the past year. A dope fiend is always anxious that some one else should learn the habit.”

“Taken as a relief only”³⁵⁹ (June, 1902)

The inquest on the body of W. R. Marvin, alias Warner, an insurance agent of Tacoma, who was found dead in his room at the Dominion hotel³⁶⁰ on Saturday evening, was held by Coroner Hart at the city hall yesterday.

The evidence of Dr. Hall³⁶¹ went to show that deceased had not been a confirmed morphinist. He had been operated upon for appendicitis, which had left him in a poor condition of health and very liable to suffer pain from cramp in the stomach. Deceased also suffered from kidney disease, and it was probable that the morphine had been recently adopted for the relief of pain. Death was caused by morphine. [...] It was likely that the morphine had been taken as a relief only. [...] The jury considered for a few minutes and returned a verdict of “accidental death.”

“Beyond all human semblance”³⁶² (July, 1902)

Seldom outside the slums of great cities is such a scene to be witnessed as was presented to Medical Health Officer McAlpine³⁶³, Sergeant of Police Butler and a World reporter this morning.

There are a number of small shacks on the lane at the rear of Dupont street. To one of these the attention of Dr. McAlpine was attracted by a man named Casher, who said there was a woman sick inside.

And what a sight was there! On a pallet lay a form partly garbed as a woman, but the face was battered, bloated and distorted beyond all human semblance. One side was swollen so that the eye was closed up, and was all colors from the inflammation, green, black, blue and purple. Across the forehead were three cuts into which the hair hanging over the forehead was matted. The open waist showed the bosom one mass of scars from the punctures of a morphine syringe.

The cabin itself was indescribably filthy. A respectable pig would refuse to live in it. When the doctor arrived there was a woman called Grace there trying to do something for the poor wreck, who was too far gone from whisky and drugs to be able to speak very coherently. In the corner was a partly emptied whisky bottle which was said to belong to a Jennie Wilson, who had spent part of the night in the cabin. The story elicited that the woman had been brought to the cabin by a colored woman who

³⁵⁹ From INCONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE. (1902, June 3). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 6.

³⁶⁰ At 119 Yates. In 1902, the proprietor was Stephen Jones.

³⁶¹ Dr. Frank Hall lived nearby, at 103 Yates. His office was in Bastion square.

³⁶² From HUMAN WRECK AMID SQUALOR. (1902, July 8). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 8.

³⁶³ Probably J. A. L. McAlpine, M. D., who in 1902 had offices at 322 Cambie and lived at 1000 Robson.

had kicked her out of the house the night before. She was sent for but she refused to take the woman into the house. Something had to be done, so the ambulance was sent for and the poor battered wreck taken to the hospital, and the colored woman informed that she would have to pay the hospital dues.

“Equipped with cigarettes and morphine”³⁶⁴ (November, 1902)

It is curious to see a man in jail, plentifully equipped with cigarettes and morphine. Walter Willis of Rossland is that man. He is charged with shooting Robert Adams and is in Nelson lockup to await trial at the next assizes. Were his morphine taken away it is thought he would become insane or die.

“Suffering keenly”³⁶⁵ (November, 1902)

Nelson [sic.] Willis, confined in the provincial jail on the charge of attempted murder, is in a sad plight. The authorities have permitted him to have the drug which he has used to excess for years, but have not allowed him a hypodermic needle. Taken internally the morphine does not seem to have its ordinary effect, and Willis is said to be suffering keenly.

“His imprisonment has been a blessing”³⁶⁶ (January, 1903)

Willis, of Rossland, who is in jail at Nelson, charged with wounding Adams in a gambling house at the former place, is undergoing the process of being cured of his love for morphine. His allowance has been decreased daily and will shortly be cut off. Willis says in that one respect his imprisonment has been a blessing.

Trixie Howard, witness³⁶⁷ (April, 1904)

The only other feature of interest in to-day’s hearing was the medical expert testimony adduced regarding the girl Trixie Howard, who is one of the important witnesses for the Crown. She admitted the other day during cross-examination that she had used morphine for a year. She admitted that she took several quarter-grain doses each day, and would not deny that she had once taken three and a half grains in one dose. During recent weeks, however, Miss Howard says she had reformed and is now undergoing medical treatment to relinquish the habit. But the defence wishes to discredit her evidence on the ground that her testimony is that of an irresponsible

³⁶⁴ From PROVINCIAL. (1902, November 11). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 3.

³⁶⁵ From PROVINCIAL. (1902, November 26). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 3.

³⁶⁶ From PROVINCIAL. (1903, January 16). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 3.

³⁶⁷ From CROWE TELLS A ROMANCTIC STORY. (1904, April 12). *The Province*, p. 1.

morphine fiend, and to that end Mr. Hart-McHarg³⁶⁸ had Dr. Ivan Senkler³⁶⁹ on hand this morning when court was called. Then Dr. Fagan, Secretary of the Provincial Board of Health, was called by the prosecution on the same point.

Dr. Senkler said that a person who could take a dose of three and a half grains and live afterwards would have to be a confirmed victim of the drug. A quarter of a grain was the usual dose, and sometimes it was doubled. An opium fiend was usually a malicious person, always trying to do harm to some one. The frequent use of the drug weakened the mental faculties, and such persons often liked notoriety. Then they were inveterate liars, and he would not accept the word of an opium fiend on a matter of importance unless very strongly corroborated.

To Attorney-General Wilson Dr. Sinclair said that if a morphine fiend were telling the truth he would probably tell it as accurately as any one else. The capacity for taking morphine varied greatly with individuals.

“If I took a grain of morphine right now,” asked Mr. Hart-McHarg, “what would happen to me?”

“You would have about an even chance of living,” replied the witness.

Then Dr. Fagan took the stand. He said he had heard the Howard woman give her evidence. He was asked to express an opinion about her condition, but Mr. Wilson said it would be for the jury to judge the value of her evidence.

Mr. Hart-McHarg said it was new to him that one witness should be called to give opinion of the testimony of another witness.

The learned judge was inclined to allow the question, at the same time remarking to Mr. Hart-McHarg that “something new happens every day.”

Dr. Fagan said that Miss Howard seemed to him to be a very bright woman, not a very advanced morphine fiend.

Her power of recognition would not, the doctor thought, be impaired.

“What would be the effect of a sharp cross-examination on such a woman?” asked Mr. Wilson.

“If she were a fiend in any way advanced, I would expect her to break down,” replied Dr. Fagan.

In answer to further questions by Mr. Hart-McHarg, Dr. Fagan said he was impressed that she was telling the truth, and that she was getting over the habit of taking morphine.

To Mr. Wilson, witness said that he had known many people who used morphine who were not at all depraved. Taking Trixie Howard’s case, he thought, from the doses she took, that she would be on the border line.

³⁶⁸ W. Hart-McHarg’s office was in Room 2 of the Flack Block. In 1904 he lived at 658 Howe.

³⁶⁹ W. Ivan Senkler. In 1904 he had offices at 633 Hastings W., and lived at 1305 Davie.

“Her mind seemed unusually clear”³⁷⁰ (April, 1904)

Dr. John T. Carroll³⁷¹ testified he had some experience treating those addicted to the morphine habit. On Feb. 29, the Howard woman called at his office, and after a verbal examination he had prescribed for her. Had she not stated she used morphine witness would not have known it. He saw her again a week later, and yesterday. Her mind seemed unusually clear. Witness had no reason to believe that she was suffering from having taken morphine. A person taking three or four doses of a quarter of a grain every 14 hours would not be affected, as it was not any more than an ordinary stimulant to an adult.

To Mr. McHarg, Dr. Carroll said [he] did not agree with the evidence of Dr. Fagan and Dr. Senkler, when they stated that a person who could take 3½ grains was an advanced morphine fiend.

“Do you contradict Dr. Osler when he says morphine fiends are inveterate liars, and their evidence is not to be relied upon?”

“Some people are like that whether they take morphine or not,” Dr. Carroll replied.

Witness said it was difficult to detect persons who took morphine. He had only treated Trixie Howard twice.

Alias Frank Greener³⁷² (July, 1904)

Of the physical wrecks that have been gathered in by the police for a dozen years, Frank Greener, aged twenty-four, arrested last night, surpassed all previous examples.

