

## ✻ PALM BRANCH ✻

PUBLISHED EVERY MONTH.

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

S. E. SMITH, . . . . . EDITOR.  
SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, . . . . . 15 CENTS A YEAR.  
FOR CLUBS OF TEN TO ONE ADDRESS, . . . 10 CENTS A YEAR.

All Band reports and notes must be sent through the Branch Band Corresponding Secretaries.

All other articles intended for publication must be addressed to  
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St. John, N. B.

All subscription orders, with the money, must be sent to  
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Richmond Street, West,  
Toronto, Ontario.

Subscriptions now taken quarterly, April, July and October.

MARCH, 1895.



We cannot but be interested in the war which is going on between Japan and China, and we believe that, terrible as war is, this will be the instrument in God's hands of still further opening up His way in the world.

Reading in the Annual Report the details of last year's work done by our missionary workers in Japan, we are specially impressed by one fact. While evangelistic work is being bravely carried on by the missionaries themselves, amid difficulties and discouragements unknown to us in civilized countries, while the tired mothers are being comforted and strengthened and helped over the rough places, still the chief importance is given to the youth of the land. Not only are they receiving secular and religious education in the schools, but they are being trained there for outside work as well. Many of them already are taking the places of their instructors. The character thus gained must tell on the future of the country. The great advantage of these native converts is that they will always have access to their fellow countrymen, a clearer understanding of the language and a greater knowledge of the national characteristics. Should the time ever come again when Japan shall be closed to foreigners, it will be a joyful assurance to all interested in her spiritual welfare, that the leaven is within her, "which shall leaven the whole lump." This thought should be an inspiration, even now, to those who pray and work for Japan.

Korea has become interesting of late to us because of its connection with the war now going on, but it is still more interesting on account of having so recently been opened to foreign nations, consequently to western civilization and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. One might suppose, because in some

respects it is a little in advance of many pagan countries (noticeably in its treatment of the children,) that it has less need of our Christian civilization, but, if so, one is greatly mistaken.

Some years ago, Dr. Meta Howard, a Methodist Episcopal Missionary, who went to Korea at the age of 23, came back after a three years residence there, completely shattered in health. She represented the hill country as beautiful and healthy, but custom would not admit of the people building there. There is such a horror prevailing of a woman being seen by any man but her husband, that, to prevent the possibility of it, the houses are all built on a level in the village. Then there is utter neglect or rather ignorance of proper sanitary conditions. The face of the country is kept in a deplorable state until the "clearing-up time" comes, which is a preparation for the coming of the king, and occurs at long intervals. The custom with regard to the burial of the dead is horrible in the extreme. Single corpses are not interred. There must be a number before burial can be given, and then there are many forms and ceremonies connected with it. Mean while the bodies are kept in the houses, and it is at least weeks before they are laid away. If it sickens us only to hear of such things, let it lead us to thank God for our better conditions, and to resolve to do all we can to lessen the sum of human ignorance and misery.

We copy this month in Cousin Joy's Corner, a little letter from "Heathen Children's Friend." It comes from the household of Rev. B. Chappell, and so will be of special interest to our N. B. and P. E. I. readers.

Any subscriber not receiving the paper will please communicate with the Editor.

### SPECIAL NOTICE.

We would call attention to the fact that our 2nd quarter begins in April. Now is the time for those who have not already done so to make up clubs!

Subscription price, 15 cents; Clubs of 10 or more, 10 cents.

### THE VOICE OF THE OLD YEAR.

I brought good desires, though as yet but seeds;  
Let the New Year make them blossom into deeds.

If I gave you sickness, if I brought you care,  
Let him make one Patience and the other Prayer.

If I brought you plenty, all wealth's bounteous charms,  
Shall not the new angel turn them into alms?

I gave health and leisure, skill to dream and plan;  
Let him make them nobler,—work for God and man.

If I brought temptation, let sin die away  
Into boundless pity for all hearts that stray.

May you hold this angel dearer than the last,  
So I bless his future while he crews my past.

Adelaide Proctor.