

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

Extracts of a kind note from Miss Preston.

Jo Gakko, April 17th, 1899.

"The mail goes out to-night, and I have written a letter for your bright little paper. I am much obliged to you for sending it. I am very glad indeed to get it. This letter will be the last, I presume, before I return on furlough, which I do this summer. The time has now drawn very near. The days are so busily filled they go by very quickly, but a busy life is a happy life, if brightened by the realization of the Master's love.

Enclosed please find a cherry blossom and a "yama-buti flower."

[The little blossoms from far Japan were as sweet as the thought which prompted the sending of them.

We welcome Miss Preston back to home and friends and needed rest.]

Jo Gakko, Kofu, April 13th 1899.

Dear Readers of the Palm Branch:

This is the 12th of April by the new calendar, but by the old the 3rd day of the 3rd month. This is the girl's holiday, when dolls are arranged in state on scais rising in tiers. There are elaborate dolls, representing the Emperor and Empress, court musicians, and other various kinds of dolls, miniature tables, with miniature dishes arranged on them, and gifts of food and drink, which, however, the little girls in the family eat up, or, it may be, any one who wishes. It is a great day for the little girls. They put on their good clothes, have visitors and go visiting, and have a very good time indeed. Some of the little girls, when they have clean faces and have on their bright dresses, look very sweet and pretty.

A little later, on the 5th day of the 5th month, we will have the boy's festival, when warriors and the like will be displayed, and in every direction carp fish, made of paper, will be flying from bamboo poles. It is said of the carp that it can ascend a waterfall and hence it is typical of power—power to conquer difficulties.

Little girls and boys in Japan have, on the whole, a good time. Their parents and friends are kind to them, and there are toys and dolls in abundance for the children. When in season the little boys delight to fly kites, and the little girls battledoor and shuttlecock. Corporal punishment, with the hand, is common, and there is a curious custom of burning with the moxa. The moxa is made from the leaves of a plant. It is burned on the skin as a punishment, and it is also considered a remedy for various ills.

Children go to school when six years of age, and every child is required to take the public school course of four years. But, nevertheless, there are many children whose parents are poor, that do not receive even this education. In some places provision is made for children whose parents are too poor to pay the fees, but the same care is not given in all parts of the country.

We have many meetings among the children. There is a Sunday-school in Kofu church; then we have children's meetings in six different places in Kofu, besides

meetings in many different places in the country. Oftentimes children, both boys and girls, come in with babies on their backs, and they try to keep them quiet by shaking them up and down, giving them cake to eat, or other devices. Sometimes the little one gets so restless or cries so hard that it must be taken out doors.

At the cotton factory, near Iekikawa, where we have meetings, there are a number of boys and girls who work all day, from 7 a. m. to 7 p. m. In this factory there is foreign machinery, great, heavy machinery, and it is very interesting to watch it when it is going. The work-hands all stand during the meeting, and they are more or less covered with cotton dust. The little boys especially, are trying hard to learn to sing "Jesus loves me." Perhaps some of you would smile if you heard them, but it is the great joy of their teacher to have them try, even though they may not sing well.

The country is beautiful now, the wheat in places is a foot high; the yellow-flowered rape-seed is out in bloom; the cherry and other trees are blossoming, and all nature seems to rejoice because the warm breath of spring has come.

So many of the boys and girls in this country do not yet know that all these good gifts come from a kind, Heavenly Father. Let each of us work more earnestly than ever to give the good news of His loving kindness to these "little ones."

Yours sincerely,

E. A. PRESTON.

CHILDREN'S JUNE SONG.

Little ones, let us be happy together

In this beautiful world of ours!

Let us be glad in this sweet June weather,

With the birds and the breezes and flowers,

With the grass and the earth, with the sky and the sun,

Let us be glad in the summer begun.

There are praises rising and prayers are springing

From the heart of creation to-day.

Hark! faith with a shout and a carol is winging

Her flight up the heavenly way!

Let thought unto thought with the sweetness ring!

Little ones, open your hearts and sing!

For a loving life breathes a fragrance dearer

To God than the breath of a rose,

And the song of the soul has a melody clearer

Than the lark or the linnet knows;

And ever He leans from the silence dim

And waits for the music you make to Him

Little ones, let us be part of the story

Of joy that the world has to tell;

Let us bloom in the beauty and sing of the glory

Of God, who has loved us so well.

Let us give Him ourselves, for to Him we belong—

Each life be His blossom, each soul be His song.

—Lucy Larcom.

We have received from some quarter (perhaps kindly sent by a friend), a copy of the "Junior's Missionary Magazine," a bright little paper, started this year by the juniors of the United Presbyterian Church, published in Pittsburg, Pa. Its front page is adorned with a ship, well and enthusiastically manned, bearing the name of "Junior Societies" on its wheel, and flying the flags of Egypt, India and other foreign lands. God speed this little ship as well as our own. It has a "Cozy Corner"