To-day's was the fourth sentence meted out to the young man in Vancouver. In 1899 Frank Lewis was sentenced to six months for vagrancy. In 1901 Frank Graham was sent up for six months for theft from the Windsor Hotel, and was given another six months for vagrancy. Last night Frank Greener was arrested, and to-day given six months, the full term for vagrancy. All three names are of one and the same man, and his tell-tale portrait occupies a prominent position in the rogues' gallery at the police station.

Early last evening Officer McDonald went to West Fairview in response to a report that a man and woman were acting suspiciously at the edge of the woods. After much search the officer and a number of the neighbors found the man, who turned out to be Greener, with a woman whom he said was his sister, but who is known by the police to be no relation to him. They had been sleeping in the woods there for a couple of weeks. The only covering in the shape of bed-clothing that they possessed was a mat composed of sacks. The couple resisted arrest, and the officer had his hands full bringing them in. One of the first things he found in their meagre outfit was a

³⁷⁰ From CROWE AND THE GLENN CASE. (1904, April 15). *The Nanaimo Free Press*, p. 5.

³⁷¹ In 1904, his office was at 803 Howe.

³⁷² From DOPE-FIENDS ARE GIVEN LONG TERMS. (1904, July 27). *The Province*, p. 1.

dope outfit. Primarily it is a morphine affair that the officer found, but connected were needles and other details of paraphernalia used ordinarily for hypodermically injecting cocaine and similar drugs. The officer and his charges were walking down a path when Greener suddenly asked McDonald to pick up a hypodermic needle that had fallen. The officer reached for it and at the same moment Greener pulled an open knife from his pocket and made a desperate attempt to kill the officer by cutting his throat. McDonald disarmed him, and then, with the assistance of another officer, brought the pair to the station.

This morning Greener and the woman presented a fearful abject appearance. Both trembled violently, and their faces were drawn to a painful degree. Both drew their clothing around them and shivered in the warm courtroom. When Greener stood up to answer the charge his arms shrunk around him and he swayed back and forth in a sickening way. He declared he was no vag, that he had plenty of money sent to him from home.

The officer told his story, and the magistrate said that he considered about six months would suffice as a benefit to the prisoner and society generally. Just then Greener began to take a real live interest in the proceedings.

With a sob Greener stepped forward and shouted:

“You might as well finish me off here! I was born in Canada, and you are trying to do me!”

The prisoner sank back in a heap on the bench. The Clerk then read another charge, accusing him of attempting to do grievous bodily harm to the officer.

Greene went into the air at this, and then he heaved forward across the rail, doubled up in agony, and groaned as if his last hour had come.

The Chief in pity decided that the second charge should be withdrawn. The man was carried out and down to a cell.

The woman was formally charged and sent down for six months. She said she would be willing to leave the city if she got a chance, but the court decided otherwise.

Theft from the Windsor Hotel³⁷³ (July, 1901)

The police received word this morning that two men who had stayed at the Windsor hotel last night, had helped themselves to some hotel furniture before they left this morning. Chief North and Clerk McIntosh went down to investigate and arrested the men, Wm. Lewis, alias Frank Graham, and Frank Lewis, in an alley off Westminster avenue.

The former was made up as a cripple with one arm, but when his coat was pulled off at the station, he became whole at once, and braced up like an athlete. Graham had been arrested and sentenced to three months' imprisonment on November 19, 1899, for attempted theft, and afterwards served six months for vagrancy.

³⁷³ From MASQUERADE AS CRIPPLE. (1901, July 11). *The Province*, p. 3.

At that time he had his leg tied up and went around on a crutch³⁷⁴ begging. This time he has discarded his crutch, but with his arm doubled and inserted, elbow first, in his coat sleeve, he looks crippled on the other end of his body.

1905 – 1914

“A man of culture and geniality”³⁷⁵ (April, 1906)

This morning a Chinaman on his way to work at Mr. F. R. Stewart’s ranch, about a mile from Central Park, noticed that the small house occupied by an Englishman named Percy W. Johnson had disappeared. On approaching nearer he saw a heap of smouldering ashes near the centre of which was the charred remains of a human body. [...]

The dead body was identified as that of Percy W. Johnson, who had occupied the shack. Mr. Johnson was a remittance man about 38 years of age. His father is understood to be a prominent broker in London, Eng. He purchased the piece of timber property on which he lived some time ago but had made little or no effort to clear it. He was admittedly a morphine fiend. He had been urged many times by neighbors to try and discontinue the habit, because, outside of that, he was a man of culture and geniality, but it apparently had too strong a hold on him. Some time ago the rickety stove he had in his shack fell down and he burned his hands very severely in putting out the resultant blaze. The theory is that the stove fell down again last night and that he was too far under the influence of the dream gun to do anything to avert the resultant tragedy.

“Death by misapprehension”³⁷⁶ (May, 1906)

“Death by misapprehension,” was the verdict returned by the jury at the inquest held last evening over the body of Joseph Green, a logger living on the Johnson road in Surrey.

³⁷⁴ Frank Graham, alias Lewis, alias Greener, may have been behind the attempted robbery described in this article from November, 1899: “A burglary case was reported this morning which shows what kind of customers are now trying to rob houses in Vancouver. The prospective victim in this case was Mrs. Dawson, wife of the proprietor of the Glasgow hotel. Last night it happened that there was something wrong with the lock on her door, and she placed a chair against it inside. During the night the chair was pushed over, and Mrs. Dawson walked out into the hall with a drawn revolver. She cornered the tramp behind a door. He was presumably a cripple, with a wooden stock on his leg from the knee down. He pleaded to be let go on account of being a cripple. On Mrs. Dawson calling for the police, the man made a plunge down stairs, and discarded the wooden leg. He went out as fast as possible with apparently not trouble about using his own feet.” AFRAID OF REVOLVER. (1899, November 17). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 4.

³⁷⁵ From MAN BURNT ALIVE AT CENTRAL PARK CABIN. (1906, April 17). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

³⁷⁶ From MORPHINE CAUSES DEATH. (1906, May 9). *The Province*, p. 8.

The evidence showed that Johnson had been addicted to the use of morphine and that he had taken several large doses lately while sobering up from the effects of a several days' spree. It was thought that he had taken an overdose of the deadly drug, and the verdict given above was arrived at.

“One of the worst morphine fiends”³⁷⁷ (July, 1906)

“This fellow is one of the worst morphine fiends I have ever seen,” said Sergeant-Detective Mulhern this morning while telling what he knew about J. P. Dunlap, charged with vagrancy. And certainly Dunlap did not belie the description. His face, of a pasty, yellowish white, was such that the man when asleep would invariably be taken for a corpse. Mulhern went on to tell how the man had come to town with the circus and had barely subsisted since, doing no work and having no visible means of subsistence.

“I hardly understand the nature of this charge. This is not the understanding I had with the officers last night. I was to get out of town at once,” said Dunlap.

“Would you go away? Have you the money to get away?” asked the magistrate.

“Well, I have sixty cents,” said Dunlap with an apologetic smile.

Then Detective Waddell³⁷⁸ took the stand and corroborated Mulhern's evidence. The man he considered one of the worst fiends he had ever seen. He had a bad record.

“Well, if I am a drug fiend, it must be charged to the medical fraternity,” said Dunlap. It is an old, old plea, and it means that during sickness drugs have been administered by a doctor and the habit thus acquired. Just how much truth there is in it in this case, no one can tell. According to the detectives the man's arms are raw and covered with scars from the hypo “gun” which he uses in injecting the drug.

Dunlap was given 24 hours to arrange to get out of town. The case will be called again tomorrow morning, but if he has succeeded in raising the wind to blow him to Seattle, it will drop.

“Of the most pronounced type”³⁷⁹ (July, 1906)

John Shaan is a dope fiend of the most pronounced type. When he was captured the other day he had every pocket in his clothes filled with morphine, and his countenance and appearance told the tale of the dope route to perfection. He pleaded for an opportunity to get out of the city so that he could find work in the canneries.

“The town is too full of men like you who want to get a living without working,” was the magistrate's rejoinder. “I'll commit you to three months and give you the chance to get free from the dope habit.”

