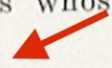


bility of returning to work, the Committee in London agreed to Miss Varley taking furlough immediately. This procedure has been carried out with many of the missionaries whose furloughs are nearly due. 

Miss Nellie Smith (N.S.W.), Lin Chow, China, is at present in charge of the Victoria Home and Orphanage, Kowloon as, owing to the disturbed state of the Canton District, it is not considered safe for the Missionaries to return there. There are 140 boarders in the School. A special feature about the Home is that a Prayer Meeting is held each evening for the older girls. Attendance must be voluntary. We are thankful to say the number that comes is on the increase.

Mrs. J. Bird (nee Miss Maud McIntosh), writing from Shanghai, says.— Things are in an awful state out here. The Reds have taken charge of our Ning Po and Hang Chow Hospitals (the latter is valued at two million dollars). Most of our Schools are closed. In Chuki the soldiers have taken charge of our two houses, the Church and two Schools. In Feng-Nwa they have broken up all the furniture in the Church and **BURNT ALL THE BIBLES**, etc.

Rev. R. Hughesdon (N.S.W.), Hyderabad, has quite settled down to the work in St. George's School, Hyderabad, and writes very hopefully of the great possibilities there.

XMAS AT OENPELLI, 1926.

By Mrs. Thorne.

Our festive season really commenced with the arrival of the boat on December 13 and the carting up of the cases. One wishes that all you good people who work so hard giving and getting together the gifts and packing the cases, could see the delight with which they are hailed on arrival here. From past experience our aboriginal friends know the multitude of good things contained in them and they were all excited, especially the small boys. For

that matter every native is a small boy or girl at heart, however big or old. All are just as interested, especially when Mr. Dyer tells them about you all and how you work for Oenpelli. So the days preceding Xmas day were very eventful and busy. General invitations were sent out to the blacks out bush to come up to the station. We saw many new faces gathering round; also some of our own people came back. A few had been away for a walk about and others had had to go away on account of our recent shortage of flour.

Xmas Day.

On Xmas morning we were all awakened very early by the children, just the same as in a family of white children. The little girls all got new dresses, and the boys were delighted with new nagas of red handkerchiefs. First came breakfast, then we all prepared for service. Mr. and Mrs. Dyer and Mr. Ivin decorated the chapel. It looked lovely—branches of oleander and other shrubs all round the walls, and heaps of zinnias and some beautiful crotons. As you know, the temporary chapel is very small, and as it was raining hard we had to get everybody inside. There were so many it was rather difficult, but Mrs. Dyer managed it. It was a beautiful service. The children sang their Xmas carols very well. We had "When Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night" and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." Mr. Dyer gave a fine address telling the wonderful story simply and in terms used by the natives themselves, and one feels sure, sowing the seed of a bigger and better understanding. After the service came the giving out of the bags, the work people receiving their Xmas gifts. Their bags contained useful articles of soap, beads, razors for men, needle books for the women, sweets, etc., and each worker a dress. The little girls each got a doll, necklace, handkerchief and toys, also soap and sweets. The boys got mouth-organs, knives, beads, marbles, balls,