

"Sound, Sound the Truth Abroad."

SOUND, sound the truth abroad,
Bear ye the word of God
Through the wide world;
Tell what our Lord has done,
Tell how the day is won,
And from his lofty throne
Satan is hurled.

Far over sea and land,
'Tis our Lord's own command,
Bear ye his name;
Bear it to every shore;
Regions unknown explore;
Enter at every door;
Silence is shame.

Speed on the wings of love;
Jesus, who reigns above,
Bids us to fly;
They who his message bear
Should neither doubt nor fear;
He will their friend appear;
He will be nigh.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JUNE 15, 1895.

THE CHINESE FIRE GOD FESTIVAL.

A MISSIONARY in China writes: "I am in a market village in China, and to-day it is thronged with people in honour of 'Ho Sheng pu sah,' which means 'the fire god.' To enter the village from the river we climb a steep bank, and going up the narrow path with us are men carrying many different things slung across their shoulders, as rice, water, fruit, and such like needful articles. We enter the little gateway, which is quite prettily decorated with varied kinds of paper cut into fancy shapes, and then we are upon the main street—and such a street! narrow, close, and dirty.

"But how pretty everything looks! Overhead the street is covered with calico stretched on bamboo frames, giving the place just the appearance of a long gallery with all kinds of decorations hanging across the way. Paper lanterns, large paper insects, paper bridges constructed from one side of the street to the other, all hung just above the heads of the passers-by. It looks like the fairy streets we used to dream about when mother told us stories around the winter fire long ago.

"To-morrow they are going to carry the idol out in procession. Four men will bear him on their shoulders, and many others in showy robes will beat gongs, and let off firecrackers, and make a great fuss generally. Poor, poor people! they are to be pitied, though sometimes it is difficult to keep from despising their folly; but they are blind, and do not see. They often say, 'Well, you have your God on your side, and we have our idols on this side; it is pretty much the same, the meaning is all one.' I often think that when the Chinese are converted, if they serve God as earnestly as they follow the idols, what splendid Christians they will be, far ahead of us!"

THE BOYS OF CHINA.

WHAT a fuss there is when a little boy is born! When about four or five years of age the boy goes to school. This is truly a grand day for all the family. The happy father, at an early hour, followed by the good wishes of all his friends, starts with his little son for the school. He takes with him what the Chinese call "the four precious things," which are paper, ink slab, a cake of ink, and some pens. He also takes the necessary books, and a present for the schoolmaster.

Upon arriving at the school the little boy, dressed in his best clothes, has to prostrate himself before his new master, and then worship before a tablet upon which the name of Confucius is inscribed. Clever boys stay at school until they are old enough to go in for the government competitive examinations.

Many boys, after a few years at school, are apprenticed to some business, but to become a scholar is the ambition of every Chinese boy. Chinese boys are very much like English boys, ever on the watch for an opportunity to play tricks. Every boy has the hair on the front part of his head shaved off, but the hair on the back part of his head is allowed to grow very long, and is braided into a tail. We always know a Chinese boy or man by his long plait. And what a constant temptation a boy's plait is to all his young friends in the

rich and recover from disease. In the case of believing in Jesus, there are no benefits of this kind." The people have no idea of a religion whose aim is to free from sin and make men pure.

Though the Chinese are good scholars and have many books, they are as superstitious as the lowest savages. They believe in ghosts and evil spirits, and one of their singular notions is that these evil spirits go in straight lines, and hence they make their streets crooked so as to confuse and keep off the bad spirits. They also believe in an oracle by which they can foretell their fate. The picture below represents a person consulting this oracle before a priest. While incense is burning and crackers are fired off, to keep the god awake and attentive, the inquirer shakes a cup in which are placed strips of wood with some written words upon them, and from the strips that fall upon the ground he learns his fate.

DIFFICULT BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE.—About the most difficult task that the Salvation Army has undertaken is the work of evangelizing the policemen of New York city. The scheme has excited no small measure of ridicule; but that will not at all discourage Mrs. Ballington Booth, who is the leader of this enterprise, and we shall be disappointed if she and her followers do



CHINESE WORSHIP.

school. It is so easy to tie a boy to a chair or a form by his tail, and two boys, and sometimes three, may be tied together by their plaits, without much difficulty, by a boy who is clever at playing tricks.