³⁷⁷ From THE COURT OF THE CADI. (1906, July 10). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

³⁷⁸ In 1906, Detective Andrew Waddell rented a room at 622 Princess.

³⁷⁹ From Time to Straighten Up. (1906, July 14). *The Province*, p. 8.

“He had been taking the drug as a physic”³⁸⁰ (January, 1907)

Yesterday afternoon Frank Fuller, who was taken to the city lock-up after being arrested for drunkenness, caused considerable excitement in the police station by taking a dose of morphine sulphate which he had concealed in one of his pockets. The man was placed in a cell after being searched and was left by the jailer in a drunken stupor. About half an hour afterwards he was found unconscious with a small phial by his side. Dr. Robertson, city health officer, was called and relieved the unfortunate with a hypodermic injection. He is sober to-day and none the worse for his foolish action.

Fuller explained to the police that he had been taking the drug as physic, and says that he was too drunk to know what he was doing. He also says that he never contemplated suicide, and the police believe his story. The dose was only a small one, and had he been sober would not have affected him.

Bacon, ham and brandy³⁸¹ (January, 1910)

Three years later, Frank Fuller was convicted of food theft.

Frank Fuller, [...] charged with stealing five hams and five sides of bacon from the sealing schooner *Peschawa*, pleaded guilty in the police court this morning and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. [...] The hams and bacon were taken from the schooner while the steward left the boat to go up town and trace his dog, which had been taken from the schooner. While away he left the stores unlocked. The case against Fuller was that he stole them and sold them afterwards. The value of the plunder was \$30. Fuller now goes into the local jail for the second time³⁸². He was sentenced to six months for being implicated in the theft of liquor³⁸³ from a bonded warehouse in the city.

“Once a well known veterinary surgeon”³⁸⁴ (February, 1907)

The spectacle of two officers carrying a morphine and cocaine wrecked and helpless form before and from the bar of justice was witnessed in the Cordova street court to-day. Physically unable to answer to the charge of theft of logs from booms in False Creek, from the sale of which he could secure the funds to supply him with drugs, Dr. William Lewis, once a well known veterinary surgeon, was formally remanded to to-morrow.

³⁸⁰ From POLICE BUDGET. (1907, January 11). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 12.

³⁸¹ From THREE YEARS MORE FOR FRANK FULLER. (1910, January 5). *Victoria D. Times*, p. 8.

³⁸² At least the third, counting his arrest for drunkenness.

³⁸³ “Frank Fuller pleaded guilty to having in his possession a quantity of brandy which had been stolen from Rithet’s bonded warehouse at the E. & N. station, and was sentenced to six months in jail.” PLEADS GUILTY AND GETS SIX MONTHS. (1908, June 23). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 2.

³⁸⁴ From CARRIED FROM COURT. (1907, February 1). *The Province*, p. 1.

Along one side of the creek Detective Jackson yesterday searched for the doctor and his crafty craft, and along the other side Detective Anderson, both with pockets full of complaints from lumber companies. They found the doctor at noon, industriously sawing off the marks of identification on the ends of the purloined logs. Today the charge appears against the “beachcomber” of theft from the Rat Portage Lumber Company.

“We have had many morphine wrecks here in our time,” say the police officers, “but Dr. William Lewis is the worst.” He can take from fifteen to twenty grains at a dose.

“Oh, don’t”³⁸⁵ (February, 1907)

“You take morphine?” asked Magistrate Williams of William Lewis, charged with the theft of logs from the Rat Portage Lumber Company and so much of a drug fiend that he was unable to appear on Saturday.

“I do, Your Worship, but I can’t help it: I’ve taken it for twenty-five years.”

“I’ll send you up for six months and see what they can do for you to break the habit.”

“Oh, don’t, don’t, don’t do it,” half-sobbed the afflicted man, who saw the imminent separation³⁸⁶ of his enemy-friend.

“The picture of a nervous wreck”³⁸⁷ (March, 1907)

David McNabb, the numismatist, will know his fate to-morrow, the term he will spend in the walled enclosure on the banks of the Fraser.

Almost unknown, he maintains a sullen silence superinduced with half-grain doses of morphine, to which the jail physician has limited the luxury-curse that tempted McNabb to gather in the Carnegie Museum collection, and which he sought to exchange for the drug in Victoria.

Throughout the morning session of the court the little brown-haired, dark-eyed man of thirty, with a drooping mustache and sallow face, seemed half-doped, avoiding the glances of the court officials and spectators. He was the picture of a nervous wreck when he rose to answer the charge.

“Guilty,” he said in a feeble undertone.

“I would ask for a remand until tomorrow,” said Crown Prosecutor Reid.

³⁸⁵ From DOPE FIEND GETS SIX MONTHS IN JAIL. (1907, February 5). *The Province*, p. 14.

³⁸⁶ “Dr. William Lewis, the former veterinary surgeon, who is now a morphine fiend and a wreck, was found guilty of stealing logs from the Rat Portage Mills, and sentenced to six months’ imprisonment. Although allowed mild doses of the drug to keep him alive he was a pitiable creature this morning. He told the magistrate that he had been a dope victim for years. He had tried cures three times and they had only ruined his stomach. Now he could not live without morphine.” COURT OF THE CADI. (1907, February 4). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 2/

³⁸⁷ From WILL BE SENTENCED FOR COIN THEFT THURSDAY. (1907, March 6). *Province*, p. 1.

McNabb, with eyes still riveted to the floor, turned and vanished through the iron door.

“An inveterate drug fiend”³⁸⁸ (March, 1907)

McNabb is an inveterate drug fiend and this morning he showed very plainly the effect of having been deprived of the usual stimulant since arrested. His eyes were abnormally bright and he was in a pitiable state of nervousness. He appears to feel his position keenly and has made a full breast of his history to the police, who absolutely refuse to give any information as to his antecedents, intimating, however, that the unfortunate man is well connected and has reached his present state entirely through his addiction to the drug habit. It is doubtful that his real name is McNabb. The police are quite satisfied that this is his first offense. McNabb stated this morning that he had been in town but a short time. He stated yesterday that he yielded to temptation when under the influence of drugs and expressed the fervent hope that his term in the penitentiary would cure him of his cravings.

The theft from the Carnegie Library³⁸⁹ (March, 1907)

The burglar who stole \$10,000 worth and more of valuable coins and bills from the Carnegie Library at Vancouver on Tuesday night of last week was arrested yesterday by Sergeant Detective Palmer and Detective Macdonald in his room at a local hotel, after being shadowed since the previous evening. He gave his name as David McNab, aged 30 years, a clerk by occupation, and stated he had been using morphine for six years past – the robbery of the Vancouver museum being attributed by him to his cravings for the drug. More than 200 coins were in his possession; and the majority, if not all, of those disposed of in this city by him were recovered. Some few bills were passed at cigar stores and saloons at Vancouver, which may also be recovered.

There were some valuable coins in McNab’s pockets. Among them was a Roman silver denarius, Trajan, A. D. 100, found at Bengore Head, Ireland; a silver groat, Henry VIII; silver groat of very base silver, struck at Bristol; silver penny, Elizabeth, with motto, “A rose without a thorn”; sixpence, Queen Anne; English silver penny, King John (but with name of Henry VII); silver penny, Edward I., struck at London; Queen Anne shilling of silver, mined in Wales; farthing of Edward VII., issued only in Malta; all of which belonging to R. V. Harvey of Vancouver.

There were also George III. half-penny of 1774, William IV. fourpence, Wellington half-penny of the year before Waterloo; Transvaal³⁹⁰ sixpence of 1896, and Koshu Kiu Ichibu, a valuable copper coin from Japan, which were in a collection loaned by Miss Edge.

³⁸⁸ From *Museum Thief Got Five Years*. (1907, March 7). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

³⁸⁹ From VANCOUVER THIEF CAPTURED IN CITY. (1907, March 6). *Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 11.

³⁹⁰ Now a part of South Africa.

