

A WALK IN INDIA.

NOT in the part of that land where our Telugus live. Away up in the centre of India is a town called Mhow where a great many soldiers are stationed. Here the Presbyterians of Canada have a very successful mission. Last night one of their workers invited a young people's meeting to imagine they were taking a walk with her through Mhow.

The streets are not wide and beautiful as in our Canada, but only narrow pathways, with mud huts or houses on both sides. Though the heathen of India do not build hospitals for their poor sick people, you will see buildings here where cows with broken legs, sick ponies, snakes that have been hurt, and even insects that are unable to fly, are cared for as the Hindu thinks it an act of merit to save such lives. See the crowd of people gathered before that mud house! They are beating drums, blowing trumpets and horns, ringing bells and trying to show their joy by making as much noise as they can. What is the reason? They will tell you a baby boy is born and the proud father praises the happy mother while his friends come to wish him joy. But go down another street and see a different crowd weeping, groaning, making all the signs of grief possible. What can be the matter? Let us go in and see for ourselves. In a far-away corner of the hut lies a poor weeping woman. A baby girl has just been sent to her and every one is so angry. Her husband says to her, "What dreadful sin did you commit that this disgrace is come upon our home? What have you done to deserve such a fate? "And the women present slap her in the face, tear her hair, and join in reproaching her for having become the mother of a little girl. See those priests coming near the house! They have thought of a way to escape part of the disgrace. They say to the father, "Perhaps your daughter will make a good thief by and by. You may be able to sell her very soon to some man who wants a wife for his little son. Bring us a board and we will try her for you." So they bring a big board and cut a hole in it large enough to pass the baby through. A plate is set down on one side of the board while all the people are watching. The priest puts a few grains of rice on one side of the plate, and a piece of India money

on the other; then he takes the little baby puts her through the hole in the board saying, "Be a thief! Be a thief! Be a thief!" If the baby's little hand touches the rice they say to the father, "You will get a good price for this child. Even if famine comes, her home will not suffer for she will steal plenty of grain for her husband." Sure enough! there come some men bidding for her and the father sells her for so much grain or so many pieces of money, and rejoices to get her off his hands. She may stay with her mother until she is seven or eight years old then will be carried away to her husband's home and be a little slave to his mother and the older sons' wives who generally all live together in closed up zenannas. She may cry for her home and mother but will only get a beating if she does. Suppose her baby hand touches the money on the plate? Why, then, her father can sell her for a much better price for she will be a thief who will steal plenty of gold for her husband. But if the baby's hand only touches the empty part of the plate, nobody will buy her, no one wants such a useless creature, and if it was not now forbidden by the government her father would see her strangled at once, and feel that he was rid of a great burden.

Then the Missionary told us of the great famine India had passed through while she was there, of the many little orphans who were picked up in a starving condition and brought to their mission. Many hundreds of the boys and girls are learning to love Jesus now. I would like to tell you about the Zenannas she visited with us last night in this mind-journey to India, but must wait until next month.

Let us all thank God that we were born in a Christian land where little girl babies are as dearly loved and tenderly cared for as their brothers.

SISTER BELLE.

Ottawa, December, 1902.

In Samva a Girls' School was built by the natives, costing \$10,000. One Island where their income was \$3,000, they actually gave \$2,000 towards the building. Think of having an income of £600 and giving £400 of it to build a Girls' School.—William Edgar Geil.