CHINESE WORSHIP.

THERE are said to be three national religions in China. One originated with Confucius, a sage who lived about six hundred years before Christ. All the Chinese reverence him, and yet a large portion of them follow another religion than the one he taught. Some are Taoists, and some Buddhists. But while these three forms of religion are professed, the people care little about any one of them. Once or twice a year each Chinaman bows and worships heaven and earth, but every day of the year and in every house in the land, worship is offered to departed ancestors. Each family keeps what are called ancestral tablets. These are boards, usually about twelve inches long by three wide, on which are written the name, rank, titles, birth and death days of each deceased member of the household. Every day, morning and evening, incense is burned and worship offered before these tablets.

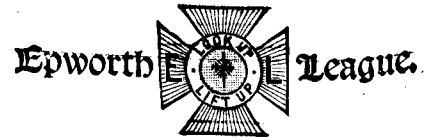
One of the saddest things about the religions of China is that none of them seem to have it for their object to make men better. A priest once said to a missionary: "Your religion does not give what the people want. When they worship they wish to know whether they can grow

not achieve a fair measure of success. A remarkable work in the evangelization of policemen has been accomplished in Toronto by Miss McDonald, whose addresses at the recent convention of Christian workers in this city created so much interest.

PLAIN ENUNCIATION.

LEADERS of Junior societies and primary departments of the Sunday-school, not to say those who attempt to lead older people, will do well to ascertain if those whom they lead and teach understand what is said to them. It is probably hopeless to attempt to reform the average choir, and train its members to enunciate plainly, but there is hope that we may get the little people to sing clearly, and with understanding of the words which they use. This correctness will not be secured without taking upon the words and their meaning. Unlikely to make some such ridiculous mistake as that of a little fellow who came home and told his mother of the beautiful song he had learned in the public school, whose words he declared with emphasis were: "Pretty little elephants, in your corsets green." It was only at the expense of a visit to the school-room and an interview with the teacher that it was discovered that the words of the song were, "Pretty little elves, in your corsage green."

The old story of the boy who asked, "What is a consecrated, cross-eyed bear?" may be recalled in this connection also. Of course, it will be remembered that what the little fellow meant was the words of the beautiful song, "A consecrated cross-eyed bear."



Come, Lord Jesus.

"LORD, our longing hearts grow weary,
Waiting for our soul's loved choice;
Every hour seems sad and dreary,
Till we hear thy welcome voice:
Come, Lord Jesus!
Come and bid our hearts rejoice.

"Thou hast promised thou wouldst take us
To thy everlasting home;
Greater still, that thou wouldst make us
Sit with thee upon thy throne.
Come, Lord Jesus!
Come and claim us as thine own.

"Blessed Lord, behold thy promise,
See, we hang upon thy word;
Thou hast spoken, 'I come quickly';
Thou hast spoken, we have heard.
Come, Lord Jesus!
Come, our own, our faithful Lord."

JUNIOR LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

June 23, 1895.

THE TRUTHFUL WITNESS.—Galatians 4. 6.

The Jews were accustomed to arrogate to themselves the blessings of the Gospel and exclude all others from the covenant of mercy. God the Father excludes none but such as exclude themselves. He has provided salvation for the Gentiles as well as the Jews, though to the latter the message of salvation was first made known, but the Gentiles are fellow-heirs of the blessings provided in the Gospel. In the passage which we are now considering, God himself has placed this matter beyond the possibility of doubt, inasmuch as he gives the same assurance of their sonship both to Jews and Gentiles, hence they both call him Father, only one of them uses the word which means father, so that both Jews and Gentiles are born into the heavenly family, and are brethren in Christ Jesus. God speaks alike to both assuring them of a Father's love.

Surely none will doubt the testimony which God gives. He sends forth the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of all who believe, and without this witness all other testimonies are of no value. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. Sometimes persons perplex themselves about how they can know that the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity, testifies as to their acceptance with God. But surely we do not doubt that that God who made man can testify to him of his adoption into the divine family. When God speaks to us we feel peace, love and joy in our hearts. We feel love to him and love to all mankind, but especially to those who are of the household of faith.