

OUR BLIND CHILDREN.

LETTER FROM REV. N. H. RUSSELL.

Mhow, India, May 25th, '99.

Dear young friends in Canada :—

Whose eyes are so bright and hearts so light, here is a picture of a class of young people who have no bright eyes, but their hearts are growing lighter because of what one of your missionaries, Miss Jamieson, is doing for them.

Some years ago Miss Jamieson became interested in the many blind children on the streets of the great sacred city of Ujjain where she is laboring. Daily she gathered them into a class and taught them the beautiful Gospel stories until these poor neglected ones learned that there was some one all powerful all loving and ever watchful who really cared for them.

THE STORY OF NATTHU.

See the end boy at the left of the picture. His story is a sad one. When quite small he suffered from sore eyes. A female village quack was called in who poured in ground glass with of course the natural result that he was soon totally blind.

His poor parents cried bitterly when they found he was blind for he was their only son. Soon after his mother died and his father went away off to the jungle to work on some railroad construction as coolie. Here he also died and poor Natthu was thrown on the world.

For some time a railway guard took him up, then he became a beggar, enduring terrible privations especially as the famine came on. He joined a crowd of children who were being taken to some orphanage only alas to find on his arrival that he could not be received because he was blind. Finally however he was brought to Ujjain where he has found a home and better still a Savior.

A beautiful little story is told by Miss Jamieson of one of these. One morning he came to class with such a happy face. "Miss Sahib" he said "I had a beautiful dream last night. I dreamed I was in heaven and oh! it was so lovely and do you know Miss Sahib no one ever said to me 'get out of the way there' There was lots of room for even me there."

Besides those on the streets she has gathered some homeless little blind ones and provides for them. Let me tell you how this little orphanage began.

One day a lady missionary was going through Ujjain and being obliged to stop over to make connection with the trains, she met Miss Jamieson. She had with her a lot of famine orphans and among others one little blind girl. She heard of the work among the blind in Ujjain and there and then it was arranged that this little odd member should stay with Miss Jamieson. Thus was begun the blind orphanage.

Several more were sent from the Central Provinces, another came from among the Dhar orphans, Rutlam and Indore also gave their contributions. And thus from different parts of this great dark Central India have been gathered these poor little blind waifs and strays under the influence of the Gospel.

POOR LITTLE JYOTI.

The second from the right of the picture, on the ground. She came from Dhar. Here is her story.

One day a man and woman with three children came to our mission bungalow at Dhar, there offering to sell a little girl. She was naked, merely skin and bone, and terribly diseased.

It seemed mockery to call her Jyoti which is the Hindi for light for she was almost totally blind. Our missionaries did not buy her but she was left with them and it turned out that she did not belong to her companions but was used by them as a means for begging, being purposely kept in her dirty, naked, half starved condition.

Jyoti was not only blind physically but also morally. She lived with the other orphan girls and would often steal their food, sometimes begging off from prayers on the plea of sickness that she might take what she could find.

One night when all were sitting at food in their house the light blew out and before it could be lit again another little girl's food was gone. Jyoti on being accused declared that a dog had stolen it for as she said "I saw him."

Marvellous however is the change which has come over this little waif. She is now one of the kindest and best behaved little girls they have.

Such probably would be the history of them all.