

LITTLE FOLKS

A Christmas Letter.

(By May Joanna Porter, in 'Christian Intelligencer'.)

One winter the ladies of Aspen-ville Church began late in February to prepare for the next Christmas; that is to say, they began to arrange a box of Christmas presents to send to a school in Japan.

When it was first spoken of they supposed that it might be sent off some time during the summer and they were quite surprised upon learning that it would be necessary to start it in May. On this account they went about the work with great energy, holding weekly meetings until all the articles for the box were made and packed.

The Junior Society of Christian Endeavor was invited to help in the pleasant task and most gladly accepted the invitation. The children made scrapbooks, and pin cushions, and needle books. Those who could knit made washcloths and balls and reins. Some of the older girls dressed little dolls quite tastefully and neatly.

Margaret Alden bought a very nice doll with her own pocket money and resolved to make it a full supply of clothing; an every day dress, a Sunday dress, a party dress, besides a coat and hat and underclothing. Now this was quite an effort for a girl twelve years of age, who passed several hours a day in school. But there was an hour every evening after supper when she amused herself as she pleased, and Margaret decided to devote this hour to sewing until the doll's clothes were finished. Thanks to her mother she already knew how to sew very well, and as Mrs. Alden cut out the various articles of clothing and gave a little bit of help where it was needed, the preparation of the doll's wardrobe went on quite prosperously. When at length it had been completed, Margaret exhibited it in triumph to the other members of the Junior Society.

'Oh! oh! oh!' exclaimed the girls, and even the boys, from the heights of prospective manhood, deigned to examine and admire the pretty things of Margaret's manufacture.

'It's perfectly lovely,' said Clara Dresden, 'I wish I were going to have just such a Christmas present myself.' Clara had always been particularly fond of dolls, so that



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the other girls of her age, who had outgrown such childish pastime, were not surprised to hear her express this wish. Although they failed to repeat it, they were quite lavish in expressions of admiration. 'Beautiful, exquisite, pretty, sweet, lovely, dainty,' these were some of the adjectives repeated again and again.

Then when the doll was taken to the house where the ladies had assembled to pack the precious box, there was a similar scene. Every one declared that Margaret Alden had won especial credit by her faithful, persevering work.

The names of the children who had contributed to the box were written on slips of paper and fastened to the articles which they had made; so that when the box reached its destination in Japan, the teachers of the school knew exactly

what American boys and girls had been busy planning a Merry Christmas for their distant cousins.

When the twenty-fifth of December arrived, the school had a festival very much like those that are held in America and every little child received a present made by the Junior Endeavorers of Aspen-ville. Margaret's doll, being so finely dressed, was given to the girl who had been the best scholar during the year. Pearl—for that was her name in English—was perfectly delighted with this great treasure. Not long afterward, when a severe illness came upon her, the doll was an especial comfort.

The next Christmas, or rather the day before, Margaret received a letter from one of the teachers in Japan. Would you like to read it?

'My Dear Margaret:—Although you have never seen me, I think you