Other Vancouver numismatists from whose collections McNab helped himself, and whose coins were found in his possession, were Miss Leavercock, Mrs. F. W. Amesbury³⁹¹, F. H. de Forest, curator of the museum of the Carnegie Library, John Clifford, C. J. Lee-Warner, D. O. Bowen³⁹², W. L. Burgess³⁹³, R. L. Clark³⁹⁴, Dr. Epps, Richard Robinson, A. X. Labrose³⁹⁵ and Dr. Grant. All of Miss Leavercock's collection was taken, including George II. halfpenny, farthing of 1755 (English), George III. twopence, which weighed as much as two and a half silver dollars – this being the coin which Detective Perdue purchased for 50 cents from McNab at Aaronson's pawnshop. There were also Spanish, Indian, Guatemalan, Brazilian, Danish, Russian and Japanese coins, which were in use centuries ago.

The whole collection is valued at considerably more than \$10,000; in fact, the total is difficult to estimate. The loot taken from McNab includes a number of cases of coins, more than 200 of gold, silver and copper coinage, and a considerable number of bills. The bills included D. O. Bowen's collection of bills, now out of print and very rare; and of all sizes, from little certificates no bigger than half an inch, but an inch and a half to ordinary sized notes. The coins were miscellaneous indeed, having everything from the ragged, chopped corners of the Roman denarius and the pebble-like brass coins in use in the days of the Shoguns in Japan to the jubilee crowns and half crowns of her late Majesty's jubilee, and the passed coinage with Oom Paul's³⁹⁶ head thereon.

McNab was selling the coins at bargain prices and a number were taken in this city, the greater number by Mr. Aaronson, who bought nearly a hundred. The valuable specie, including coins that numismatists would pay many dollars for, were loose in his pockets, and the bills crumpled in a small purse, a pocketbook with the mark of a St. Paul firm on it. He had also some legal tender of the time in the form of a \$10 bill and some silver, and two small vials of morphine tablets. In his pocketbook also was a cutting, or rather a "tearing," from the Vancouver Province of Thursday, February 28, with a half-column describing the burglary³⁹⁷ of the Carnegie Library at the Terminal City. The report was amended with pencil-marks, some of the list of coins reported taken being scratched out. Those eliminated from the list by McNab's

³⁹¹ F. W. Amesbury was a partner of the Victoria and Vancouver Stevedoring and Contracting Co.

³⁹² He once owned a "Gold-handle umbrella, initials D. O. B.; left on a 6 o'clock Davie car. D. O. Bowen, 435 Granville, North American Life." LOST. (1907, August 23). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 21.

³⁹³ William L. Burgess (d. 1927).

³⁹⁴ An auctioneer with offices at 336 Westminster Avenue.

³⁹⁵ A. X. Labrose was not averse to selling part of his collection. "FOR SALE – Collection of coins. Apply A. X. Labrose, P.O. Box 1347, city." FOR SALE. (1908, April 9). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 22.

³⁹⁶ Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger (1825 – 1904), president of the South African Republic during the Second Boer War.

³⁹⁷ The article begins: "Mr. H. J. DeForest, curator of the museum at the Carnegie Library, yesterday afternoon completed an inventory of the coins stolen by burglars in Tuesday night's raid on the museum. Most of the losses are incurred by those who lent collections to the museum, although Mr. DeForest has discovered, what he apparently overlooked yesterday morning, that he is himself a considerable loser, having lost all his collection of coins, although his paintings and curios, other than the coins were not taken." MANY VALUABLE COINS ARE MISSING. (1907, February 28). *The Province*, p. 7.

pencil were: Halfpenny, George IV., 1823 (Irish harp); half-penny, George II., 1806; half-penny, Victoria, 1860; Wellington, half-penny token, 1814.

Suspicion was directed against McNab by his attempt to sell a \$7 bill issued by Molson's Bank in 1871, now rare, for \$5. When the city detective department reported this fact to Chief Langley, knowing that the museum of the Carnegie Library at Vancouver had been looted the week before, he arranged to have the man kept under surveillance, and meanwhile, telegraphed to Chief Chisholm of Vancouver, asking if such a bill as the Molson's Bank issue offered by McNab was among the loot taken from the Carnegie Library. Before an answer came a telephone message was received from Sergeant Palmer that McNab had gone to Aaronson's pawnshop and was offering coins for sale there. Detective Perdue went to the premises on the corner of Broad and Johnson streets, and without causing suspicion, entered into conversation with McNab while the later was endeavoring to sell several coins.

"How much for this one?" asked the detective, picking up a George III. two-penny copper piece, weighing more than two and a half silver dollars.

"Four bits," answered McNab, and a bargain was struck.

Then the detective left him in order to allow the unsuspecting man to return to his hotel, with Detectives Palmer and Macdonald on his track. Soon after McNab entered his room at noon yesterday he received a visit from the officers and was placed under arrest, search revealing the large number of coins carried in his pockets.

He admitted the robbery and volunteered his name as David McNab, "a good Scotch name," but this is thought to be an assumed name. He said that on the night of Tuesday, February 27, he was sitting on the steps of the Carnegie Library at Vancouver, broke. He was on the steps when the place was locked up, and found a key with which he entered the building about 10 p. m., and proceeded to gather up the coin collections. He remained in the library the greater part of the night, leaving with his loot in the early morning. He remained in Vancouver the next day and read the newspaper reports, meanwhile going to different cigar stores and saloons selling coins and bills. He offered only the modern coins, less likely to attract suspicion, and on Friday came to Victoria, where he has been since.

Detective Jackson, of the Vancouver police department, arrived by the steamer Princess Victoria last night, and returned this morning, taking McNab back to Vancouver. The collection of coins recovered was also returned. The list of coins taken from the Carnegie library brought by the Vancouver detective covered nine foolscap pages of writing.

History repeats itself³⁹⁸ (July, 1908)

For the third time the valuable collection of coins and war medals in the museum section of the Carnegie public library was last night made the prey of

³⁹⁸ From LIBRARY COINS STOLEN FOR THE THIRD TIME. (1908, July 27). *The Province*, p. 1.

unlawful hands. The first burglar was never caught, the second one is now serving five years, and the third—³⁹⁹

Practically the entire collection, consisting of loans of prominent citizens, including the collection of the curator himself, Mr. H. J. DeForest, was carried away by the robber, who was careful to leave no clew to his identity. He made his entrance by the un-grated and easily accessible basement window and the rear stairway, broke the glass window of the door leading to the museum, unwrenched the three Yale locks, gathered up the curious sand almost unpassable coin, and departed the way he came.

The collection numbered some six hundred coins. It is impossible to estimate their value, many being exceedingly rare.

But therein was an efficient clew to the detection of the last numismatist, David McNabb, who a year ago last February gathered in the collection, although adopting another method of effecting the theft, secluding himself in the building until the convenient hour. A week later David, who was an opium fiend, sought to pass some of the coins as payment for the weed at Victoria. His arrest immediately followed with a pathetic plea of guilty and a sentence of five years in the provincial penitentiary. The maximum term is fourteen years.

Mr. DeForest, the curator of the museum, believes with the detectives that the latest numismatist will be apprehended at an early date, descriptions of the coins having been sent to various cities on the coast and a careful watch maintained on all railway and steamboat lines, as well as among the pawnbrokers.

The first wholesale theft of the coins was in 1905⁴⁰⁰ when the collection was much smaller. They were never recovered. [...]

Had Watchman Auld been at his post at 9 o'clock last night the coins would be in their cases to-day. But Mr. Auld was an hour and fifteen minutes late, and in the meantime, Mr. Burglar had made his appearance, his haul and his disappearance.

It was only after the robbery of a year ago last February that the library board decided upon the employment of a night watchman.

³⁹⁹ This sentence is not in the original. I've adapted it from a sub-title of the article: "First Burglar Never Caught, Second Now Serving Five Years, the Third—".

⁴⁰⁰ "The rooms of the Art, Historical and Scientific Association on the top floor of the Carnegie Library building at the corner of Hastings street and Westminster avenue, were rifled last night of some of the most valuable gems, coins and mineral specimens on exhibit. [...] Three cases of coins and mineral specimens had been violated, and at the rear of each were small pieces of half-burned paper, showing that the thief had worked in the light of paper spills. [...] Whether the thief was disturbed in his work or whether he was short on memory, is a question puzzling the detectives, as on top of the largest case in the Grant collection was found a man's kid glove in the fingers of which were concealed two small phials of gold nuggets. The gold was worth anywhere from \$30 to \$40, and was well worth taking from the standpoint of a burglar." ROBBERY OF GEMS AT MUSEUM OF CARNEGIE LIBRARY. (1905, June 7). *The Province*, p. 1.

