

## THE PALM BRANCH.

And Christmas Eve, there is no need to tell the girls that bed time has arrived, for long before this they have hastened away to rest. No, they do not expect Santa Claus, they have heard but little of that renowned personage.

But one of the treats of the year, comes to-night. A little before eleven p. m. the older girls are called, and as soon as ready, we walk through the village, which is most brilliantly lighted. Many of the windows show a lighted candle in each pane. Those who could not afford this have one in each room, so that every window in every house is illuminated and several have lighted lanterns in fantastic patterns outside their houses.

The Island, divided from the main land, looks a little city by itself; but as we cross the bridge and see the main part of the village, or go down the long wharf where we can view the whole—and that again reflected from the dark water—the sight is beautiful indeed.

But there is not time to linger, the streets must be cleared at twelve. Any careless ones who have disregarded the rule are duly taken in charge by the native policeman whose duty it is to see that the streets are clear, for as the hour of twelve strikes the church bell is rung and the choral singers leave the church, singing in different parts of the village till about four a. m., when they have a grand finish by going to the mission rooms, where Mr. and Mrs. Crosby treat them to simple cake and coffee.

(CONCLUSION NEXT MONTH.)

### Hymn.

Though I am but a little child  
And little I can earn,  
Yet He who died for children's sake  
The offering will not spurn.  
For I will add for sweet perfume,  
The frankincense of prayer,  
And love may venture with a gift  
When angels would not dare.

How happy was the little lad  
Who gave his fishes small,  
His simple cakes of barley bread,  
And gladly gave them all.  
In thy dear hand I too would lay,  
Jesus, my gift of love,  
Wert Thou upon the earth to-day  
Or I in Heaven above.

Yet far and wide, through all the earth,  
With famished hearts and sad,  
My little sisters wait, dear Lord,  
For joy we long have had.  
Gladly I'll send the Bread of Life  
To those so dear to thee,  
While Thou dost whisper to my soul  
"This thou hast done to me!"

W. M. S. Hymnal.

### Field Studies for February.

#### JAPAN AND KOREA.

We are to have a little talk each month about the subject of prayer for the next month. If we want to pray for something, we certainly ought to know as much as possible about what we are praying for, or how can we put our heart into our prayer.

For February, then, our subject is Japan and Korea.

Japan is a group of islands in the Pacific Ocean, lying east of China. Korea is on the mainland, to the northeast of China, and it has nearly 2,000 miles bordering on the water. There are over forty millions of people in Japan, and in Korea there are sixteen millions.

Both of these countries have beautiful scenery. There are many mountains, but in Japan these are often volcanic, and earthquakes are quite common. The Japanese are small, dark-skinned people, but are intelligent and eager to know the customs of the foreigner. For very many years they had a law forbidding anyone of any other nation to come to Japan, and at the same time not allowing any Japanese to go away from this country. This shut out Christianity, but now it is all changed. In 1859 the first missionaries arrived. In 1872 there were not ten native Christians now they number over 35,000.

In 1873 our Methodist church began work there, and in 1882, our Woman's Missionary Society sent Miss Cortmell, our first worker in a foreign land. Now we have fifteen missionaries and numbers of Bible women. These are natives and are doing good work by visiting the houses and holding regular meetings there. We support four schools: one in Tokio, the capital, one in Shizuoka—one in Kofu which is an inland town and another in Kanazawa, away on the western coast. Girls who are taught in these schools learn about Christ and when they return to their homes they carry the glad news with them, and so the little seed grows and spreads. As soon as the girls hear of what Christ has done for them they are willing to do something for others and so they have a King's Daughters Circle and help poor children and visit hospitals and teach in the Sabbath schools. It is often hard for them to live a Christian life, especially in their own homes where the parents are heathen, and the girls are laughed at for their Christian notions.

Does not every Mission Band member, whether she is big or little think she ought to pray most earnestly for our Japanese sisters. If we had a real sister in Japan, working in the schools or among the natives, I am sure we would want to pray for her and can we not adopt them all for sisters and pray for a rich blessing upon them and their work. They have so little to help them like we have, for they are always helping others and they are only a few among many, many heathen.