

# \* PALM BRANCH \*

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JULY, 1896.

Our subject for prayer this month is "That covetous hindrances to Christianity may be removed." It is not surprising that people who live in countries where "the Light of the world" never penetrated till the last century, should object to being called "Heathen" by nations which pose as Christian, but whose governments allow such covetous hindrances to Christianity as the opium and liquor traffic. The contrast is not so great after all. Those people might have been much higher in the scale to-day, if nations which have the Gospel had sent them more of that which clears the brain and renews the heart, and less of that which intoxicates and kills. It is shortsighted policy to increase the revenue of a country by destroying the souls and bodies of its inhabitants.

We are fortunate this month in having two contributions straight from Japan. The story of "The Doll Festival" is interesting, as showing the customs of that distant country, and the touch of patriotism is pathetic. There seems to be a clinging to old-time customs, and there is no mention of the "new Heaven" from which we are hoping such great things for Japan. The letter signed Kono Ito, was written to Mrs. Gee, of Nova Scotia, and is the experience of a Japanese girl who was graduated from our school in Azabu. Her language and composition, all her own, and her intelligent appreciation of the new religion, which she has embraced, speak well, not only for herself, but for the faithful teachers who have so long labored for this result. Indeed too much cannot be said for the work of the missionaries of the W. M. S. in Japan during the last fifteen years. It is worthy of all praise.

A missionary writes to the New York "Observer" that one of the most encouraging and suggestive signs of the times in Japan is the possession of the Bible by

Japanese in high places. "Evidently, with many of them," he says, "It is a treasure book." He met with a Japanese consul last year who had spent some time in the United States—he had attended church there and read and enjoyed a prayer book very much. He gladly received a copy of a Japanese Testament and asked for another for his servants. He died not long after. The missionary thinks he was a true Christian, though not a professed believer. The chief of police in Yokohama cheerfully granted his request to distribute Bibles among the policeman and in the hospitals. To the missionary's surprise he said, "Its teachings are good and if they were followed it would lessen my work very much." The Governor of Yokohama has a Bible and speaks well of missionary work. Count Inouye has both an English and Japanese copy. It is believed that there are many secret believers and perhaps followers of Christ in Japan, who for various reasons will not let it be known.

We hope you have not ceased to pray for the suffering people of Armenia. Pray that God may show the "Christian governments" of the world what to do, and then give them strength and courage to do it.

Our thanks are due to the young lady in Toronto who kindly sent us the interesting story on our first page.

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## FOR WEARY WORKERS.

"O strengthen me, that while I stand  
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,  
I may stretch out a loving hand  
To weary souls with the troubled sea."

## SELF-DENIAL.

There is a little story on the last page which will interest you all, and that is the story of the three little sisters who gave to the Mission Band the money they had saved for a bicycle. Now there is great fun in bicycles, no doubt, but there is a day coming when bicycles will not be worth one thought. In that day, when these sisters will see standing close beside the glorious Saviour the little Indian girl whom they have helped to lead to Him, do you think they will feel sorry for their loving little deed of self-denial? Even now they must be happy in the thought that they are growing like their Saviour.

"Even Christ pleased not Himself."