

"There were about one thousand supplicants, and the desire of each one was very plainly expressed, and yet there was not a sound to be heard. Let me tell you how that was. Nearly a day's journey from Hanchung Fu, in Shen-si, is a pretty gorge, that is, a cutting between the hills, with a river flowing at the bottom. A good stone roadway is made along the side of the hills on one side of the river, and it was on this path overlooking the river that I found the dumb prayer-meeting. On the farther side of the river is a crumbling old idol in a niche on the side of the hill, who is called the 'white stone earth' god. He is believed to have the ability to bestow very great favours, but unfortunately he lives in a very out-of-the-way place: however, his petitioners have devised this method: they have each engraved their desires on a stone tablet, and erected these tablets on the side of the hill facing the idol. They took like a lot of small grave-stones all

heaped together. I counted about a thousand, and carefully looked over them to see what the persons who placed them there were praying for. The prayers were very much alike, such as 'Bless my father!' 'Preserve both my father and mother!' 'Protect the spirits of my departed parents!' 'Help me to get rich!' 'Take care of me in all my journeyings!' 'Protect our country,' etc. But oh, what a dull prayer-meeting; and such a useless, wicked one, too!

"I could not help thinking of a little Christian Chinese prayer-meeting I had only

a few days before been present at in Hanchung Fu, where a few men and women were met in Jesus' name, and where there was real prayer offered to a real and powerful God. 'O, Jesus, wash my heart, and take away all sin,' prayed one; 'O God, stop the opium trade, and send men to tell about Jesus,' asked another; 'Since Thou hast saved us, help us to love one another and to do all that Thou has told us to do,' prayed a third; and so on."—*Mission Dayspring*.

A LETTER TO BOYS AND GIRLS.

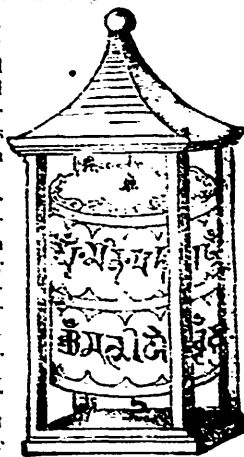
DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

We wish to have a little talk with you about our French Canadian Boys and Girls.

Christmas has come and gone: poor old Santa Claus has made his dangerous descent from the chimney and left in your stockings most wonderful things, things which you have long been wanting, and which now you prize, and your love for the dear old man is stronger than ever. Will you listen quietly while we tell you about some boys and girls we know, who are quite as fond of stories as you, but to whom Santa Claus never brings a story book?

In this great city of Montreal, there are many little boys and girls, with round black heads and pretty dark eyes, who would not understand you were you to say "Merry Xmas" to them. They would shrug their little shoulders in their own peculiar fashion, and would say "Je ne comprends pas" or "comprends pas" more likely. (I do not understand you). They are bright little creatures, so happy and full of fun, chattering away so fast in their own language, French, that did you hear them, you could only stare and say, "Well, I don't understand you."

Still they are like you in many ways. — they have merry romping games, they sing and jump and skip, play marbles, and are fond of toys. Santa Claus may carry to many sweeties and toys, but he



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