

in rank to a magistrate, and their remarks left a good impression upon those in the room. In private many opportunities present themselves to make known the Gospel tidings. Yesterday, while in the bank, the way opened for a good talk with one of the proprietors on the things pertaining to spiritual life.

One of the best preaching-places in China is on the street corner. We have visited a great many streets this fall in the vicinity of our mission premises. In our hands are a bundle of tracts. Wherever we stop a small audience gathers around. The subject-matter of the tracts is stated, and after preaching a short sermon the tracts are offered for sale. In this way we accomplish two things, viz., get acquainted with the people, and spread Christian literature through their midst.

Unforeseen events, however, have changed my plans from an active street and chapel work to that of building. This fall a suitable place for future expansion in school work was offered for sale. As the rent and repairs of U Sha Kiai, the rented premises, would in a few years eat up the price that would buy a larger place, and as there had been some threats that the landlord might ask us to leave this place, it was thought best to purchase. Dr. Hart has no doubt written you a full description of the place.

As the buildings would not allow of being satisfactorily repaired, to build a one-story house in the form of a bungalow has been committed principally to my charge. From daylight until dark I am on the new premises. Chinese workmen are very fond of smoking, and when the foreigner's back is turned they think they ought to rest. It is also expedient to be present, as the workmen will scarcely do a thing before they have had an interview, and found out if they are right or wrong. Once a Chinaman gets the idea, he is very clever to construct.

Dec. 25th.—To-day is our third Christmas in China, our second in Chen-tu. We have just come from a very interesting Christmas gathering. This morning we fixed up my study a little and placed a big tray of oranges and a Christmas cake on the table. The book-shelf was adorned with cards sent me by a person living in Brandon. The walls were hung with pictures and maps. To the Chinese, whose homes are so dark, cold and dreary, it would seem like a little entrance into the better land. Eleven o'clock I struck the big gong, and sixteen girls, followed by eighteen boys, entered the room. Then came the two teachers and the visitors. The room was filled. As the children caught sight of the oranges and picture cards, their faces lit up, and their hearts warmed, ready to take an active part in the service. Our first hymn was, "Come, let us join our cheerful songs with angels round the throne." I wish the boys and girls who are, Sunday after Sunday, giving their pennies to spread the Gospel could have heard these thirty-four voices as they rang out the chorus, "Tsan mei ngo chu tsan mei chu yin ta ti ngo sheo sz." "Praise my Lord, praise the Lord because He died for us." The Scripture lessons were Matt. i 18-25 and Luke ii. 1-20. They were interested to hear how the boys and girls spend their Christmas in Canada, and next year (D.V.) we expect to have a Christmas tree. The happy meeting closed by singing "There is a happy land."

I might just add here that, if anyone would like to help in some way in the children's work, they might send out all their spare Christmas and New Year's cards; also cards used for advertisements, especially if the pictures are nice. The Chinese children are very fond of pictures. By writing portions of the Bible on the cards, the pearls of the Scriptures are carried into many homes.

Dec. 27th.—A little excitement was caused to-day by our day school teachers saying that there was a report upon the street that we boiled children, and the children were afraid to come to school. They both, however, took active steps to deny the charge, and sent out word for the children to come. One little boy came crying. The teacher sent word to his father to come and look all over the place and see for himself. This prompt action on the part of the teachers has, I trust, nipped in the bud what might have led to serious consequences. The school children continue to come regularly. This is the first we have heard in Chen-tu on these lines. We imagine that someone has seen our stoves, and as they never saw anything like them before

concluded they must be used for some extraordinary purpose.

This letter has been written during my spare moments in the evenings, hence its disjointedness. I thought a letter in this form would give you some idea of our daily life, and if you wished to use any part of it for publication you could do so. I will try to write more frequently by writing scenes and events as they daily occur, and sending them in the above form.

We have heard with great pleasure that by the almost unanimous voice of the General Conference you have been re-elected to fill the important position you have held for so many years. You have our prayers that you may be wonderfully supported by God's grace during the next four years.

Missionary Readings.

Notes on the Congo.

THE Congo Independent State comprises the greater part of the immense basin of the Congo River. This state was founded by Leopold II., King of the Belgians, and has 1,508,000 square miles of territory, and the estimated population is between forty and fifty millions.

For one hundred miles from its mouth the Congo River is navigable, then for more than two hundred miles it rushes through tremendous mountain gorges in a series of cataract and falls. Stanley Pool is the starting point of the upper half of the Congo, which is navigable for more than a thousand miles.

Through the cataract region travellers are taken in hammocks made of thick canvas cloth, and suspended from a bamboo pole, with a man at each end as carriers. All goods for transportation are packed into sixty-pound loads, and taken by men, as there are no beasts of burden, and only recently the new railroad, which is in process of construction, has been completed for thirty miles. The roads are narrow, zigzag foot-paths, winding around great rocks, over hills and young mountains, and through the plains and valleys. In going to-and-fro the traveller often sees elephants, buffaloes, deer and monkeys, while the more dreaded leopard prowls around at night in search of sheep, goats, etc., for food. Snakes allow themselves to be seen occasionally.

In the line of real pests, centipedes, jiggers, white ants and red ants, or drivers, are the most dreaded. The bite of the centipede is painful and poisonous. The jigger is a small creature, which looks like a flea. Instead of biting, he enters the flesh, especially the feet, and when completely covered by the warm skin he begins to enlarge until a tiny sack is formed, and, if left long enough, instead of the original jigger, there comes out of this sack dozens of full-grown jiggers, each one eager to increase his kind in a similar manner. All decent people keep themselves free of them, but the lazy, nude waifs, found in every town and village, allow their toes to be eaten off, and their feet, elbows and fingers to remain in a chronic state of sores, caused by these creatures.—*Selected.*

Squandering Millions.

A NEWSPAPER states that one of the wealthiest of America's millionaires is intending to spend one million dollars a year for ten years in building and beautifying a palace and its surroundings; and this while there are homeless orphans, helpless invalids, young people struggling for education and for usefulness, and a thousand million human souls living without God and dying without hope in the world.

There is one defect in the architecture of all these palatial residences. They are *not death proof*. No matter how strongly they are built, or how beautifully they are finished; no matter how many blinds, shutters, bronze doors and storm doors they have, yet death finds its way into them. In the most unwelcome hours and at the most inopportune