

From the National Era.

THE HASHISH.*

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Of all the Orient lands can vaunt
Of marvels, with our own competing,
The strangest is the Hashish plant,
And what will follow on its eating.

What visions to the taster rise,
Of Dervish or of Almeh dances,
Of Elbis, or of Paradise,
Set all aglow with Houri glances.

The Mollah and the Christian dog
Clap the same pipe beneath their noses;
The Muezzin climbs the synagogues,
The Rabbi shakes his beard at Moses!

The Arab by his desert well
Sits choosing from some Caliph's daughters,
And hears his single camel's bell
Sound welcome to his regal quarters.

The Koran-reader makes complaint
Of Shitan dancing on and off it;
The robber offers alms; the saint
Drinks tokay and blasphemes the prophet.

Such scenes that Eastern plant awakes,
But we have one ordained to beat it—
The Hashish of the West, that makes
Or fools, or knaves, of all who eat it.

It makes the merchant class, with ware
And stock in trade, his fellow sinners;
And factory lords, with equal care,
Regard their spindles and their spinners.

The preacher eats, and straight appears
His Bible in a new translation;
Its angels, negro-overseers,
And Heaven itself a snug plantation.

For seraph songs he takes the bark
And bay of blood-hounds nothward setting;
The planter for a patriarch,
With servants of his own begetting.

The noisest Democrat, with ease,
It turns to Slavery's parish headle;
The shrewdest statesman eats, and sees
Due southward points the polar needle!

The man of peace, about whose dreams
The sweet millennial angels cluster,
Tastes the mad weed, and plots and schemes
A noisy Cuban filibuster!

The Judge partakes, and sits ere long
Upon his bench a railing blackguard,
Decides, off-hand, that right is wrong,
And reads the ten commandments backward!

Oh, potent plant! so rare a taste
Has never Turk or Gentoo gotten;
The hempen Hashish of the East
Is powerless to our Western cotton!

*A preparation of the *Cannabis Indica* or Indian hemp, under the name of *Hashish*, or *Haschisch*, is famous throughout the Eastern world for its singular narcotic and intoxicating qualities, producing an agreeable hallucination, or *fantasia*, and disposing the eater to all kinds of exaggeration and extravagance. The effect of the *cotton plant*, mental, moral, religious, and political, upon the people of the United States, would form a proper subject for a medico-philosophic essay like that of M. Morceau's "*Du Haschisch et de l'Alienation Mentale.*"

"Cotton!" said a distinguished speaker in Congress, some years ago—"Cotton! one would think, from the manner in which gentlemen speak of cotton, that all their conceptions of good were in that one word, cotton; that the destinies of this great nation were bound up in cotton; that the very thread of our fate, which the Parcae are spinning for us is, of cotton."—*Speech of Hon. R. C. Winthrop.*