

children themselves, telling them how much the money had bought, and sending them a curious box, carved in some sweet-smelling wood, which they put aside to be used as a Japanese mission-box all the rest of their lives.

And now, dear children, are there not some of you who will resolve to give even one penny a week to the Lord's work—such a little sum, and yet one hundred pennies make a dollar, and a dollar can buy a good deal? But remember, though, the penny is not all; remember, money can do little without God's blessing, and so, as you drop them into your boxes, remember the whole request: "A penny a week and a prayer."

N. V. Observer.

New Year's Day in China.

If the boys and girls who read the LINK lived in China, they would be getting ready for the greatest holiday of the year.

On New Year's Day fire-crackers are fired by old and young to drive evil spirits away. Even the priests come out before their idols and send up beautiful fire-works in honor of the day. A missionary tells us that every one counts his birthday on this day. If a child is born only a few days before the close of one year, at the beginning of the New Year he is called two years old. Every person is one year older when the New Year begins. Before the sun rises on this day each family is gathered together for solemn worship to heaven and earth, to the family idols, to dead, parents and grand parents, and last the children are taught to worship and bow down before their living parents. Men, women and children get down on their knees before the idols and bump their heads on the ground to show how religious they are, and their gratitude for being kept safely during the past year. Even these heathens thus begin their New Year with praise and prayers to their gods. Do we remember the one who has kept and blessed us all through the years that have gone? Are the first hours of our New Year spent in thinking how very much we have to be thankful for? Then in China the boys and girls walk about the streets and wish every one they meet a Happy New Year, only this is the way they say the words "Kung he, fat tsai." Another party of boys carry a dragon's head from house to house to drive evil spirits away. Two of them beat large gongs for music as they go. Their real object is to get a few cents from every house they visit. All old debts must be paid before the New Year begins. In case the Chinese are not able to finish the work the day before, you may see them hurrying around the next day carrying lighted lanterns to show that their last night's work is not completed yet. A general house-cleaning has taken place just before this holiday. Every one takes a bath. Sometimes this only happens once a year as the Chinese dislike water very much. Many make themselves ill by living in dirt and uncleanness the whole year. Every one tries to dress well on this day even if they have to hire or borrow the clothes they wear. A beggar who daily dresses in rags is seen now wearing as costly clothes as his richer neighbors. The praying machines are in constant demand. These are made like brass boxes with covers and a little spindle inside. All the prayers the Chinese wish to repeat to their idols are printed on paper and rolled on to this spindle. Then it is covered with cloth and shipped into the box, as your mamma put a bobbin in the shuttle of their sewing machines. The box is hung around the neck of the owner, and as the spindle is turned round and round, and he receives credit for saying

so many prayers. But if it is by mistake turned backward, all the good is undone. Does it not make you sad to think that this is the only way many of the Chinese ever pray? Are you not glad that missionaries have gone to teach them about the only true God? Another custom is to remember the dead of the family who have gone during the year and to mourn for them. How I wish the poor Chinese had the comfort of knowing that their dead friends are alive in heaven never to die any more. Dear boys and girls many of our homes are houses of mourning this year. Our loved ones who looked forward with us to beginning the New Year of 1888, have begun it in heaven. But if we know they are safe with Jesus, half our pain is gone. Let us ask our own hearts if we are ready if God should call us. There is only one way to get ready to live or to die. That is by giving our hearts to the Lord Jesus who bore the punishment for our sins when He died on the cross. If we trust in Him as our Saviour, and love Him because He first loved us, we may be sure that ours will be a Happy New Year.

SISTER BELLE

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Idols and Their Worshipers.

BY MRS. M. G. KENNEDY.

(A recitation with motions, given at the Children's Missionary May Festival.)

Start with folded hands or arms folded in front. In both the psalm and song the motions are similar. At the words heathen, or far off, extend arms at full length towards the East; at God, point upward; at heavens, both hands raised; at the work of men's hands, hammering motion; touch ears, eyes, mouth, throat, etc., as each part is named.

For the passage in Isaiah have several boys. They will need to make the various motions of the blacksmith and carpenter, hewing and planting of trees, warming hands at the fire, etc. From the words "he is hungry" to the words "he is faint," let the voice grow fainter and fainter, and the head droop and the whole appearance be one of exhaustion.)

SINGLE VOICE.

Children, do you the story know
Of idol gods? And can you show
What they are like, and by whose hands
Are formed the gods of heathen lands?

Recitation by the Band of Psalm cxv. 2-8, with motions.

FIRST CHILD

King David in his Psalms hath told
Their idols silver are and gold;
Only the work of human hands,
These gods of far-off heathen lands

Chorus.

Our God is in the heavens above;
We'll praise Him with full hearts of love;
We'll shout hosannas to His name,
While heaven and earth His power proclaim.

SECOND CHILD.

They all have mouths, but cannot talk;
They all have feet, but cannot walk;
Two eyes that cannot see have they;
A tongue that not a word can say.