“Mr. Auld, for himself”⁴⁰¹ (August, 1908)

It appears the crime was never solved, but the night watchman furnished additional details a week later.

Mr. Auld, for himself, said that he had always been on hand at 9:45, except on two occasions: once when he came in at 10:10 but had telephoned in that he would be late, and again on Sunday night, when the burglary was discovered. That night he also arrived at 10:10, but did not go to work till 11:15, being interested in reading about the Marathon race. Everything was all right when he left at 6:30 on Sunday morning. His suspicions were first aroused on Sunday night, when he found a hasp of the window in the basement had been tampered with. Then he went up and found the lock pried off the museum door. He then notified the police. A man might have been hiding in the back stairway on Sunday evening. He had seen windows open in the basement before.

“Her reason gave way completely”⁴⁰² (April, 1907)

Mrs. Hunter, the unfortunate drug fiend who, with her husband, was removed from a Seymour street rooming house after the pair had made themselves a nuisance not to be borne, was committed to the asylum for the insane at New Westminster on Sunday. The woman has been in the hospital twice, but was in such a terrible state from the ravages of morphine that her reason gave way completely.

Jennie Smith⁴⁰³ (November, 1907)

Imagination could not conceive a more horrible example of the effects of the use of morphine than was presented by Jennie Smith, as she was half carried into court this morning. For sixteen years this woman has been a drug fiend, killing her intelligence, ruining her body, sinking through every degradation and only kept alive by repeated injection of morphine. Her system has not been stimulated for the past three days and the effect was such that hardened police officers, used to sordid misery, turned their faces and did not care to look at her. Skin as dead white, eyes without the faintest gleam of intelligence, body exhausted by the frenzy which had racked it all last night, she sat before the judge, for she was unable to stand.

“What is the matter with the woman?” inquired his honor. He was told, and Mrs. Smith was ordered back to her cell. What to do with her is a problem. There is no institution in this city where she can be sent for treatment. If she remains without morphine she will die in a very few days. The only other legal alternative is to supply

⁴⁰¹ From ENQUIRY INTO MUSEUM ROBBERY. (1908, August 4). *The Semi-Weekly World*, p. 8.

⁴⁰² From SENT TO ASYLUM. (1907, April 1). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 2.

⁴⁰³ From PITIABLE WRECK FROM USE OF DRUGS. (1907, November 15). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 2.

her with small quantities of the drug and keep her in confinement, where she may drag out a useless existence for years.

“He presented a wretched appearance”⁴⁰⁴ (June, 1908)

Morphine was responsible for the appearance of J. Gates in the police court this morning. He presented a wretched appearance. His clothes hung loosely from slack shoulders, his face deathly white with blue shadows under the eyes. Three detectives in stereotyped phrases unfolded a tale such as Zola would have reveled in. The first the police knew of the case was when it was reported to Detective Jackson that a woman was being kept locked up in a room in the Spokane rooming-house. He went down and found all the doors leading to the room padlocked. Watch was kept and Gates was seen to leave the room. When entry was gained a poor girl aged about seventeen years was found in advanced stages of drug poisoning. She was taken to the hospital and Gates was arrested as a vagrant. He went into the witness-box on his own behalf and told a long tale of how he had conquered the drug habit himself, and was now endeavoring to cure his wife. He said he had money coming from Seattle and was working as a mechanic. He was anxious to leave town and take his wife back to her home in Seattle. The court gave him until Wednesday to get out.

“Unbelievable cruelty”⁴⁰⁵ (June, 1908)

That a man should lock his wife up in a room for days is almost unbelievable cruelty which John Roy Gates, in the police court this morning, justified on the ground that his wife is a “dope fiend,” and he was trying to cure her. The wife is the unfortunate young woman who in September, 1906, was found in the restricted district here and sent back to Seattle to her parents.

It appears that the pair came here some months since and put up at a rooming house in the city. According to the evidence of the city police and of the proprietor of the rooming house, the husband was in the habit of padlocking the door of the room every time he went out. Detective Scott, in his evidence, said the accused described himself as an inventor, a maker of gambling outfits, and expected to be a beneficiary under the will of a relative. Both were “the worst kind of morphine fiends.” The woman was in the hospital at present. Medical evidence also showed that the woman was very much addicted to morphine. She was weak and emaciated, said Dr. McTavish, and could scarcely walk. Her body was completely covered with marks such as are produced by injections of morphine. The pair were married here, and had been ordered to leave town.

Indulgence in some debilitating drug was written on the man’s appearance. Dr. McTavish also stated that the man admitted to him that he was addicted to morphine and asked to be supplied with some.

⁴⁰⁴ From MORPHINE CAUSE OF THIS MAN’S DOWNFALL. (1908, June 1). *Daily Province*, p. 14.

⁴⁰⁵ From LOCKED WIFE IN HIS ROOM. (1908, June 2). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 1.

Gates appeared on a charge of vagrancy and was given until Wednesday to leave town.

“To dull the pain from a wound in his leg”⁴⁰⁶ (July, 1909)

New Westminster, July 31. – The funeral occurred this morning of the late Dr. R. R. Robinson of Port Moody, who was found dead in his surgery on Thursday evening. [...] The death of Dr. Robinson was due to an overdose of morphine or cocaine which he had injected to dull the pain from a wound in his leg caused by a bicycle accident that happened two months ago. He was discovered unconscious on Thursday night with a hypodermic syringe in his hand and the bandages removed from his limb. The narcotic had induced heart failure, and Coroner Pittendrigh, who investigated the case, declared that no inquest was necessary. The demise is peculiarly sad on account of the frail condition of Mrs. Robinson, who was in such ill health that she could not attend the funeral of their boy Robin, three years old, who died the day before his father.

Mr. Robinson had practiced in this province for sixteen years, and was 38 years old. He served in the South African war and had acted as a physician on one of the C. P. R. liners to the Orient. He had been in residence at Port Moody for about four months.

“A veritable walking second-hand store”⁴⁰⁷ (March, 1910)

Frank Harrison was arrested last night at the instance of John H. Clambert, who claimed that Harrison was wandering about his residence without authority and acting strangely. A search of Harrison at the police station revealed many things which were unlooked for by the officers. Harrison was a veritable walking second-hand store. In the pockets of the five coats which he was wearing were found seven syringes, three pocket knives, a full morphine outfit, including several vials partly filled with the drug, one window shade and rings for blinds, a compass, spool of thread, Vaseline, cotton batting, cigarettes, physicians' manual, a razor, cake of soap (never used), tooth brush, nail brush, three red pencils, a dentist's scapular and tooth punch, a pair of gold rimmed glasses, shoe blacking, match case, tubes of cement and thirty cents.

Harrison is a morphine fiend in an advanced state. His arms and body are literally covered with puncture marks, especially his right arm, which has been pricked so many times that there is no space left in which he might make another injection. Harrison is known to the police as an old offender, having served two years in Westminster some time ago. Of late he has been living on money supplied by a sister, who asked the police some time ago to order him out of the city.

⁴⁰⁶ From OVERDOSE OF MORPHINE. (1909, July 31). *The Vancouver Daily Province*, p. 1.

⁴⁰⁷ From MAN OF MANY COATS APPEARS IN COURT. (1910, March 31). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 22.

In police court this morning Harrison was remanded till Saturday. In the meantime steps will be taken to have him leave the city.

“Leave town at once”⁴⁰⁸ (April, 1910)

Another vagrant to appear in the excuse box was Frank Harrison, who had been liberated on Saturday on the understanding that he leave town at once. Frank failed to accept the handicap allowed by the court in his Marathon stunt for freedom and will go into training and seclusion for three months. Considering that Frank is strongly addicted to the morphine habit the court felt that a chance to break off would do him good.

