

QUANTITIES OF FIREWORKS

and keeping up a terrible racket with the explosions. You would almost think they were having a battle with real guns; for China is the best place in the world for getting fire-crackers—none of your little squibs that make a noise like paper caps, but great solid fellows that startle you almost out of your senses if you are too near when they go off. And it isn't the boys, either, who are setting them off, but the grown up Chinamen. All over the land they are setting them off to-night at their kitchen doors, getting noisier and noisier as the evening wears on, and some one in each family will stay up all night to keep on firing them till daylight. Indeed for the last few days fireworks have been exploding and harsh gongs sounding all over the town. And what do you think it all means? Well, when it *does* mean something, it means that they are trying to : get away evil spirits so that the new year which begins to-morrow may be a happy one.

HOW DIFFERENT

their way of seeking a happy new year is from yours: staying up all night to scare away evil spirits with the noise of fire-crackers;—that's the way *then* do it; while *you*, more sensibly, go to bed the night before and waken in the morning, fresh and eager, to jump into the big sleigh and drive up town to some church to hear of Him, who, when once admitted to any heart gradually drives out all the fear and sin and misery that may be there, and shines in all the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness.

But the Chinese want to be happy, as much as we, and they seek for happiness at this season in the best way they know how, not by showing their love toward the great good God, in whom they live, and move, and have their being, but by showing their terror for evil spirits filling earth and sky, who, they believe, can do more to harm them than their gods can to protect them.

O yes, they want to be happy: and to-morrow will go about calling on one an-

other and wishing one another a very happy New Year, just as you do at home.

By the way do any of you

REMEMBER THE STORY

about China I once printed for you in a yellow cover, with some Chinese characters on the back? Well, would you believe it, only this afternoon I saw those very characters pasted up over the doors of a number of Chinese houses. I wonder if any of you remember what I told you the characters meant? They really represent a single word, which is pronounced *foo*, as in the English word "food." It means HAPPINESS; and the idea of pasting it up to-day is to wish everyone who goes through the door a year of happiness.

Let us all work and pray for the time when these strange people will be made willing to enter the true door to happiness here and hereafter—even to enter through Him who called *Himself* the Door. But as it is they know nothing of Him, and worse still don't particularly care to know.

They little realize that He is so near them all the time, that they do nothing without His knowledge. Why, last week, as the year began to grow very old, instead of looking up to our Heavenly Father and confessing all the sins they had committed through the year, and praying for forgiveness in Jesus' name, believing that if they confess their sins God is faithful and just to forgive them their sins,—instead of doing this what do you think they did all over China?

SHALL I TELL YOU?

They gathered in their kitchens on Tuesday night, in order, as they thought, to send a paper god up to heaven through the flames in the stove to report upon everything good and bad that they had done throughout the year; and as he was burning they prayed earnestly, "Now, god of the cooking stoves, be a good god, and tell only nice things about us!"

In some cases they had a stuffed god, to whom they thus prayed as they burnt him; but in the most of cases they had