

"All the towns I have been in are dreadful in comparison with our towns; the houses are built very low, many made of straw and mud, no windows, mud floor, a table and a form or two comprise a Chinese home of the poor. Many cattle and fowls in our lands have better places to sleep in than these poor creatures have to live in year after year. In the summer I am told they live together in the open air. One of the sad features of domestic life in China that I have noticed, is the want of privacy.

"I feel very happy that God has called me to work here, and has so safely brought me here in health and strength. We have a nice comfortable home; it would seem very poor of course put beside the homes in our own lands, but it is quite a palace compared to the Chinese homes. We have paper windows; they admit light, but do not permit of your seeing through them. Of course no windows are on the street, but all open into the open court yard, which is made to every house of any size. I shall be very happy here when I have learned the language and can go out amongst the people to work."

#### "I'VE GOT ORDERS NOT TO GO."

"I'VE got orders, positive orders, not to go there—orders that I dare not disobey," said a youth who was being tempted to enter a smoking and gambling saloon.

"Come, don't be so womanish; come along like a man," shouted the others.

"No, I can't break orders," said John.

"What special orders have you got? Come, show them to us if you can. Show us your orders."

John took a neat wallet from his pocket, and pulled out a neatly folded paper. "It's here," he said, unfolded the paper, and showed it to the boys.

They looked and read aloud:

"Enter not into the path of the wicked man. Avoid it; pass not by it; turn from it, and pass away."

"Now," said John, "you see my orders forbid my going with you. They are God's orders, any by His help. I don't mean to break them."

#### VICIOUS COMPANY.

The following beautiful allegory is translated from the German:

Sophrionius, a wise teacher, would not suffer even his grown-up sons and daughters to associate with those whose conduct was not pure and upright.

"Dear father," said the gentle Eulalia to him one day, when he forbade her, in company with her brother, to visit the volatile Lucinda—"dear father, you must think us very childish, if you imagine that we should be exposed to danger by it."

The father took in silence a dead coal from the hearth, and reached it to his daughter. "It will not burn you, my child; take it." Eulalia did so, and behold, her beautiful white hand was soiled and blackened, and as it chanced, her white dress also.

"We cannot be too careful in holding coal," said Eulalia, in vexation.

"Yes, truly," said the father. "You see, my child, that coals, even if they do not burn, blacken; so it is with the company of the vicious."—*Æt.*

#### A BEAUTIFUL CUSTOM.

We call the Chinese heathen, and yet they have some customs that would do credit to a Christian people. On every New Year's morning each man and boy, from the Emperor to the lowest peasant, pays a visit to his mother. He carries her a present, varying in value according to his station, thanking her for all she has done for him, and asks a continuance of her favor another year. They are taught to believe that mothers have an influence for good over their sons all through life.

On another page will be found a recitation for mission band entertainments. Seven young people represent the different nations asking for the Gospel. The speakers come upon the platform, one at a time, as their turn comes to recite, and all remain standing until the end, when in concert they repeat the closing verse. If they wish, each one may be attired partly or wholly in the dress of the nation they represent. But above all do not fail to hear in the appeal the cry of the heathen from afar.