“You’ve given us an anxious time”⁴⁰⁹ (December, 1910)

When Detective Perry last night arrested George Edwards, alias Edward Edwards, alias Frank Harrison, he caught a man the police believe to be one of the slickest house burglars on the Northwest circuit and, what is more important, the man who is held by the police as responsible for the greater number, if not all, of the mysterious residence thefts which have kept the police department on the chase for two months or more.

For several days the detectives have been on the trail of Edwards, but it was not till yesterday afternoon that they were able to definitely locate their man. Then when they picked up the track and got him under surveillance they shadowed him for several hours in the hope that he would unconsciously lead them to his cache, but he was too wary for that and, finally, to prevent him slipping through their hands, they arrested him.

He was taken to the police station and when searched was found to be wearing an overcoat stolen from the residence of Dr. Turnbull several nights ago, while it was also discovered that he had attempted to pawn in downtown second-hand stores jewelry allegedly taken from the residence of R. W. Walker, 1025 Thurlow street; Dr. H. L. Turnbull and George E. Winters, 1416 Comox street. On his person was found a thirty-eight caliber revolver with one chamber fired, and this morning he was arraigned and remanded in the Police Court on charges of vagrancy and carrying a concealed weapon.

When Edwards was taken to the lockup he had a short conversation with Deputy Chief Mulhern.

“Well, young man,” said the deputy, “you’ve given us an anxious time and a good many chases.”

“Yes, I guess that’s right,” replied the prisoner with a grin, but beyond that he would not go.

⁴⁰⁸ From WORK FOR LOAFERS. (1910, April 4). *The Vancouver Daily Province*, p. 12.

⁴⁰⁹ From MAN SUSPECTED OF MANY BURGLARIES ARRESTED. (1910, December 29). *The Province*, p. 1.

So far the prisoner has not given any reliable information about himself. He stated at first that he came originally from Montreal where he had practiced law, and then he affirmed that he was from St. Paul, where he had worked as an engraver.

There is one thing, however, which the police do know about him, which will not count in his favor at his trial. Eight months ago, the police say, he was arrested in this city under the name of Frank Harrison and charged with the theft of some clothes. At his hearing they say he was convicted and allowed to go on suspended sentence, which verdict is still hanging over his head and under which, it is stated, he can be sent over the road on the old accusation.

“On its own volition”⁴¹⁰ (February, 1911)

The British Columbia Pharmaceutical Association is the first body of the kind on the American continent, and probably in the world, to take up the matter, on its own volition, of absolutely stopping the sale of habit forming drugs. It is impossible for a cocaine or morphine fiend to obtain these drugs or any of their derivatives anywhere in this province, for the reason that the druggists, realizing more than any other trade or profession the terrible effects of these drugs, have taken it upon themselves to make such stringent regulations regarding the sale of same, that no one, except upon the original prescription of a registered practitioner, can obtain such drugs.

The voluntary action of the B. C. Pharmaceutical Association has been incorporated into the laws of the province by the terms of a bill introduced in the legislature by Mr. Frank Mackenzie⁴¹¹ of New Westminster, the member from Delta, and one of the members of the council of the association. Briefly, the bill provides that no person may sell habit forming drugs without first receiving a prescription for the same from a regularly authorized practitioner, and that the prescription must be in every instance retained by the druggist filling it. Veterinary practitioners are prohibited from prescribing these drugs for the use of human beings. A penalty clause is attached imposing fine or imprisonment for violation of the act. [...]

Agitation on this matter started nearly five years ago, and three years ago, prior to the passage of the Pharmacy Act, every druggist in the province threw out of stock all proprietary medicines containing morphine, cocaine or their derivatives. These were especially prevalent in so-called catarrh powders, and many of the persons addicted to the use of these drugs, especially cocaine, could trace their downfall to the use of these powders. The druggists did this because they alone were in a position to know the number of people addicted to such habits and the terrible effects of such drugs upon their victims. The action of the Pharmaceutical Association was taken quietly, of their own volition, and because the association was convinced that this was the right thing to do. Some relief from the sale of the deadly stuff was experienced by the passage of the act of 1909, but this only applied to patent

⁴¹⁰ From COCAINE HABIT STAMPED OUT BY DRUGGISTS. (1911, February 13). *The Vancouver World*, p. 5.

⁴¹¹ Francis James Anderson MacKenzie (1873 – 1932) served as MLA for Delta from 1909 to 1920.

medicines which had already been thrown out of stock. A person could, however, still buy cocaine or morphine by the pound if he so desired by retaining his original prescription and having it duplicated in various drug stores.

The enormous sale of these drugs was brought most forcibly to the attention of the drug trade in this city during the first race meet. The amount of cocaine, heroin, and other compounds used on the race track, presumably for the horses, was alarming, and the effects terrible. The druggists determined to get an act passed prohibiting the sale of these drugs except for legitimate purposes such as in medical practice. As a result it is now utterly impossible for any one to buy morphine, cocaine or their derivatives from any one of the fifty-odd drug stores of this city, or as a matter of fact from any store in the province.

“Gillessee is a medical graduate”⁴¹² (June, 1911)

H. J. Gillessee was again before the magistrate this morning on the charge of stealing a suit case from the night clerk of the Atlantic hotel. [...] The owner of the valise identified the valise and some of the contents, though there were other things in it that belonged to Gillessee, notably packages of morphine and cocaine. The witness stated also that Gillessee had wanted him to take a shot of morphine one night, but he had refused. He had asked him if he had a flask of whiskey to see him through the night after the bar was closed, and when he replied in the negative Gillessee had proffered the morphine, saying he could get more fun out of it. Gillessee is a medical graduate and his father is now on the way from Montreal to look after him. His case was adjourned till next Thursday. The police believe that drugs are to blame for his waywardness in the matter of passing bogus cheques and appropriating other people's property.

Jail break⁴¹³ (July, 1911)

Some time between midnight and 4 o'clock this morning three prisoners who were awaiting trial, all on serious charges, successfully made their escape by sawing through one of the heavy iron bars at the back of the police station, and but for the timely arrival of the night turnkey there might have been a wholesale delivery of the prisoners who are awaiting trial.

The men who escaped early this morning are John Ross, James Hughes and H. J. Gillessee. [...] Gillessee is a criminal with a past record, his picture adorning the rogue's gallery in many of the cities of the United States. Among the many things which Gillessee is charged with are forgery and theft. He stopped at a number of local hotels, and instead of paying his bill would walk out with some guest's suitcase.

The men were all sleeping in the open corridor, and that at least a dozen suspects who are awaiting trial did not make their break for liberty is attributed to

⁴¹² From ANOTHER VICTIM OF PERNICIOUS DRUGS. (1911, June 29). *Vancouver World*, p. 23.

⁴¹³ From SAWED THROUGH BARS. (1911, July 5). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 22.

the arrival of the night turnkey. The heavy iron bar was sawed through very neatly, and when removed afforded ample room for a large man to crawl out into the jail yard. As soon as the escape was discovered the city detectives who were at the station took up the chase, but so far nothing of the jail breakers has been heard of.

“Back to durance vile”⁴¹⁴ (July, 1911)

News has been received in the city from the immigration authorities at Blaine, Wash., that the three men who escaped from the city jail here have been arrested in attempting to cross the boundary line on Wednesday morning. Detectives McLeod and Jewett left to take charge of the fugitives as soon as the news of their detention at Blaine was received. As they are eminently undesirable citizens, no difficulty will be experienced in bringing them back to durance vile.

“Not a jailbird”⁴¹⁵ (July, 1911)

Mr. H. J. Gillessee, who for some time made his living in Vancouver by going to an hotel and staying for a few days, picking up someone else’s grip and carrying it to another hotel as a bluff on the hotel clerk, and incidentally forging a few cheques, expressed great indignation against *The World* this morning in the police court. Just so that it may not be forgotten, it may be again mentioned that Gillessee is one of the trio who broke jail last week and were recaptured at Blaine, Wash.

While this bunch of pretty fellows were loafing in New Westminster, after breaking jail, they got hold of a copy of *The World* and in it Gillessee found that he was described as a jailbird. He wished to deny this in court this morning. He was not a jailbird. Otherwise he would not have flown the coop. The magistrate said he was not interested in the matter, but City Prosecuting Attorney Kennedy said that if Gillessee’s milk-white character had been soiled in such a way as to affect his later trials he would doubtless have recourse. If he had never been in a “rogue’s gallery,” it was very unfair to have such a statement made.

