

Transcribed by Stacy Calderwood, 1/25/21

[Otaru], Japan

July 23, 1907

My dear, dear Mrs. Tibbetts,

Do I owe you a letter? I don't know. And it doesn't matter. I know you will be glad [for] a letter any way. I wonder if you have a lot of company or are you spending a short time up in the wilds of Me. By the time this reaches you, you will be busy getting Elsie ready for school. I can't [realize] that she has graduated.

We are now on [our vacation] trip. We expect to be gone [from] Tokyo about three weeks, after which George will go to Tokyo & teach in the summer school & I shall go to [Karuizawa] where I was last summer. The first day we left Tokyo a 10-hr. ride [on] railroad took us to [Sendai]. [Illegible words] three days there visiting [illegible words] that are near. One day we [went out] in a sail boat seven or eight hours going in & out among the islands of Matsushima bay. There are over [200] islands of strange shaped rock formation. Only a little imagination [illegible] forms them into faces & animals. Islands not more than a rod square have pine trees of good size growing on them. Many of them have caves & sometimes the islands make arches.

From Sendai it was an 11-hour train to [Aomori] on the northern [coast] of the main island. The city is not very pretty but the scenery is fine – mountains & sea at the same time. We were at [Aomori] two days in a Japanese hotel, sleeping on the floor & eating from [trays] on the floor. From Aomori we took a steamer & crossed over to the northern island [Yeso] or Hokkaido as it is [illegible words] more commonly called. It was a [illegible] hr. sail. At first we were in Aomori bay then out in the open sea for about an hour then we came into another bay. At no time were we out of sight of land. I was pleasantly surprised at the size & [niceness] of the boat. It was a delightful trip. We landed at [Hakodate]. The city extends part way up the side of a mountain which comes close to the shore. The top of the mt. is strongly fortified. It is sometimes spoken of [as] the Gibraltar of Japan. The [illegible] city has electric lights [illegible] works & horse cars.

From Hakodate a [illegible] hr. ride brought us to [Otaru] yet the distance is less than [200] miles – the rail road [sic] goes up through the mountain so much of the way the train went very slowly. The scenery here on the island of [Yeso] is more like N.E. scenery than any I have seen in Japan before. You see the latitude is about the same. The flora resembles that of N.E. also.

There were big potato field & apple orchards. It did [illegible] me good to see an apple tree, Fireweed, [illegible] daisies [illegible] primroses etc. made us exclaim. Many of the home flowers George had not seen for five years. Nearly all day we were in sight of an extinct volcano about 7,000 ft. high. Sometimes we saw it on one side of the train & sometimes on the other. Several times we had a view of it with quite a large river in the foreground. And it was beautiful!

Here at [Otaru] we are on the sea shore again but the mountains are all around. We are stopping with a foreign family. I believe there are only four foreign families in the city. We are in a Japanese house. It is on a hill which overlooks the city [&] the bay. There is a breeze all day & at night it is rather cool but down in the city it is hot during the middle of the day. [Otaru] is a city of 100,000 inhabitants. During the last ten years it doubled its population. It reminds me of some

of our western [*illegible*] that are “booming”. We shall be here about [one] week then go on to Sapporo.

I have written for Abbie to come. I can hardly wait for her [*illegible*]. I know she will be happy to be with me again & I shall be so happy to have her here. I feel sure George will like her too.

Excuse the awful writing.

With love,
Cora