

THE following letter from Rev. John McLean, addressed to the Corresponding Secretary of St. Mary's Auxiliary, Mrs. J. Roberts, is full of interest, and we gladly publish it:

BLOOD RESERVE, MACLEOD, ALBERTA, *May 19, 1887.*

"Dear Mrs. Roberts,—I wrote you a short time ago in reply to your letter of inquiry. We are grateful to you all for the help so freely given us. Woman's position to-day among the Blackfeet is one of degradation and sin. There are to be found maidens of comely appearance and neat in their dress. Having crossed the threshold of womanhood, the maiden's hand is eagerly sought by means of courtship on the part of the young men, or by a speedy marriage without her consent to some old man. And she is taken to share his lodge with several other wives. Marriage is simply a bargain between the suitor and the young woman's father, a certain number of horses being the price paid by the accepted suitor. If she is fair and beautiful, a greater number of horses must be paid for the intended bride. From two to twenty horses have been paid for a wife by a young man. In the good old days when the buffalo were abundant, the more wives a man possessed the richer he became, as the greater number of robes dressed by them soon proved. When the husband became angry with his wife he beat her with impunity; when he wished her no longer he sold her; and when she was found guilty of adultery her nose was cut off. A life of suffering is that experienced by women who dwell among the tribes degraded by the civilization of the pale face. It is sad to be compelled to say that the settlements of the country in the vicinity of the Indian Reserves by white men is injurious physically, mentally and spiritually, to the members of the red race. The happy, active life of Indian women when game was abundant has given place to one of idleness, filth and pain. The joyous hours are now filled with sorrow, as they see their homes becoming desolate by the ravages of disease. The primitive virtue of Indian womanhood has been destroyed, and immorality prevails among young and old. The respect and gallantry manifested by some tribes for the female sex has long since departed from the Indians of the plains, if, indeed, these ever existed. Life on a Reserve is very different from the nomadic habits of former years. There is a change in all domestic work. The house, the food, the methods of cooking, the arrangements of the home, and the new customs have all been influenced by the civilization of the white man, and what has been first learned has been of the very lowest type. The stealing of women by the male members of the camps constitute one of the chief causes of excitement and trouble. A young man will elope with the young wife of an aged Indian, and then there is either pursuit and capture or reparation demanded by the injured party. When death enters the family it is the women who suffer most. They are the chief mourners, as may be seen by the mutilated limbs, short hair and bloody hands. The aged medicine women are feared by the people, because of the power supposed to be possessed by them. The hard lot of Indian mothers soon brings on premature

old age, and the ruddy glow that lights up the countenance of the young wife or maiden is soon replaced by the saddened look and disproportioned form. The songs of the maidens are the benisons of God, that dwell among the lodges, cheering the sick and lonely in their hour of pain and grief. The state of Indian womanhood amongst us compels us to labor earnestly on their behalf. We are toiling hard in the lodges among the people to elevate them in all things and lead them to Christ. We are grateful for the help you have given us. Mrs. McLean joins me in sending our best wishes to all the members of the St. Mary's Woman's Missionary Society."

#### JAPAN.

*Extracts from a letter received from MISS WINTERMUTE, Japan.*

MR. HIRAIWA came in from Shidzuoka this week. He has been telling all that the people there are willing to do, if the ladies of our Society will start a girls' school there. They will give us a building all fitted up (except of course the room for the foreign lady who goes there), free of rent, for a number of years; will contribute 40 yen a month for two years towards supporting the school, and insure us against any monetary loss for the same length of time. So that all the school will cost the W. M. S. for two years and probably longer, will be the salary of the foreign lady and her travelling expenses here. I have not time to write at length of the present opportunities for Christian work in that city, but they are VERY great indeed.

Dr. Eby has been out on a missionary trip to the country and returned with Mr. Hiraiwa. He says that at Numadzu (about 25 miles from Shidzuoka), they want us to send a lady to teach English in one of the Japanese schools. She will have to teach only two hours a day, so that she would have time to study the language and do some evangelistic work besides, from the very first using an interpreter, until she could speak herself. They will give her 50 yen a month, so that if the W. M. S. send a lady there, it will cost the Society only her expenses out here. Our mission will soon be getting so large that we will hardly be able to get well acquainted with each other, if we keep on increasing as fast as we have done.

Last Sunday the quarterly services were held in the Boys' School, as the little chapel is not nearly large enough. Six students of the Boys' School, six of our girls, and one quite old lady were baptized. It was a very interesting service, although I could not understand much of what was said. Every Quarterly Meeting seems to be attended with special blessings, for after each one at the Sunday afternoon prayer-meeting there are nearly always some conversions. Last Sunday there were several more students who asked for baptism. One of them, Yoshi Hasegawa, is a perfect little marvel at learning English, and she does very well in her music also. She is in the next to the highest English class, and she has been here only about a year and a half; I think you can make her understand almost anything you want to say in common, simple language. I think you have her photo-