

FIELD STUDY FOR JULY.

COVETOUS HINDRANCES TO CHRISTIANITY.

THE liquor traffic and the opium trade are strongly entrenched in an evil principle common to human nature, namely, covetousness—greed of gain.

It is shocking to find how completely the opium trade is in the hands of the British government. It has full control of the manufacture in India. I knew that a great revenue was derived from it, but thought it was through taxation. The whole crop is sent to the government factories in the form of juice. Here it is dried and made into cakes or balls. These are packed in chests. A fixed price is paid for it, but it is sold by auction. So it passes into the hands of the merchants, who have their profit. Charges for freight and insurance are very high for opium; and there are lines of steamers that make it their main cargo. Great fortunes are accumulated in these ways.

Much has been done both in England and India by those who realize these great evils. Through the efforts of these reformers a Royal Commission was appointed to look into the evils of the traffic. How much does our selfishness colour our decisions! They reported opium to be a benefit and blessing to the human race!

The people of India do not so readily give them selves up to the opium habit as the Chinese. Had the Commissioners held their session in some city in China, it would have been more difficult to arrive at the same conclusion. Here opium suicides are matters of daily occurrence; this not only on the coast, but throughout the whole country. Our medical missionaries in Chentu are frequently called in the night to help revive these poor creatures. Sometimes they succeed, oftener they are too late. Dr. Stephenson declared he was ashamed of being a British subject, expressing the hope that if Britain continued to force opium on the Chinese, Canada would declare her independence. All over the country it is the same story. "How can these 'foreign devils' be anything good, say the Chinese, when they compel us to let opium come into the country?"

However, we have our own question in Canada. She is not acting up to her convictions on the liquor traffic. By a popular vote, called a plebescite, four provinces have declared themselves ready for prohibition. But the laws we have are not carried out. Citizens decline to enforce them, because it will hurt their business. One and another says: "I can't afford to do this work; it will make enemies for me; I will lose custom."

Every year there are eighty millions of dollars spent in Canada for liquor. The amount given to missions in Canada in 1891 would only pay her drink bill for *four days*. And yet Canada is one of the soberest of countries. The liquor traffic is also a direct hindrance in many mission fields; for instance, among our own Indians. In Africa whole tribes are nearly destroyed by liquor sent from England, Holland, and the United States.

While we study these evils we must not forget to look into our own hearts. Our Lord himself says: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." Some one has said that drunkenness is the vice of the world, and mammonism is the vice of the church. She is certainly not fully awake to her privilege to serve Christ by giving. Giving is the best cure for covetousness. Not to supply our own needs and pleasures, and then, if anything is left over, give that to *Christ*. Yes, we may well pause. It sounds dreadful, put in that way. But the act is worse than the sound of the words. Let us acknowledge Christ in our giving, remembering, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." D.

QUESTIONS FOR JULY.

- What is the cause of the liquor traffic and opium trade?
- What has the British Government to do with the opium trade?
- In what form is it sent to the government factories? What becomes of it then?
- How is it packed and sold?
- Into whose hands does it then pass?
- How are great fortunes made by means of it?
- Has anything been done in England and India to stop it?
- What?
- What was the Royal Commission appointed to do?
- What was their report?
- Which people are the greater slaves to opium—those of India or China?
- Are there any suicides in China from this cause?
- Can our medical missionaries help them?
- What good, strong language did Dr. Stephenson use?
- What do the Chinese themselves say about it?
- How is Canada behaving about the liquor traffic?
- How many provinces have declared for prohibition?
- What is the reason the Laws are not enforced?
- How much money is spent for liquor every year in Canada?
- What can you say of the money given to missions in 1891?
- In what is the liquor traffic a direct hindrance?
- How are whole tribes in Africa destroyed?
- What must we not forget to do while we study these evils?
- What did Jesus say about covetousness?
- What have drunkenness and mammonism, or love of money, been called?
- What is the best cure for covetousness?
- Must we give to ourselves first, and then to Christ?