



EVEN OUR FAITH."

# Monthly Letter.

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## Subjects For Prayer and Study for the Month.

Aug.—Our Missions in Japan. The Isles of the Sea.

Sept.—Medical Missions. Mission to Lepers.

## Japan.

From Miss Washington, Kofu, Japan, April 4th, 1901.

WE have had a very good winter. It has been mild and sunny, and there has been very little sickness in our school or among our evangelistic workers. Though we have had during the term some trying things to deal with, on the whole the work has prospered well, and we have a bright outlook for the future.

Our graduating exercises were held yesterday. The day was fine, and an unusually large number of guests were present, many of them being former pupils of the school. Our girls, nearly a hundred in number, wore kilted skirts of dark red cloth, and various colored waists of silk or of cotton, with long sleeves. They looked very pretty as they sat tier upon tier at one end of the long school-room, and we were very proud of them as they sang or came forward one by one to read a carefully-written Japanese or Chinese essay, or to give an English recitation. Ten little girls sang a kindergarten song very sweetly. The Governor was present, and after speaking a few words to the teachers and graduates he proceeded to deliver a most earnest address on Temperance, in which subject he is deeply interested.

On the last Sunday in March we had another temperance rally for the little ones. In the same month we held a concert under the auspices of the W.C.T.U. It was well attended, and many of the numbers on the programme were well rendered.

The evangelistic trip to Yoshida, Kurechi and Yamura was successful and interesting. The Christians in these places are few in number, but very earnest, and include some of the influential men and women of the neighborhood. They treated us (myself and helper) with the utmost kindness and courtesy. At Yoshida some of the Christians of the place called upon us and were very attentive indeed. We were met there by the pastor and two young men from Yamura, and an old gentleman from near Kurechi. That evening in spite of rain, a goodly number of men and women attended our meeting. Three of the four who came to meet us accompanied us the next day to Kurechi. We held a meeting there at two o'clock, with about seventy persons present, and reached Yamura at half past six in the evening, where we were warmly welcomed. At the evening meeting a judge, the principal of one of the schools, and other leading men were there, and they with all the others present seemed deeply interested. Several remained to talk afterwards. We had another meeting the following evening, and set out for home the next morning, attended on our way as far as a little bridge among the hills by five of the Yamura Christians. We returned by the road leading over Sasago Pass. The mountain scenery and air are delightful, the roads are very bad indeed.

One day here in Kofu I was out with a helper when a sudden thunder storm caused us to take refuge in a little square-roofed enclosure near the temple. Three or four men and women who had been working near by hurried to our shelter a few minutes afterwards. One of them, a large, well built man of about forty, began to talk in a loud voice that could be heard distinctly above the heavy, beating

rain. He pointed to a tree not far away and said it had been struck in a late storm by the *thunder*. He proceeded to say that the following morning he came to the place and saw distinctly the footmarks of the thunder, left, right, left, ending at the foot of the tree. Then all the way down the tree he saw the marks of the thunder's claws where it had split the trunk from top to bottom. I said in a low voice to the Japanese with me, "Do you mean to say he thinks the *thunder* did it? What in the world does he think *thunder* is?" On our homeward way she explained that many Japanese believe thunder to be a devil with a square face and two horns, and having claws on his hands and feet. Some profess to have seen him. He is supposed to live in the clouds, and the sound of the thunder is thought to be the angry beating of his drum. Many people will not go out in a storm for fear of encountering the wrath of this demon.

Much of our teaching, especially in the country villages, has to be of the simplest nature and given in the simplest words. On the other hand some of the people, especially some of those possessed of wealth and leisure, are people of intelligence, culture and refinement.

During this term seven women have been baptized. We have held 151 women's meetings with an average attendance of eleven.

To impress the need of more workers upon the young women of the Church, Mrs. Ross has sent the following extracts, taken from a private letter of Miss Preston's, Tokyo, Japan:

"I find there are fully two hundred homes to visit, and the *possibilities* of this evangelistic work in Tokyo are something wonderful. I am trying to visit all the homes of the women once myself, so as to know the work, the women, and just what there is actually to be done. The more one does the more there seems to do, in visiting one is always coming across new homes, and I have found quite a number of the Kofu women scattered here and there through the city. But we cannot begin to compass the visiting as it ought to be done. So many women seem interested, and they need constant visiting and help. If this could be given, there ought soon to be a large ingathering. There is a wide field for work, too, in looking up and visiting the former pupils of the school, so many of these belong to influential families. Everywhere there is the same crying need—the fields white, but the laborers too few. If we could only cover the work as it ought to be done, we should have great results.

"There is so much of interest I would like to write you so many interesting incidents in connection with the work. Today, after our women's meeting, I went to the prayer meeting in the Ginza church. They are having wonderful revival meetings in Kyobashi Ku, meetings are held every night in some of the churches in that vicinity, and a daily prayer meeting in the Ginza church. This afternoon it was reported that fifty were converted last night, and that 528 had decided for Christ since the beginning of the meetings. Drunkards, gamblers, bad women, and people of all descriptions have been reached, and even the little children are bearing their part in the good work, bringing their parents and friends, or at least persuading them to go. As one hears of what the children are doing one is impressed anew with the importance of the Sunday School."

I must not forget to tell you that special services are to be held in our church, Azabu, during the month of June, and we are looking and praying for a large ingathering."

May 23rd, 1901.