

the Moslems, and offered a fabulous price, because they knew that priceless gems were embedded in the idol's body, managed to arrange this delay, with the anticipation that many worshippers would come, and so pour money into the temple's money-chest. Nor was their forecast without foundation.

"Two workmen, bolder than the first, had promised to deliver the fatal blow for a reward of fourteen shillings. In the dim light of the early morning the crowds began to gather, and jostled each other in order to worship their god for the last time. As the day wore on the stream showed no signs of exhaustion. After waiting a long time the patience of the workmen was exhausted. They would wait no longer. There, with a blind courage, they rushed in among the worshippers, and hurled the idol over in the midst of the ceremonies; then, fearing, perhaps, the wrath of the idols, certain of the anger of the worshippers, they fled and hid themselves. The crowds at first stood horror-struck; then, seeing that no thunderbolts fell, and none was struck blind or paralyzed, they were first amazed, then doubtful, and at last they laughed.

"The burning of Fui Sing is not without interest. This idol is the patron saint of the educated classes. His origin it is difficult to trace. His appellative is the name of one of the stars of *Ursa Major*, and by this name he is known regardless of his origin. His physiognomy is hideous, as is that of most Chinese idols. He is always carved standing upon a dolphin. He has been much worshipped, though perhaps not always believed in by the so-called educated classes of China.

Over the great examination hall in Canton, which has accommodation—as the Chinese understand it—for ten thousand students, Fui Sing has long held sway. The recent Imperial proclamation took away the *raison d'être* of his existence, and so he was consigned to the flames. It was assumed that he would be quite unable to assist Chinese students to force their way through the tangled ways of the English language, nor could he lend a helping hand across the *pons asinorum*; ther'fore to the flames he went. But even in his destruction, the innate tendency of the Chinese to conserve for future use all things possible and impossible was seen. A newspaper editor, when describing the burning of the image, burst forth with the following regret: 'Why was Fui Sing burnt? Wasn't he made of sandal wood? Sandal wood is always valuable. Why wasn't he sawn asunder, and the expensive timber of which he was made sold to the dealers?'

"Can we find a more piquant example of the irony of idolatry? Incense sticks are made of sandal wood. An idol is burnt! But the wood should have been conserved, and perhaps ground and made into incense sticks to be burnt as an offering to other idols, whose doom is for the time delayed. As Fui Sing was gilded here and there with gold leaf, children might have been seen riddling the ashes in order to find some traces of the precious metal. And so the great examination hall has been cleansed of the patron saint to whom thousands, perhaps millions, have been offering incense during many generations. This act alone is a striking example of the introduction of a new era into Chinese religious life.

"These many attacks on idols must not be understood to mean that the people are ripe to come over *en masse* to the Christian faith. The people, amidst much perplexity, are naturally unwilling to repudiate their ancient idols, whom their fathers have worshipped, and who are the outward and visible signs of the gods in whom they have trusted. On the other hand, this attack on idolatry certainly shows that a new spirit is moving upon the face of the educated, and what these think

to-day the crowds will accept to-morrow. It has long been seen, by those who have watched the signs of the times that the minds of the thoughtful have been gradually estranged from the senseless idols of wood, stone, and earth, in which many have never heartily believed, and when the conviction has been thoroughly grasped that they are indeed vanity and that wholesale destruction is not followed by any sign of retribution from their hands, the Chinese will become seekers after another God."

## An Effective Opium Cure

AT this time when methods have been devised for decreasing the use of opium among those addicted to the habit, it seems providential that there has been discovered in Jejebu, Malay Peninsular, a creeper, a decoction of the leaf of which when drunk results in the breaking of the habit. The Rev. W. E. Horley, Presiding Elder of the Federated Malay States District, writes that one, who came a second time for the medicine, said that he had been an opium smoker for twenty-eight years, but that he had broken off the habit and now had come for a supply of medicine for his wife. He had found it so good himself that he wanted her to take it also. They had together spent on opium \$1.40 a day. Mr. Horley made inquiries at the opium shops, and found that



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eight retail shops were taking nearly \$1,000 a week less, and that one wholesale shop was taking \$1,390 a day less. From good sources he learned that there was a decrease in the estimated government sales of opium from the 16th of October to the 15th of November last, of thirty chests. This would mean about \$44,000 decrease in money—certainly a striking proof that the medicine has done good. Of course it remains to be seen whether the cure is permanent or not, but one fact stands out significantly that 25,000 applicants have come for medicine within a few weeks.—*The Chinese Recorder*, January, 1907.

"From Opium Fiend to Preacher," by Rev. A. P. Quirmbach, is a book to be published soon by Dr. F. C. Stephenson. The writer tells in an interesting manner of the complete regeneration of a slave of opium. Rev. Dr. Burwash, Chancellor of Victoria University, says of this book: "This simple story of the grace of God in the life of Cheng should be scattered by the thousand among our people. It will create not only faith in the work of missions in China, but what is more faith in the Gospel everywhere. It will be a message of hope and salvation to many a poor victim of sin in our own land as well as a stimulus to Christian hearts to send the Gospel to China." The illustrations on pages 101, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, are from this book by the courtesy of the publisher. The price of the volume is 75 cents per copy.