

"If the missionaries," he says, "in that vast empire had accomplished nothing more during the half century past than to furnish object-lessons of the true position of woman, and the highest type of Christian homes, that result alone would justify their presence in China and the money invested in the enterprise."

"Opium," he says, "is more deadly than alcohol, because it fastens its grip more quickly and firmly upon the victim. No language can exaggerate the evil results of the habit. No honest person who has seen its effects upon the Chinese can describe it as other than an awful curse. To force it upon China was a crime against humanity. One Chinese writer describes it as tenfold more deadly than arsenic."

The enormous income from the opium trade, which has been so disastrous to China, amounting to nearly \$40,000,000 a year, represents but a small sum compared with what might be gained to the advantage of both countries if this trade had been suppressed in the interests of honest commerce. This book we consider indispensable for understanding the complex and difficult Chinese question.

Hôtel de Rambouillet and The Précieuses.

By LEON H. VINCENT. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 123. Price, \$1.00.

This dainty and quaintly printed little book is quite in harmony with the quaint literary development with it treats. Indeed Mr. Vincent is a *Précieuse* in his way. He has the delicate touch, the subtle humour, the literary refinement akin to that of the Marquise de Rambouillet herself. This lady, he tells us, "in a corrupt age, made virtue fashionable. It is something to have got such people to realize that it may be good form to keep the Ten Commandments." A special note of the *Précieuse* was a passion for correct dictation and literary grace. "And why," asks Mr. Vincent, "should any woman, any man, lack in fastidiousness about the choice of words? Society ought to be as impeccable in its language as it is in its attire."

Our author describes the rise and progress and decline of the Salon de Rambouillet and the literary movement of which it was the symbol. One cause of its decay was the ponderous romances of Madeleine de Scudery. A single romance contained almost as much as all the *Waverley* novels taken together. "She

was the most pitiless writer of fiction the world has ever known."

With characteristic lightness of touch Mr. Vincent thus sums up the merits and follies of the *Précieuse*: "After all it seems less culpable to be frivolous over words and ideas than over cards; and if it is a question of ultimate idiocy, charades are no worse than dancing. Let us not exaggerate the significance of trifles. Incredible as it may appear, I have seen human beings playing *hjalma*; the men were college graduates and the women belonged to clubs." A bibliography of the copious literature to which the movement gave rise, adds to the value of the book.

Historical Survey of Pre-Christian Education. By S. S. LAURIE, A.M., LL.D., Professor of the Institutes and History of Education in the University of Edinburgh; author of "Institutes of Education," etc. Second edition, revised. London, New York and Bombay: Longmans, Green & Co. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Company. Pp. xi-411.

This is a book of unique and remarkable interest. We do not know of any other covering exactly the same field. The author's aim "has been to seize the leading religious and social characteristics of pre-Christian societies, as these were actually found operative in the life of the people of each nation." As the result of immense research, the author gives us a clear statement of the historical review of the place of education in Egypt, among the Arabs, Jews, Chinese and Hindus. More than half the work, however, is devoted to the history of education among the Greeks and Romans, and very interesting and instructive chapters these are.

The education of the youth of Sparta was particularly austere. On the annual festival of Artemis-Orthia youths were whipped to the drawing of blood. "Nor must one be offended," says Solon to Anacharsis, in Lucian, "when you see their young men whipped at the altar and streaming with blood, whilst their fathers and mothers stand by entreating them to suffer it courageously, and even proceed to threats if they do not bear it with patience and resolution. Many have died under this discipline rather than acknowledge themselves unequal to it before their friends and relations. Statues of them have frequently been erected at the public expense."

In Athens, the system of education was much more genial; in Rome, a more