

fested intense anxiety lest the supply fail, and immense relief when there proved to be enough and to spare. After games, singing, and profound salaams, the shadows of night began to fall, the school children went to their "rice," and the naked little bodies of the heathen blended with the shadows and disappeared.

In some missions they give a Sunday-school picnic, as a Christmas treat. Mrs. Ninde tells of one given in Lucknow, the "City of Roses," at the time of her visit there. Two thousand children from the Methodist Sunday schools gathered at the *Maiden*, a public park in the centre of the city. There were seven great elephants adorned with crimson velvet, and gold fringe, awaiting their arrival. Mrs. Ninde and the missionaries mounted one of the large beasts, and the backs of the other six were quickly crowded with boys and girls. She inquired why there were not more elephants so that all of the children could have a ride, and was informed that only those could ride who had passed the examination. Just before Christmas all of the Sunday-school children are examined on the work of the year, and only those who can recite without mistake all of the lesson topics, golden texts, and selected verses are entitled to an elephant ride. Mrs. Ninde felt sure she could not do this, and with a keen sense of her own unworthiness proposed to leave her lofty position; but as she was a guest she was allowed to stay. The question naturally arises, how many elephants would be required for the ordinary American Sunday school?

BURMAH.

In Burmah we find a polyglot celebration, English, Karen, and Burmese rejoicing together. One missionary has described her Christmas surprises. Here is the list: "First a kind of bag made of the bark of the plantain tree; in it are several little packages containing tea, sugar, cocoanut, and a handkerchief with a pretty border. These are from the old Karen preacher, who lives in the compound. Next a pretty fan and a little looking-glass from Pau Pau, my right-hand girl, folded oranges in large leaves; in this package of leaves, a bit of cake from the youngest child present; an ear of corn, a tiny bottle of candy, two sheets of paper, and two needles follow; then more handkerchiefs costing three cents each, two candles in this packet, and what have we here? Ah, it is cigars! How they laugh, for I talk so strongly against smoking, but they tell me these are for my plants, so I accept them. Though these are all such trifles, they are very precious as they come laden with the 'good will' of the Christmas season."

SINGAPORE.

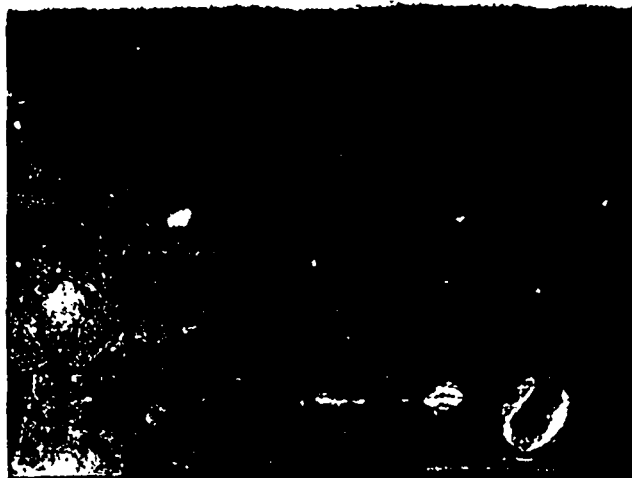
In Singapore there are so many nationalities that four languages are required at one celebration. There were the dusky Tamils from India; daughters of wealthy Chinese merchants with hair and dresses sparkling with jewels; groups of Siamese children, and hosts of Malays. After carols in Tamil, the prayer in Chinese, and the address in Malay, the gifts were distributed. Girls of twelve or thirteen, being too old to appear in public, had little remembrances sent to them. We hope, considering their great age, that these presents were especially nice.

CHINA.

From the hundreds of Christian centres in China we must choose only one, the Girls' School in Peking. "On Christmas morning the beautiful cantata, 'The Star of Bethlehem,' was exquisitely rendered by the school children. The crowning event, however, was the distribution of gifts on Sunday afternoon to the heathen children. The chapel was packed with a motley crowd of the great unwashed. Expectation was on tiptoe, for they had been told that, if they came regularly, they would receive on Christmas day a nice card, and when in addition each boy and girl was given a package, with the strict injunction not to open it until out of the chapel, it was pathetic to see them. The little girls with their dirty faces, partially concealed by paint, would carelessly hold their packages against their cheeks, smoothing them gently, and rock them back and forth crooning, "I believe it is a doll," but not a package was opened or peeped into until all were outside, and, as the missionary explained to them the coming of the

Christ-child and the joy it had brought to the world, the gladness that shone in their faces was proof that some of this joy had come to their hearts. Two hundred and fifty children or more on that day received their first Christmas gifts, and in more than one hundred and fifty heathen homes the sweet story of the nativity was told by childish lips."

JAPAN.



Like a picture on a dainty Japanese fan appear the tiny people in Glory Kindergarten at Kobe. "One purpose of the kindergarten has been—under the blue sky, beside the sea, in the shadow of the hills, yes, in the presence of thousands of shrines and temples of heathenism, at the time of the preparation and excitement attending the mere advent of the new year—to make a festival for the children which shall celebrate the birth of Christ, the King of the earth." After the songs had been practiced, the recitations learned, and the gifts all folded in snowy paper and tied with red and gold strings, which signify a gift, the room was decorated and the tree set up. A profusion of chrysanthemums, with bouquets of small pine trees, purple cabbages, and red berries, were very effective, and the teacher had made two flags of chrysanthemums, one of the American and the other the Japanese, which were put on either side of the Christmas text. The fascinating Japanese shops furnished red, blue, silver, gilt, and green glass balls, with dozens of bright-colored candles for the tree. But all the decorations are as nothing to the gay little company of children who marched in, arrayed in "pale green silk, soft grey crepe, gaily bedecked with flowers, fine sashes with over-sashes of rose pink, gold-embroidered collars, artificial flowers for the black hair, and paint and powder for the little girls' faces." Then followed the Christmas music, "Once in Royal David's City," "Heaven and Earth this Night Rejoice," "Waken, Little Children," and kindergarten songs, all sung in Japanese. After a simple Bible lesson the children played their graceful games, and enjoyed their beautiful tree, and a treat of bean paste, sugar storks, and cakes. The children, dear, quaint little figures, are extremely polite, and make low bows as they offer "ten thousand thanks" for their tiny gifts.

DARKEST AFRICA.

From the color and charm of the sunrise kingdom look into the heart of darkest Africa. In this haunt of slavery, cannibalism, fetichism, and witchcraft, is there the faintest gleam of the Star? Down the great river, through the deep forests, comes one of the very merriest accounts of a Christmas celebration. The attempt to introduce Santa Claus was not a success. He was greeted with shrieks and groans, and cries of "let me out," "it is the evil one," "it is the day of judgement." The small fry caught the infection and fled to the bedroom, while the black children crept under chairs and tables to hide themselves. Santa Claus was obliged to remove his disguise very hastily, and they were soon reassured and began to laugh and chatter and nibble their cakes and fruits. One said he thought that Elijah had returned, another that it was John the Baptist, and another that it was Satan, and all his evil deeds rose up before him. They may not need our legends of Santa