

H-1927

C.P.O.Box No. 1234, Shanghai, China, Nov. 8th, 1928.

Dear Friend,

I have been interested in having your name in the best known autobiographical book in America and am glad you have accomplished so much in your line of service. The thought came to me that you might be interested in things Chinese, so I take the liberty of writing to you.

I send you a god-of-fire, his name is "Ho-zuen-bu-sah." He rules fire. When he's displeased with people he sets their houses afire. Ho-zuen was a Taoist priest; but during a great battle he changed himself into a giant with three heads and six arms. He has three eyes, one in the middle of his forehead. He has red hair and he is of a fiery disposition. He rides on a fiery horse which snorts flames, and fire flashes from his hoofs. In the god's six hands he carries a Heaven-wide flashing seal, a wheel of five fiery dragons, a gourd enclosing 10,000 fire crews, and two swords, and a thousand-mile smoke screen filled with swords of fire. No wonder he can scatter fire everywhere and do untold damage when on a rampage. People in whose house he starts a fire are not welcome in other houses lest, in so doing, they bring Ho-zuen's wrath upon themselves also. People where a fire starts hurry to the temple and plead with Ho-zuen to leave their house at once. When he leaves they thank him for punishing them. Ho-zuen-bu-sah is much feared, also, because of the danger to the one in whose house the fire starts, for if it spreads to other houses and he is found, his neighbors throw him into the fire for bringing loss to them. So he runs away and is not seen again or comes back only after a long time. When the houses are rebuilt the old rubbish is put on his lot!

You would be greatly interested to see a Chinese fire and the fire-fighters at work. Crowds of firemen come each with a long name-banner. These banners are left in line against the walls of the narrow streets near the fire. One set of men are carriers having carrying poles with a bucket on each end of the pole. Ahead of each carrier runs a man with a gong beating wildly to make way for the carrier as he brings the water from a creek or canal or well near by. He dumps the water into the tub of a hand-pump which forces the water up a spout on to the fire. This pump working reminds one of an old R.R. hand-car. Wealthy men often keep a hand-pump in their own house; but lest the fire-god give the pump work to do there is written on it, "Be-r-peh-yong" - prepared but may it not be used. A fire in China is a noisy, exciting and very primitive thing in its method of extinguishing; but fierce in its burning.

While the fire is burning sometimes theatricals are held on the street. These are to please the god-of-fire and get him to go back home. At other times, when people fear troubles are coming, they buy a paper image of the fire-god and burn false money, incense, and candles before it and then burn the image itself. This is sending his home with spending money and fragrance to keep him from starting other fires.

I asked the Chinese if the fire-god lit a recent fire on a ship. They answered, "If there was a fire on the ship the fire-god must have been there--at work." We have towers in Shanghai where men watch for fires. When one is discovered the fire-bell is rung. When the old Custom House was built a large clock was placed in its tower. For some weeks after this clock began to strike the hours there were few if any fires. The Chinese said it was because the fire-god thought that every time the clock struck there was a fire announced so he could rest without helping. Chinese life and atmosphere is chuck full of such superstitions. Chinese are never free from them and the anxiety they bring--like a superstitious man forced to pass the night in a haunted house. When the Gospel comes the believer goes free. For he knows the Truth that makes free indeed.

Wishing you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year

Yours in Christ's glad service,

(Rev.) E. G. C. Hallock,

*E. G. C. Hallock*

Dear Friend,

I have been interested in hearing your news in the last few weeks. Autographed books in America and as I had you were encouraged to write in your line of service. The thought came as we had you might be interested in living Chinese, so I take the liberty of writing to you.

I send you a God-blessing, his name is "Gao-sung-an". He raises fire. When he's disappointed with people he starts himself himself was a leader of the first group. He was then aged one in the into a group with three heads and six arms. He was then aged one in the middle of his forehead. He has red hair and is in of a fiery disposition. He rides on a fiery horse which makes flames and fire flashes from his mouth. In the day, six hands he carries a heater with flames and a wheel of five fiery dragons, a good containing 10,000 fire arrows, and two swords, and a thousand-armed woman killed with words of fire. No wonder he can scatter fire everywhere and do untold damage when in a rage. People in whose houses he starts a fire are not welcome in other homes just in no doing, they're being hurt. People who are with him are to leave their homes at once. When he leaves they thank him for punishing them. He-sung-an-in his mouth, also, because of the danger to the one in whose house the fire starts, for it spreads to other houses and as he roams, his neighbors drive him into the fire for bringing fire to them. He runs away and is not seen again or comes back only after a long time. When the houses are rebuilt the old mischief is put on his list. You would be greatly interested to see a Chinese fire and the five-lighted at work. Groups of Chinese come and with a long noise-gong. These banners are held in line against the walls of the narrow streets near the fire. One set of one are carrying, having carrying poles with a basket on each end of the pole. Ahead of each carrier runs a man with a basket containing with to water, for the carrier as he brings the water from a creek or canal or well near by. He dumps the water into the tub of a hand-pump which pumps the water up a pipe to the fire. The pump carries one of an old N.R. hand-pump, having one of the pump with a hand-pump in their own house; but just the fire-god but may it not be so. There is written on it, "Five-god-god", "prayer" but may it not be good. A fire in China is a noisy, exciting and very primitive thing in the method of extinguishing; but lives in the building.

While the fire is burning conditions themselves are held on the street. There are to please the God-of-Fire and get him to go back home. At other times, when people feel troubled and anxious, they buy a paper image of the fire-god and burn false money, incense, and candles before it and then burn the image itself. This is leading him down spending money and incense to keep him from starting other fires. I asked the Chinese if the fire-god lit a person's fire on a fire. They answered, "It does not lit on the fire for fire-god most have been there - not". We were located in Shanghai many years ago for fire. When one is discovered the fire-god is rung. When the old Chinese house was built a large clock was placed in its tower. For some years after this clock began to strike the hour they were led by the fire. The Chinese said it was because the fire-god thought they were the fire-god there was a fire mentioned as he could read without help. Chinese life and atmosphere is a state of such superstition. Chinese are never far from the market, they bring-like a superstitious man forced to pass the night in a haunted house. When the danger comes the bellows goes free. For he knows the truth that makes free indeed. Wandering you and yours a merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Yours in God's great service,

(Rev.) H. C. O. Wilson,