“Gillessee was a trusty”⁴¹⁶ (July, 1911)

In the county criminal court this morning, before His Honor Judge McInnes, James Hughes, Jack Ross and H. J. Gillessee⁴¹⁷, the three men who escape from the city jail some time ago and were subsequently recaptured at Blaine, pleaded guilty to this offence, alleging extenuating circumstances. They claimed that they did not have to break anything, that Gillessee was a trusty and was always at large; that Hughes,

⁴¹⁴ From ESCAPED PRISONERS RECAPTURED. (1911, July 8). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 21.

⁴¹⁵ From JAIL BREAKER IS INDIGNANT. (1911, July 10). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 11.

⁴¹⁶ From JAIL-BREAKERS NOT SEVERELY DEALT WITH. (1911, July 17). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 19.

⁴¹⁷ Spelled ‘Gillisse’ in the original.

returning from an interview with the detective upstairs, was put into the cell occupied by Ross and himself without the door being locked, and that the bar, by bending which they succeeded in making their escape, had been sawn through for some time, and that all they had to do was to push it aside. Gillessee said he was the first man out, and Hughes said that [as] he was the only witness Ross had in his favor on a charge then pending, Ross practically had to leave with him to avoid conviction.

Sergeant McRae, Sergeant of Detectives McLeod and Detective Jewett testified that the bar seemed to have been sawed through on the night of the escape, and McLeod said Hughes and Ross had opened the door of their cell by working a broom. The latter officer also testified that the men made no trouble at Blaine and raised no difficulties against being brought back.

His honor imposed sentence of four months' imprisonment on Gillessee and two months' imprisonment each on Hughes and Ross, these terms to be added to those which they were serving when they made their get-away.

“He told where the saws where”⁴¹⁸ (January, 1912)

Some time ago there was an escape from the jail in which a man named Kelly⁴¹⁹, another man named Gillessee⁴²⁰ and a third man gained their freedom. At that time there were some saws concealed in the jail and they were used by Kelly in making the getaway. Gillessee, however, was captured and his confession as to the hiding place of the saws, no doubt, served to lighten the sentence which Judge McInnes imposed on him and which he is still serving. He told where the saws were and the police recovered them.

“Weak and tottering”⁴²¹ (July, 1912)

Broken in health and weak and tottering from the effects of morphine and opium, Charles Peeres, a young man of excellent education and family, was sentenced to serve one month in the county jail yesterday morning by police Magistrate Shaw.

Peeres was arrested last Tuesday in a room at the Queen Anne rooming house, which is situated in the heart of Chinatown, by Police Constable Lowrie, and at the time of his arrest was in a bad state of both physical and mental exhaustion, caused by the overuse of drugs. Peeres confessed to having been a drug user for years, and brokenly told the court it was too late to reform.

In pronouncing sentence the magistrate stated that he was sending the man to jail for his own benefit, as it would give him a chance to recuperate.

⁴¹⁸ From HACK-SAW STORY IS UNTRUE, SAY POLICE. (1912, January 19). *The Province*, p. 28.

⁴¹⁹ Either a mistake or an alias of Ross or Hughes.

⁴²⁰ Spelled ‘Gillesse’ and ‘Gillisse’ in the article.

⁴²¹ From MORPHINE FIEND SENT TO PRISON: STILL YOUNG MAN. (1912, July 4). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 1.

“The drug had been prescribed”⁴²² (October, 1913)

Somewhat of a surprise to the matron who searched Beatrice Penrose⁴²³, charged with vagrancy, must have been the discovery of a bottle of morphine. The accused, a well dressed bright girl, appeared before Magistrate Jay in police court this morning, and admitted the ownership of the drug, but stated she had the advice of a prominent physician in the city, whose name she disclosed, and the drug had been prescribed, adding the name of a druggist in proof of her veracity.

“Keep out of Chinatown at night”⁴²⁴ (October, 1913)

The young woman, Beatrice Penrose, who admitted taking morphine, was allowed go to, being advised to keep out of Chinatown at night. Prosecutor Harrison told Magistrate Jay that an examination by Dr. Hall had led him to the opinion that accused was a “drug fiend.” She frankly told the court that she obtained prescriptions every week to enable her to secure the drug.

Mrs. Mary Blair⁴²⁵ (December, 1913)

That Mrs. Mary Blair of Selkirk street⁴²⁶, South Vancouver, came to her death from an overdose of morphine was the decision of a coroner’s jury yesterday. The jury added: “There is nothing in the evidence to show how the deceased obtained the drug or what her intentions were in taking it.” Mrs. Blair had been separated from her husband for some time. Neighbors found her in a weak state a week ago and had her taken to the Vancouver General Hospital. She died on Monday while sitting in a chair in one of the wards while a nurse was absent to get her a drink. The hospital examination on her admittance showed that she was suffering from the congestion of

⁴²² From IN POSSESSION OF DRUG. (1913, October 3). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 19.

⁴²³ “Mrs. Lillie Hook, who has been known to the police here for some years as an habitue of Chinatown, was charged with being a keeper of a house at 1816 Government street, in the Chinese quarter. Mrs. Ruby Beatrice Penrose and Greta Kerlin were charged with being inmates. [...] The woman Hook was fined \$100 or one month on each of the charges of keeping and of selling liquor without a license. The two others were fined \$50 or one month each. In the case of the girl Kerlin the court was informed that she was taken from a house of ill-fame some time ago, and a position secured for her. She left this and when another was obtained she refused to take it. Lately she had been found on the street at 2 o’clock one morning with a young girl of fourteen whom she was taking to a room for an immoral purpose. It was stated that she came here from Vancouver with a man who later jumped his bail in police court. The magistrate strongly advised the young woman to get out of the country and return to Seattle, from whence she came originally.” KEEPERS OF RESORTS ARE HEAVILY FINED. (1913, May 26). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 17. In the 1913 directory, 1618 Government street is the address of Brown, John & Co., tailors, and 1618½ Government Street is the site of furnished rooms rented by James M. Hook.

⁴²⁴ From FAILED TO REPORT. (1913, October 4). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 12.

⁴²⁵ From That Mrs. Mary Blair of Selkirk. (1913, December 9). *The Vancouver Daily Province*, p. 26.

⁴²⁶ Her residence was at the corner “of Selkirk street and Fifty-first avenue.” Adjourned for analysis. (1913, December 5). *The Vancouver Daily World*, p. 28.

one lung, but this was not sufficient to cause death. A disease from which she was suffering might have caused her pain and led her to take the morphine, the existence of which was only discovered by an analysis of her stomach by City Analyst Vance.

“Don’t poison baby”⁴²⁷ (December, 1914)

FORTY YEARS AGO almost every mother thought her child must have PAREGORIC or laudanum to make it sleep. These drugs will produce sleep, and a FEW DROPS TOO MANY will produce the SLEEP FROM WHICH THERE IS NO WAKING. Many are the children who have been killed or whose health has been ruined for life by paregoric, laudanum and morphine, each of which is a narcotic product of opium. Druggists are prohibited from selling either of the narcotics named to children at all, or to anybody without labelling them “poison.” The definition of “narcotic” is: “*A medicine which relieves pain and produces sleep, but which in poisonous doses produces stupor, coma, convulsions and death.*” The taste and smell of medicines containing opium are disguise, and sold under the names of “Drops,” “Cordials,” “Soothing Syrups,” etc. You should not permit any medicine to be given to your children without you or your physician knowing of what it is composed. CASTORIA DOES NOT CONTAIN NARCOTICS, if it bears the signature of Chas. H. Fletcher. Genuine Castoria always bears the signature of Charles H. Fletcher.

⁴²⁷ From Castoria. (1914, December 31). Don’t Poison Baby [Advertisement]. *The Vancouver Daily Province*, p. 8.

