

THE FIELD  
IS  
THE WORLD

## Missionary Department

"Pray, Study, Give."

THE SEED  
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THE WORD

### August Missionary Meeting

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**TOPIC:** Hindrances to Christianity—opium, superstition, ancestral worship.

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We know without further proof that opium, superstition, and ancestral worship are hindrances to the spread of Christianity. What we want to learn in the study of this subject is: (1) Something about the opium traffic, how the use of this narcotic can be prevented and how it hinders the work of the missionaries; (2) how superstition and ancestral worship affect the people who practice them and check the spread of Christianity.

These two points can perhaps be best brought out by the following questions:

**Q.—How many kinds of opium are there?**  
A.—Two, one used for medical purposes, and one used for smoking.

**Q.—Where is opium most used?**

A.—China is called the home of the opium, which, along with various preparations, such as morphia, seems to be a sign of Chinese influence. Six-sevenths of the supply used in China is home-grown. British India is also a great producer of opium, mostly for exportation. But the habit of opium smoking is not confined to the Orient and the Chinese. In 1907 one hundred and fifty thousand pounds of smoking opium were imported into the United States, and in British Columbia the yearly receipts for the product at the opium factories are estimated at \$650,000.

**Q.—Why are the Chinese more than other nations addicted to the use of opium?**

A.—Life in China is characterized by monotony. Games and other amusements have no place in the life of the common people. Some form of recreation they must have, and the quiet, meditative soporific relaxation induced by opium takes the place of active recreation in vogue elsewhere.

**Q.—What is the attitude of Japan to the opium question?**

A.—An opium user in Japan is regarded socially as a leper. It is said that the Japanese fear opium as we fear a rattlesnake. Because they are patriots they unite for the repression of this habit, which is looked upon as a menace to national life. Japan, a non-Christian nation, is the only country where the opium question is dealt with in its purely moral and social aspect without regard to the least to its commercial phases. In a population of forty-seven millions a law, kept to the letter, forbids importation, possession, and use of opium except as a medicine. Under penalty of seven years' imprisonment for selling it, and three years' imprisonment for smoking or eating it.

**Q.—How does the attitude of China differ from that of Japan?**

A.—The Chinese Government is aware that smoking opium destroys the

individual lives and manhood of the citizens. China, however, lacks what Japan eminently possesses—public opinion and national life. Here opium is regarded as an evil, but it is not conceived as a menace to the life of the nation because the Chinaman disregards the welfare of others outside his own family. He believes in the injury of the many for the benefit of the few, provided the few are his family and the many are not. This peculiar altruistic selfishness pervades his life, thought and actions. Consequently, the Chinaman who would ward off opium from his own family would have no qualms in selling it to the members of other families.

**A.—What steps are being taken to abolish the use of opium?**

A.—In 1905 an International Opium Commission met at Shanghai, and the leading countries of the world, such as Great Britain, Germany, France, China, Japan, Russia, Portugal and Siam, sent representatives. As a result these countries have enacted legislation which within a decade ought to wipe out the traffic in opium. One of the leading members of this Commission said, "The traffic in opium for other than necessary uses ought not much longer to continue or there will yet loom between the East and West a problem that in its magnitude will outstrip the magnitude and forces of the long since happily settled slavery question."

**Q.—What has China done to abolish opium?**

A.—In 1907 the government issued an edict having as its purpose the suppression, within ten years, of the growth and consumption of opium in China. The British government in India co-operated in this reform, promising to restrict one-tenth each year for three years, the amount of opium exported from India. This is to continue if China effects a similar proportional reduction in her opium production and consumption. If continued, in ten years the production of smoking opium will be brought to a vanishing point in these two principal producing countries.

**Q.—What has been done in Canada to stop the use of opium?**

A.—In 1908 the Dominion Parliament passed a law prohibiting importation, manufacture and sale of smoking opium under penalty of three years' imprisonment or \$1,000 fine.

**Q.—How is an opium fiend cured?**

A.—The antidote is a plant which grows wild in Malaysia. The cure must be brought about gradually, because a person who has been addicted to the drug is subject to grave injury if he is suddenly deprived of it. Indeed, to deprive an opium fiend of his drug is to induce a mania which would work social havoc in the greatest sort. Japan, which is solving the opium problem for Formosa, has established ten government hospitals. Medical care is provided for those outside the hospitals, and patients and curing home treatment are placed in the hands of the people.

**Q.—If opium should be totally suppressed in China what problem will the Chinese be called upon to face?**

A.—The question arises, Will China emerge from the opium habit a spotless empire where no artificial stimulant beyond tea enters into the life of the people, or will the drink question follow? This problem rests largely with the English-speaking peoples, who have it in their power either to introduce the drink habit into China or keep this country free from it.

**Q.—How does ancestral worship hinder Christianity?**

A.—From time immemorial people in almost all countries have believed in some being higher than themselves whom they worship. Many heathen nations choose heavenly bodies, as the sun and moon, and also the spirits of departed ancestors. The Roman Catholic Jesuits believed that ancestor worship was really only homage, while others said it was worship proper, rendered as to gods, and therefore idolatry. The conclusion arrived at both by Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries is that veneration of ancestors is worship, and must be forbidden to Christian Chinese. Therefore in order to accept the Christian religion, the Chinese must give up sacred customs and beliefs which are centuries old. It has been said that the one great thing that they be detached from ancestor worship. It has been well declared that there can be no future for a country so relentlessly held in the grasp of the generations gone. When the Fifth Commandment will still nourish the virtue of filial reverence, but will no longer suffer it to be a bar to progress and to the forelooming vision of the generations to come.

### "If These Didn't, Who 'Did'?"

(See April Era.)

Glimpses of fascinating fields of Mission study are revealed in the Leaguers in these twenty-six questions. It has been said that history is but the biography of great men, and this is especially true in the history of missions. Some of the greatest names the world has ever known are here, and these names will be forever associated with some special phase of missionary endeavor, or some particular world field. More than one of the Leaguers, in answering, stated that the exercise had been a great benefit—that in searching for the answers to the questions, a great deal of useful information had been acquired. We trust that it will not end here, but that in all our societies courses of systematic mission study may be entered upon, and our young people may become more familiar with the lives of the greatest missionaries, and hence with the expansion of the Kingdom of God in the non-Christian world.

Thirty-three lists of answers were received. Of these five were correct, and fifteen, almost half of the total number, had but one error. This is very encouraging, although it is a source of regret that more of the Leaguers did not enter the contest.

The following is the correct list of answers. It will be noted that in a number of cases alternative answers were given. Either of these answers were accepted as correct. To question 19, the answer, "Obookiah, a native Hawaiian," was given in several instances. This is incorrect, as Obookiah died in the United States, before beginning his work. His enthusiasm and zeal, how-

"Live with men as if God saw you; speak to God as if men heard you."