

Young People's Department.

A LETTER FROM JAPAN.

THE postman brought a letter from Japan to our house recently. It had five stamps on it of different colors. They were at once "spoken for" by our stamp collector. The letter had a painted picture at the top of the sheet of men carrying a long pole, from which was suspended a hammock with cushions in it. Two young girls in Japanese dress were sitting one at each end of the hammock and being carried through the streets. This sort of conveyance is called a "Kago." Perhaps you would rather ride in a "jinrikisha." It looks like a large baby carriage and is drawn by one of the men. Sometimes he is so strong that he can go fifty miles a day. The name of this carriage means "man power cart." Shall I tell you how it came to take the place of the "Kago"? In 1870, one of the missionaries had a very sick wife. He wanted her to be able to go out for a ride in the fresh air, but was afraid of the jolting she would get in a kago, so he showed the picture of one of our baby carriages to a clever Japanese carpenter, and asked him to make one big enough for his wife to ride in. The Japanese people were so delighted with the way he did this, that they wanted a ride too. Now, the jinrikisha is used in some parts of India and China, as well as all over Japan. The lady who wrote this letter from Japan does not like the kago, says she much prefers walking. You see she is a Canadian girl, from Ottawa, and is now making her home in Japan. She says, "I climbed an active volcano last summer, and looking into

the crater, saw the earth red hot. Look in your grate when the coals are all aglow, and you will see the same as I saw in the crater. The roar was like a blasting furnace, and one was nearly suffocated by the fumes of sulphur that escaped. There has been so much history made in Japan since we came, that life is full of interest. The Japanese Crown Prince and the Crown Prince from Korea, recently exchanged visits. The last named, only eleven years of age, has decided to stay and be educated in Japan. There were great crowds in the streets of Tokyo the day he came. A great many people from all nations are in Japan now. On Christmas day around our table were gathered representatives of Canada, United States, Austria, Denmark, Norway, Australia, England, Wales and Japan. No one seemed surprised for there was really nothing unusual in such a gathering. We are wonderfully safe in Japan. A white woman can go alone anywhere and never even receive a rude look. "One missionary found the Japanese worshipping sun and moon, living and dead heroes, idols both great and small, even pictures of horses, monkeys and foxes. After some of them had learned to love Jesus Christ, they threw away their idols, so the missionary sent a good many to a museum at Yale College. One of them was a jolly old fellow, with a fish under his arm; another was a little fat man sitting on his rice bags; another was a pleasant looking idol, always smiling, while another had ever so many hands so he could play on different musical instruments at once. There are many books written about Japan, and I hope my boys and girls will read some of them. They will make you glad that you were born in Canada.

SISTER BELLE.

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