

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Mission Band Friends:—

When looking through the "Palm Branch" of October I noticed the decision which had been reached in regard to the study of the different fields of mission work during the coming year; and when I saw that Japan was the country chosen for this autumn and winter, I resolved at once that I would write at least a little letter for the next mail, and give you what fresh news I could about our work here. Now, however, that I have laid aside the preparation of my lessons for to-morrow's classes and turned my thoughts from "Abraham," "Alfred the Great," and a literature lesson on "The Child's dream of a Star," and taken up my pen to write, knowing that the mail for America will close at bed-time, I am asking myself, rather in despair: "What is there that is new or interesting in our work here now that the boys and girls at home do not already know?" and really there seems to be nothing new to write.

You know already, I think, that Miss Jost has gone to Kofu, and that there are only three of us in the Tokyo station this year—Miss Blackmore and myself giving most of our time to the school work, while Miss Hart carries on the Evangelistic work with her Japanese helpers. You know, too, that our old school buildings were pulled down during the summer, and a new one commenced on our fine new lot next to the church, which we were so happy in securing last spring, and you probably have heard ere this the unpleasant news that a typhoon struck our new building on September 8th, just when the frame was ready to be boarded in, and laid the whole building flat—that before it was that far advanced the second time a second and worse typhoon destroyed a great part of it again on October 7th, and I am sure you can all imagine, without my attempting to tell you, what a keen disappointment this was to us; delaying, as it did, the completion of the school for two or three months, and leaving us practically homeless for a while. You will know from more recent reports that after two weeks search, a large Japanese house was found in the neighborhood, where all our senior pupils could be housed with Miss Blackmore, and the little ones with Miss Hart and myself found a home in the second story of the little lecture hall, or Sunday-school room at the rear of our church. There are, of course, inconveniences that come with this mode of life, for we are much cramped for room, and the girls must eat, sleep, play, study and have school all in one room; but they have almost without exception been patient and bright through it all, and are so helpful with the extra work that it has been a real pleasure to live in among them, and we have come to know them better, too, in some ways that we ever would have done in regular dormitories. There is one thing which I am sure you do not know, and that is, when the new building will be finished, for we do not know that ourselves; but we have a little hope of being able to move in during the Christmas holidays, if all goes on well.

Speaking of Christmas reminds me that it will be

with you probably ere this letter reaches you; but perhaps it would interest you to hear of some of the preparations that are already being made here in our Sunday-schools for its celebration. To prepare an interesting programme in the church Sunday-schools where the children have been for several years under Christian training, is not difficult; but in the little poor Sunday-schools, or children's meetings, where each fall sees a number of new children gathered in, to prepare even the simplest programme of singing, Bible verses and recitations takes several weeks of training, and much patience on the part of our school girls, who are the teachers. Can any of you, I wonder, remember the time when you did not know why Christmas was kept, and all the beautiful story connected with the birthday of the child Christ? It seems to most of us that we must always have known it. Can you imagine what it would be to hear it for the first time at the age of eight, ten or twelve years, as the little folks in our Sunday-schools do, and hear it, too, under disadvantages that never trouble us in our land. For instance, the names of Joseph and Mary are real every-day names to us, but in Japanese they become "Yosefu" and "Marea," which have no meaning whatever to Japanese ears, and sometimes after telling the story of Christ's birth in the simplest possible language, I have heard the teacher ask in review: "Now which was the mother of Christ, Yosefu or Marea?" and the answer is more apt to be Yosefu than Marea. Will you not in your Christmas rejoicings remember in prayer the children of this and other dark lands, who, as yet, know so dimly the true meaning of Christmas, that as they memorize the Bible verses and gather in their Christmas celebrations their hearts may be opened to understand and accept the Love that brought Christ to earth as their Saviour and ours.

With good wishes for a happy, prosperous year to all in our Circles and Bands, I remain

Yours sincerely,

M. ABBIE VRAZEY.

8 Toru Zaka, Azabu Tokyo, Nov. 14th, '99.

A CHRISTMAS SUPPER.

Dear Children of the Palm Branch:—

A Happy Christmas to you all. It is only right we should have a good Christmas supply, and as you like to search the Scriptures, I want you to help me find out the bill of fare:

"Spread the cloth" and then let us have the "bright shining of the candle," for it is night. We would better have "Salt without prescribing how much," and "oil in a cruise;" then we will put on "the dishes and the spoons and the bowls, with the bread in the basket," as we are "strong of appetite" we will begin with soup—"pour out the broth," and, perhaps, some "pottage;" then "the roll," we will "use a little wine," but not the kind which will intoxicate; then after soup we will have some "broiled fish;" "we remember the fish we did eat freely." "Bring of the fish which they have now caught;" then we will have "hare," "hickens," "be-

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