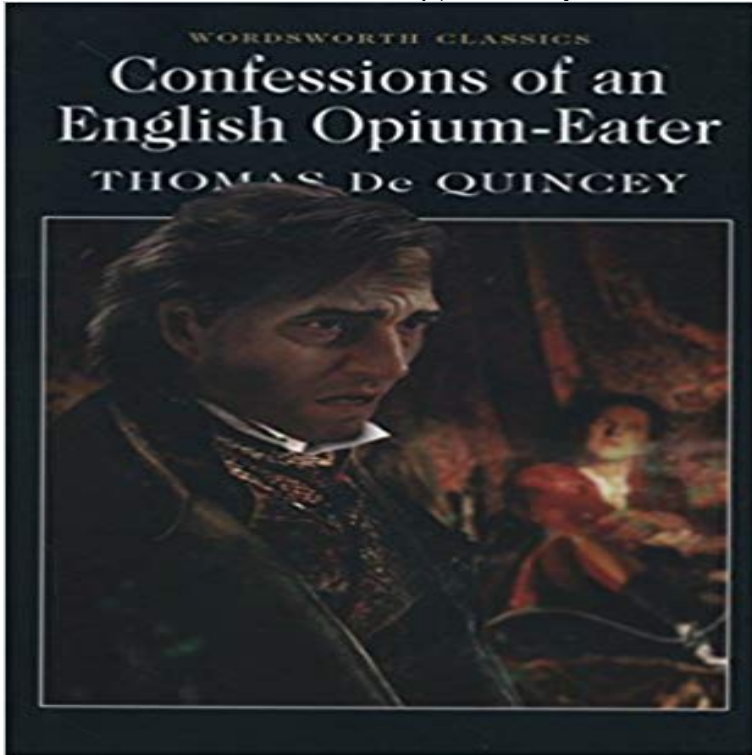


Confessions of an English Opium Eater (Wordsworth Classics)



In the first part of this famous work, published in 1821 but then revised and expanded in 1856, De Quincey vividly describes a number of experiences during his boyhood which he implies laid the foundations for his later life of helpless drug addiction. The second part consists of his remarkable account of the pleasures and pains of opium, ostensibly offered as a muted apology for the course his life had taken but often reading like a celebration of it. The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater is thus both a classic of English autobiographical writing the prose equivalent, in its own time, of Wordsworth's *The Prelude* or *Growth of a Poet's Mind* and at the same time a crucial text in the long history of the Western World's ambivalent relationship with hard drugs. Full of psychological insight and colourful descriptive writing, it surprised and fascinated De Quincey's contemporaries and has continued to exert its powerful and eccentric appeal ever since.

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