

## QUEER LITTLE HISTORIANS.

Independent.

Just a raindrop loitering earthward,  
All alone,  
Leaves a tiny "tell-tale story"  
In the stone.

Gravel tossed by teasing water  
Down the hill,  
Showed where once in merry laughter  
Flowed a rill.

In the coal bed dark and hidden,  
Ferns (how queer!)  
Left a message plainly saying,  
"We've been here!"

You may see where tiny ripples  
On the sands.  
Leave a history written by their  
Unseen hands.

Why, the oak trees, by their bending,  
Clearly show  
The direction playful winds blew  
Years ago!

So our habits tell us, little  
Maids and men,  
What the history of our whole past  
Life has been!

## LETTER FROM REV. MR. KIRBY.

Dear Children of the Palm Branch:

I was thinking to-day what ever should we do if we were like the Chinese. We seem to have so little time to worship our God, and so little time to worship at all, that I don't see how we could manage to worship so many gods as the Chinese have. The gods of China are legion. In the large temples there are the great images, and in the shrines they have odd fragments of idols. Every village, field and mountain has a god of its own. A god of the skies to control the thunder, the rain, the harvests, and the elements; then there are the spirits of all the dead, and especially of one's ancestors; and besides these every strange object and everything they cannot understand, for fear it might be a god, must be worshipped. Oddly shaped stones, queer looking gnarled roots, fantastic bits of wood, and waifs brought in with the tide are all gods to them.

There is one god, however, who bears the name of Su Meng Kong, and he has been a god for hundreds of years. He is called the god of the kitchen, and every person setting up house-keeping would not dare do anything without him. In some houses there is no image of this god, but the incense sticks burned for his worship are stuck in the crevices of the range chimney. Many have his image placed in the best room of the house. His birthday is the fourteenth day of the seventh month, and on that day every family worships him, each in his own house.

On the 24th day of the last month of the year the gods are supposed to go off on a ten days holiday. On that occasion a paper horse and other travelling equipments are burned for the use of the kitchen god during his journey to make his annual report to the superior gods. A lamp is kept burning constantly dur-

ing the first days of the new year, to indicate that the family is waiting to welcome him whenever he returns. When children have been away from home, after greeting their parents, they worship Su Meng Kong. If things go right in the household affairs, if the house-mother rears some nice fat pigs, they think the credit is due this god, and they give him thanks for his blessing.

Now, I was thinking, how we busy people could find time to worship all these gods. Yet, it seems to us, we can learn some very important lessons from these people. They are very sincere and true to their gods, and we admire their devotion, but do we remember to give thanks to our living Heavenly Father for His great kindness to us? O how we take His blessings and forget to thank Him. They kept a lamp burning during the first days of the new year; but I remember our dear Master said, Let your light so shine before men, "not for a few days, but through all the year."

"Jesus bids us shine, you in your small corner and I in mine" What for? "That men may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Jesus is the kitchen God, the workshop God, the home circle God, the playground God, for He is the one of whom we can say, "Thou God seest me."

I do trust when Jesus looks on you He can say, "There is one of my little followers, and some day I will confess them before my Father and all His holy angels."

"There we shall see His face,  
And never, never, sin;  
There from the rivers of His grace  
Drink endless pleasures in.

Then let our songs abound,  
And eve's tear be dry,  
We're marching through Emmanuel's  
ground  
To fairer worlds on high."

Hoping you may all be there some sweet day bye and bye,

I am yours, looking for this glorious hope,  
W. J. KIRBY,

## WAYS TO MAKE MISSIONARY MONEY.

A band of girls met once a week and made clothes-pin bags, iron holders, dust cloths, dish rags, dish towels, laundry bags, shoe bags, watch cases and pin cushions, and sold them. They also made a quantity of very tiny bags and distributed them among their friends as receptacles for self-denial pennies.

The boys of one band brought large spools which they whittled into shape. Then a handle was run through the hole, the end was sharpened, and after being sand-papered and painted, they had nice tops for sale. A number of boys made kites and sold them.

Some girls made molasses candy, chocolate drops, toffy, and popcorn balls. Others quilted and tied comforts. Another band planted missionary gardens, raised vegetables and flowers and sold them, and sold eggs from missionary hens. Two school-boys delivered baskets for the grocer on Saturday mornings, and another boy sold a weekly paper late Friday afternoons.