

### LETTER FROM REV. D. McGILLIVRAY.

Rev. Mr. Shearer has kindly forwarded for publication the following letter written to the S. School children of his congregation by Mr. McGillivray, one of our missionaries in Honan. I am sure we all thank both Mr. McGillivray and Mr. Shearer most heartily and hope that others who have missionary letters to the young people will send them to the CHILDREN'S RECORD that its many thousands of young readers may share the pleasure and the profit of their perusal. --Ed.

*Dear Children,* --Although I am so far away from you, I have heard about you. Perhaps, as your mamma sometimes says, a little bird brought me news of you. Well, just suppose he did, for we have many birds here which are just like Canadian birds.

And what did he tell me? Why, that you too were a lot of little missionaries, and when I think of that my heart is glad, because I know missionaries always pray for one another, and so I know you too must be praying for us Honan missionaries. Just now we are mostly studying the language of the people which Mr. Shearer will tell you about, and studying the people too, and their customs and worship.

In this great city are about 60,000 people. You will think of Hamilton, and say, O, what a nice place it is, what nice buildings and shops and things. But you are greatly mistaken. There is a great pile of dirt in the back yard, and if you come up there with me you can see the city from it. I can't ask you upstairs to look out of the window at it, because the houses here don't have any upstairs. Well, suppose you are up on that pile of dirt with me. You look around and do not see much but the roofs of the houses all one height, but they are not like your roofs because they are made of mud and

lime, mostly mud, with lime to patch up the cracks. See those funny white figures on the roofs, some like frogs, some like snakes, running all over the roof. These are the cracks mended with *lime*. But you can see a few roofs different from these. They are *higher* and covered with burnt clay *tiles*. These belong to rich men or are temples. If there is only one brick building in a village it is the temple with its scowling idols, which you can usually see through the open door.

You would soon get tired looking from the top of my heap of dirt. So come down to the streets. They are narrow and dirty of course. The middle is generally muddy, so you say, I will walk on the sidewalk, but there is no sidewalk, and if you walk along close to the shops you will likely strike your head against the shop signs, of which Chinese shop men display a great variety. The whole front of the shops is open and you can see a number of Chinamen in each shop behind the counter either waiting on customers or perhaps studying arithmetic which they do in an *abacus* the same as you have in your schools. As you go along the streets some friendly man will ask you to come in and drink a cup of tea. But I am afraid if you took his invitation he would think you very ignorant, for it is only common politeness to invite you to drink tea. You should reply, "Please drink yourself," or, "thank" and pass on.

One thing you would be pleased to see. The Chinese are rather fond of *birds*, and many cages are constantly seen hung up, or carried on the hand by the owner. And the birds often can sing very sweetly. You could understand their song, but you could not understand what that *blind woman* was singing over there (for the blind often make a living that way out here too.) The Chinese, perhaps you know, don't sing very well according to *our* ideas. But it is sweet to hear them sing the songs of Jesus, after foreigners have taught them. Lately I saw several very small cages from which proceeded a shrill chirping sound. On coming near I saw that