

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

AN AFTERNOON WITH ONE OF OUR
MISSIONARIES IN JAPAN.

HIS being the afternoon for the Women's meeting we left Azabu, before one P. M. to walk to the distant part of the city, where the meeting was to be held. Reaching our destination about two o'clock, we found nine native women and one child waiting. After a few words of greeting the meeting opened with singing and prayer, then a Bible lesson. All seemed much interested, and gave the best of attention. At the close of the Bible lesson our missionary gave an opportunity for any to ask questions, or make any remarks. There was a pause, then an old woman said, while her voice trembled and tears stood in her eyes, "I came here this afternoon to tell how the Lord has blessed me, and to give thanks to Him for His goodness." She then told her story. It seems, a few weeks before, this woman's grandchild had been very, very ill with diphtheria. The disease was very bad and the doctor gave little hopes of the child's recovery. One night while it was very low, the minister and neighbors agreed to pray for the child, that God might save it. Those who could not go to the church, were to pray at home. During that same evening there was a decided change for the better. The day following when the doctor called he was astonished—the child was so much better, and as the woman expressed it "The throat was all clean," and from that time he had continued to improve and now was quite well. Health given back in answer to prayer. The next to speak was one who looked as if life had been very hard, her story was sad. And yet she rejoiced because she had learned the lesson. She was a very, very poor woman, who had always worked Sundays as well as on other days, but when she became a Christian had promised to rest on that day. But she was so poor, and it was so hard to get enough to eat, she thought it would be no harm for her to work on Sunday, so she had broken her promise. This had gone on for several weeks, till just the week before, her youngest child, a healthy boy of five years, was taken with inflammation of the bowels and died before night. But during that short illness, and in spite of his sufferings, he sang, repeated the Lord's Prayer, talked about "bearing the cross," and seemed so happy; and even after the power of speech was gone, he understood what was said by those about him, and happiness beamed from his face; so had he passed away. The mother said the strong faith of her son had made her see how she was breaking God's commands. She remembered how our missionary had tried to show her how wrong she was, but she would not understand. So God had to use very strong measures to show her what was right. Now she had decided to be a whole Christian, and would not break the Sabbath day. She said, some of her neighbors who hated Christians, had been with her while the child was ill, and also when he died. They had been very much impressed with the child's strong faith, and happy death. They believed they would

become Christians also. There was a little more conversation and the meeting was closed with singing and prayer. A little general talk after meeting, then we bowed our adieus and hastened away, as there were several calls to be made. The first was to see a woman who had been very ill, but was better and seemed so glad to see our missionary, who talked with her, then read a few chosen verses, sang and prayed before leaving. We then called to see a family who were very poor, but who, my companion told me, were rich in heavenly things. Through the small entrance, a sort of kitchen, not more than 9 x 3 feet, we entered the sitting room which was but very little larger. A small closet off one end of the room completed the whole house. In this little house we found a father, mother, grandmother and four children. While our missionary talked with these people, I found myself wondering how they arranged their beds, so that all would have room to lie down on that floor; of course, there were no beds visible, for in the day beds are rolled up and put out of sight. I concluded these must have been stowed in the closet as I could see nothing that had the slightest resemblance to even a Japanese bed. My companion had prayers here also. The next home we entered was larger, the people better off. We saw the mother and two children. The next was still larger—here we saw the husband, an old man, his young wife, their daughter, a servant, and boy who was staying there. These visits were much alike, though in the last place the husband had asked us to sing—we sang that lovely hymn, "My faith looks up to thee." Leaving here, we had quite a distance to go, before reaching the place next to be visited. We were talking of the experiences told in the meeting. My companion spoke of another case:

"A year ago a very poor man and his wife were taken into the church. They did well for a time but their early sins and debts followed them, and after a time even their winter clothing had to be pawned to meet debts. They then thought they would have to work on Sundays, till the debts were paid. They did so for quite a time, but all their happiness was gone, and matters seemed to get worse instead of better. They got so troubled they concluded to give up the Sunday work, and rest on that day, but when Sunday came there was not food enough to last till Monday, so the husband went to church, but the wife opened her little shop (a street stall) and worked all day. Though they got the food necessary, they felt so very unhappy, that at last, they decided, food or no food, they would rest on the Sabbath day. The next Sunday both had attended church. The following week when the Bible woman made them a visit, the whole story came out. But the old woman said 'We are now so happy, and do not mind if we sometimes have to go a little hungry.'"

We soon reached another house, where our missionary said we must call. However here the woman of the house was out, so we did not enter, but stopped at the next place, where the people were very poor, too poor to be able to buy rice. I asked, in astonishment, "What do they live on if rice is too expensive for them?" My companion said "People who are too poor to buy rice live on sea-weed and vegetables salt-

Continued on 8th Page.