

THE STORY OF LING-TING-CHING.

It was in China that he lived, and he was a liar, gambler, sorcerer, adulterer, and for twenty years an opium smoker. For the first time poor Ling-Ching-Ting heard of a Saviour seeking to save lost sinners. He replied to the missionary "This Jesus I never heard of before, but do you mean that He can save me? Do you know who I am, and what I have done?" The missionary answered, "Jesus knows it all, and yet He wants to save you." Weeks passed in a fearful struggle with the powerful chain of evil habits, but at last came the victory. Ling-Ching-Ting, with radiant face, told the missionary, "I know it now! Jesus can save me from my sins, for He has done it!" Then this forgiven sinner became himself a preacher and went through China telling of the Saviour who had saved him. He was persecuted, beaten, stoned, falsely accused, sentenced to cruel stripes from the merciless bamboo until bruised and bleeding he was borne to the missionary premises almost dead. When the missionary sought to comfort him in his agony, he said with a smile "Teacher, this poor body is in great pain, but my inside heart is in great peace." When only half-healed and scarcely able to walk he begged to be allowed to go back to his persecutors and tell them once more about Jesus. His mission was blessed and his very foes brought to trust in Jesus Christ, the wonderful Saviour of such a sinner as he had been.

THE CAPTIVES RESTORED.

In a Karen village there was great mourning one day. A band of heathen robbers had stolen two boys and one girl from Christian homes. They then defied their God to deliver them, promising that if He did they, too, would believe in and serve Him, but if not they would speedily return for other captives. The missionary returning to this village found the Christians praying for help. He felt that it was a test case, and believed God would answer their prayers. Sending a message to the robbers asking that the children be at once sent back to their homes, he received this reply: "Come on and get them if you can, we have guns." So he answered, "If they are not returned to us at once in safety we will leave you in the hands of our God. He will deal with you in this matter." The Christians kept on praying. One of the captives was sent back. Then fifteen of the native converts went unarmed to rescue the other two children. Halting in the road near the village of the heathen robbers, they sang one of their Christian hymns, read a chapter from the Bible, and offered earnest prayer to their God. As the result of this prayer-meeting, the other two little ones were sent back to them without delay. All things are possible to those who have faith in God.

SISTER BELLE.

THE CHILDREN OF INDIA.

BY ADA J. STILES.

Children are alike all the world over, and the children of India are as interesting at their play as our own. In India the word "play" is the commonest word used in connection with the word "child." Whenever a child is inquired for, the invariable answer is "He is playing." The Bengali and the American come closest together in their children. While the two in habits and education have little in common, their children might be members of the same family.

The play of the children of India, as might be expected, imitates the work of their elders. The little Bengali and Oriya girl does not bake mud pies or fry pancakes; but, with a stick for a rolling-pin, she sits on the floor and rubs out and grinds her make-belief spices for the curry, as her mother does. She takes a handful of dry earth and a few leaves, and plays get dinner. The leaves are her plates and the earth her rice; and she prepares a plateful for each member of the family. She stands erect on one foot, and beats the other on the ground, saying, "I am husking rice," for that is the way she sees her mother do it every morning. She balances her little earthen saucer on her head, and follows her mother to the well when she goes to bring a jar of water. (It is by beginning so early, I think, that the women learn to carry their heavy jars of water on their heads.) She does not rub her doll's clothes on a board, but catches up a bit of a rag and slaps it vigorously on the ground, just as she has seen the washerman beating out the dirt from the clothes upon the rocks of the village tank; and so she goes on through the whole round of Indian house-work, busy and happy. She often has a doll, a rude, ill-shaped thing, made of clay, hardly worthy of the name. An American five-cent doll is a marvel of beauty compared with it. An Indian child who is so fortunate as to possess one of our American dolls is considered very fortunate. Few children in India have ever seen one. A lady traveling in a remote part of India happened to have with her a doll which belonged to her little child. She showed it to some of the native women, who expressed great delight and wonder at it. The report of the wonderful doll soon spread, and people crowded in great numbers about her carriage, so that her journey was obstructed. She then held the doll up to the carriage window as she rode through the streets, while a crowd followed a long distance to get a sight of the doll. Girls and women seem equally pleased with our dolls. Girls of sixteen and older in the schools frequently ask for a doll, when requested to make known what reward of merit they would choose. This is the reason why dolls are so desirable for the work in India. It is best in sending dolls for this purpose to select the small, inexpensive ones, because in that way more children can be made happy.

In my walks I have many times chanced upon a child's playground. There would be mapped out in my path little rice fields, each with its surrounding wall of earth. In the tiny fields clumps of grass or twigs were planted, representing the growing rice. I have often seen the children busy at this kind of play, and I should judge it to be the most popular pastime among children of a certain age in the country. Combined with the rice fields they often make little mud houses, like those in which they live, accompanied with stables for the goats and cattle.