

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

SHIDZUOKA, Jan. 21st, 1897.

MY DEAR GIRLS:—It is a long time since you have had a letter from Shidznoka. "M. A. R.," who told you so much about the school is now in Canada. Some of you will likely meet her, and no doubt you will have lots of questions to ask her. But there are many interested in us, I hope, who may not be able to talk with her, and it is to them this letter is written.

Have you heard that we have a beautiful new school? It was finished last June, and very glad we all were, for the old building was becoming quite dilapidated. I would like to take you through the school. If you could come to-day, you would hear a good deal of English spoken, for this is Thursday, and every Thursday the girls are required to talk English only; that is, the fifth year girls must not speak Japanese, from the time the rising bell rings, at 6 A. M., till the 9.30 P. M. bell rings for putting out all lights. The fourth year girls are allowed to speak Japanese before twelve, noon. The third year girls must speak English only from 3 P. M. to 7 P. M.; and the first year girls for one hour between five and six.

Some of the girls are very quiet on Thursdays. There are others who *must* talk—real chatter-boxes—just like some of you girls at home, and as, if they talk at all, it must be in English, we hear a good deal of English spoken on Thursdays.

In this letter I think I will tell you how we spend Sunday in our school, for Sunday is, with us, perhaps the happiest day of the week. In the morning the rising bell rings, as usual, at six o'clock; breakfast at seven. Sunday school begins at twenty minutes past eight. We commence with singing, followed by reading from the Bible, and prayer. Then the girls go to their different classrooms. We have four classes, three taught in Japanese, and one in English. In the lowest class are all the girls who have entered the school since last April. There are sixteen girls in this class. Some of them had never seen a Bible before they came to the school, and none of them knew anything about the Old Testament—so a young girl, who graduated last April, and who has remained on in the school as a teacher, has charge of this class, and Sunday after Sunday she tells them the Old Testament stories in simple language,—the same old stories that your mothers told you when you were tiny girls. In the next class are seven girls, also taught by one of our own graduates. They study the Old Testament history from their Bibles. In the third class are nine pupils. These are more advanced in Old Testament history, and are taught by a graduate from our Tokio school. In the highest class are only two girls, who are taught in English, by Miss Belton.

The bell rings shortly after nine, and the girls re-assemble in the large school room, where ten minutes are spent in hearing them recite Bible verses, and fifteen minutes in a short talk on the selected verses for the day, after which the Sunday school is closed with singing and prayer. At 9.30 the bell again rings, and the girls get ready to go to church.

The population of Shidznoka is about 40,000, and in this city there are only two churches—our Canadian Methodist, which is one of the prettiest churches

in Japan, and an American Methodist, very much smaller than ours. The church is about twenty minutes walk from the school, so we set out as soon as possible, so as to be in time, for the service begins at ten o'clock. If you went to church with us, you could not understand anything that was said, for every word spoken or sung is in Japanese. The girls lead the singing, one of them playing on the organ. The tunes sung would all be familiar to you, but the words you could not understand at all. The service is over about half-past eleven, and we reach home in time to get a few minutes' rest before the bell rings for dinner. About one o'clock one of the girls goes off in a jinrikisha (a little carriage drawn by a man), to a village about four miles away. Here she has a little Sunday school, to which about thirty children come. A little later, three others go off to another Sunday school, which is about a mile away; and a few minutes later Miss Belton, and four more of the girls, start for the Church Sunday school.

If you were here, you would see near the school gate a number of little children—boys and girls—and babies on their nurses' backs. Many of these little ones have been waiting there for more than an hour. The bell rings at half-past one, and these children come into the school, where two more of our girls have a Sunday school for them. They are all children of the neighborhood, and come from comfortable homes. Only two are from a Christian home, and these are a little girl of four years of age, and a little boy of two, children of a judge, who lives not far from the school. The father is not a Christian, but the mother is, so the children are allowed to attend Sunday school. When the boys and girls come to the door, they step out of their wooden shoes, and pull out of their long sleeves straw sandals, which they put on. One Sunday it was raining, and the nurse from a neighboring house came, carrying two children on her back at once, and set them down in the hall. I wish you could come into the room with me and see the little ones when they are all seated. The boys are almost as restless as Canadian boys. The girls are generally very quiet. In the front seat you would see an old woman, who comes regularly, because her little grand-daughter is too shy to come alone. Near the door are three or four little nurses, with babies on their backs. They are shaking the babies rather vigorously, in order to keep them quiet, for when the babies cry they must take them home. After fifteen minutes' singing, and a short prayer, the boys go out into another room, and the girls remain where they are. After a little story is told them, they come together again for singing and prayer, and are then dismissed. I know you would enjoy visiting this little Sunday school. Of course in dress the children look quite different from Canadian Children, but I know you would agree with me in thinking the most of them just as cute as they can be. I would like you to see how politely they bow as they pass the teachers. They are never too much hurried to give one of their low bows. By half-past two they are all gone.

We have on Sunday afternoons what we call the quiet time. For two hours the girls are required to stay in their rooms, either reading, or if they talk at all, it must be *very* softly; so that every one has a