Roy Gilman

“Addicted to the morphine habit”⁴²⁸ (November, 1891)

One of the guests at the Brunswick Hotel⁴²⁹ went to Nanaimo Sunday and returned yesterday to find his trunk opened and several articles of clothing gone. He informed the police, and suspicion pointing to a boy named Roy Gilman, he was arrested by Sergeant Hawton⁴³⁰ and taken to the city lock-up. The clothes were found in his possession, for which he was called to account in this morning’s police court. He pleaded not guilty, stating that the night clerk had given him the articles. The night clerk was not available, and the case was adjourned in consequence till tomorrow. Gilman is addicted to the morphine habit, and displays all the nervousness of those afflicted with it.

“Over the lockup wall”⁴³¹ (November, 1891)

Roy Gilman, the young slave to morphine who was to appear in the police court, on remand, this morning, charged with petty larceny, bade jail and jailer an unceremonious good-bye, last evening. His jail breaking was daring, but not difficult; he simply took advantage of a natural ladder, in the form of the iron bars across the window of the chief’s office, in one corner of the jail yard, which permitted him to climb over the roof of the lockup. One of the windows of the city hall opens on this roof, and he had only to open in and step through into the main hall and freedom. He had been feeling very badly in his cell, calling for morphine, and the doctor came and left him a charge, which he injected himself. He then complained of being cold, and, putting on his overcoat, informed the jailer that he was going to the closet in the jail yard. A few minutes later another prisoner also went out in the yard, and returned with the information that Gilman was gone.

“From a luxurious home”⁴³² (November, 1891)

Constable Manguay, of Chemainus, has again distinguished himself as a thief catcher; the young morphine fiend, Roy Gilman, or Gillet, as he is known here as elsewhere, being arrested by him, yesterday. He will be brought down by this morning’s train from Nanaimo, where he is now held, and will find half a dozen different charges requiring his attention – larceny at Tacoma, larceny at Port Townsend, larceny in Victoria, and jail breaking here.

⁴²⁸ From So Young, So Frail. (1891, November 20). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 5.

⁴²⁹ At 75 Yates St.

⁴³⁰ In 1891, John Hawton lived at 15 Penwill.

⁴³¹ From Over the Lockup Wall. (1891, November 21). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 1.

⁴³² From MORPHINE’S VICTIM. (1891, November 24). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 6.

No trace of Gilman or clue to his whereabouts was obtained from the time he took an unceremonious leave of Jailer Allen and the hospitality of the city lockup, until Sunday, when he was seen at McPherson's station, on the E. & N. railway, by Sergeant Langley, of the Provincial police. The sergeant was coming home, and was standing on the car steps when he saw the sought-for Gilman, fifty or sixty yards away. He immediately sprang from the train and gave chase, Gilman, who had blackened his face and otherwise disguised himself, running like a deer as soon as he saw the officer. The woods were not far away, and the culprit managed to reach their shelter and conceal himself in their fastnesses. After informing the residents of the runaway's character and asking them to keep a lookout for him, the sergeant again boarded the waiting train and returned to Victoria.

In this city, another well known officer of police was waiting for an opportunity to interview Gilman – Chief Delaney, of Port Townsend, having come over from the Sound city on purpose to renew his acquaintance with the young gentleman. His story of Gillet's movements and character is as strange as it is horribly interesting.

It is thus told in the Port Townsend Ledger, of Saturday: Albert Killen [an alias of Gilman's], a youngster, who looks as though he might be in the neighborhood of 45 years of age, but who is not over 18, is missing, as are also a row boat, belonging to George Trenholm, a hunting suit and gun, the property of Harry Floyd, and some jewelry.

Killen arrived here from Tacoma, some ten days ago, having been forced to flee from that city by the authorities, who gave him up as incorrigible. His baggage when he stepped off the midnight boat consisted of about eleven grains of morphine and a hypodermic syringe. The latter was as good as useless, as the needle had broken, making it unfit for the "fiendish" purpose intended. Killen was a confirmed injector, and for several hours he suffered untold agonies trying to procure a new instrument of torture. Some practical joker finally told him Chief of Police Delaney was a user of the drug, and although it was three o'clock in the morning, he hunted the chief up in his rooms to assist him out of his sufferings. Delaney was at first inclined to be angry, but when he had realized that his unceremonious awakening had resulted in the location of a character who would during his stay in the city need watching, the chief simply growled, dismissed Killen after a kindly lecture and again went to bed.

Killen was an excellent musician, being especially proficient on the piano. His conversation denoted education and refinement. For several nights he made a pretention at earning a livelihood by playing in a notorious house. He disappeared Sunday night. The police are of the opinion that he stole the property which is missing, making his escape in the boat which is gone. Those who claim to know the boy, however, maintain that he was in the habit of going out every morning to bring down a duck for his breakfast. They think that he went merely to shoot, and that his boat was swamped in the rough sea prevalent last Monday, and the boy drowned. It is said that his parents are among the wealthiest land owners in Honolulu, and his unnatural craving for morphine has drawn the lad from a luxurious home.

Gilman arrested⁴³³ (November, 1891)

Gilman, the morphine fiend, who escaped from Victoria jail last Friday, was arrested at this depot, this morning, while making his way Northward, on the morning train, by Constable Mainguy. Gilman's mind is apparently somewhat affected, and he made known to the conductor his personage and manner of escape, whereupon the conductor promptly wired to this station and had Mr. Mainguy in readiness.

"Surely dying"⁴³⁴ (December, 1891)

Gilman, the morphine fiend, who is serving a four months' sentence for stealing, in the provincial jail, is said by the doctor to be slowly but surely dying, the poisonous drug which has ruined his life having about completed its deadly work. An effort is being made to communicate with his parents in Honolulu.

"Undergoing treatment"⁴³⁵ (December, 1891)

The young morphine fiend Gilman is undergoing treatment which is proving decidedly beneficial, at the provincial jail, and it is hoped that he will be practically cured before his term expires.

"Recovering from his excesses"⁴³⁶ (December, 1891)

Young Gilman, the morphine fiend and thief, is getting on well now, and is recovering from his excesses.

The return of Roy Gilman⁴³⁷ (September, 1893)

A Vancouver telegram announces that "Roy Kelsenna," the morphine slave, arrested recently in Westminster, has consented to return to his home in Honolulu, and left for the Hawaiian capital by the Warrimoo. "Roy Gilman," the musician and morphine fiend who served a term in the Provincial jail here, from which he was discharged apparently cured of the "habit," also came from Honolulu. Evidently Roy Kelsenna and Roy Gilman are one and the same.

⁴³³ From CHEMAINUS. (1891, November 25). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 5.

⁴³⁴ From Surely Dying. (1891, December 3). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 5.

⁴³⁵ From Under Treatment. (1891, December 10). *The Daily Colonist*, p. 4.

⁴³⁶ From BRIEF LOCALS. (1891, December 16). *The Victoria Daily Times*, p. 8.

⁴³⁷ From THE CITY. (1893, September 19). *The Victoria Daily Colonist*, p. 5.

“Not a white boy”⁴³⁸ (September, 1893)

A lad was arrested here recently who was a victim to [the morphine habit]. He came from New Westminster the day before his arrest. His occupation is that of piano player in low resorts, and he is not a white boy, but a Hawaiian.

“I knew him”⁴³⁹ (September, 1893)

He is “somebody’s boy.” Someone mourns doubtless over his pitiful condition, and whether he be of Hawaiian or British descent it matters little. He is a young man of less than 20 summers, a wreck through the morphine habit. The young man is as much of a white man as I am. I knew him in this city in March or April of last year. I knew his very dangerous occupation. He acknowledged to me that he knew that he was doing what he knew to be wrong, and promised that he would strive to rid himself of the cursed thralldom that bound him. Who knows the power of that thralldom but those who have experienced it? He gave me the history of his life. It was the old story of running away from home. He had been a sharp, shrewd boy and much that was interesting remained. He was no ignoramus. Yet, in spite of knowing better, and with a real desire to do better, at what an awful condition at our very doors has that boy arrived! I believe he came here from Honolulu, but his father, he said, had been a San Francisco merchant.

⁴³⁸ From LETTER FROM MR. TRYTHALL. (1893, September 22). *The Vancouver World*, p. 4.

⁴³⁹ From MR. TRYTHALL AGAIN. (1893, September 26). *The Vancouver World*, p. 5. Written by William John Trythall (d. 1921).