

RAISING CORN FOR MISSIONS.

Once a wee little girl with two round, dimpled cheeks,
 And with eyes like a dove's soft and fair,
 Held her kerchief at once, for the kernel's of corn,
 Which her teacher placed in it with care.
 Then the kind lady said, and in tones full of love,
 "Plant this corn for the Lord whom you know,
 Then water it, tend it, and shield it from harm
 And the Lord will Himself make it grow."

Then the wee little girl with her treasure went home,
 And quite snug 'neath her pillow 'twas laid;
 The next morn, ere the sun had sipped up all the dew,
 Her neat little garden was made.
 And at night she thus prayed, as she knelt by her bed,
 "Bless dear papa and mamma, and Joe,
 Please, God, bless my corn, and just where it is sown
 Please don't let the blackbirds know."

So with watching and praying and tenderest care,
 The young blade soon appeared through the sod,
 And ere long as it grew, and the wind through it blew,
 To the wee little girl it did nod.
 Then in time there appeared silken tassels on high,
 And bright plumes such as warriors wear;
 And the bright golden corn in its cradle so soft,
 The wee little girl watched with care.

But when it was ripe and then garnered and sold,
 The wee little girl danced for joy,
 As ten bright silver dimes lay right in her hand,
 And naught could such pleasure destroy.
 Now, dear children, go ye and do likewise and see
 If the half of her joy I have told;
 Plant your corn for the Lord, scatter broadcast the truth,
 He'll reward you a full hundred-fold.
 —Selected, The Missionary Monthly.

SIAMESE BOYS AND GIRLS.

A Siamese boy learns to walk and to smoke cigarettes at the age of two years. Soon afterwards he learns to swim, and at the age of seven or eight he can paddle a small boat, and is able to take care of himself out on the river. At first I used to feel alarmed at seeing five or six children in a little boat, loaded down to the water's edge, all laughing and shouting in high glee, for I was afraid they

would upset and be drowned, but I soon learned that they thought there was no better fun than to tip the boat over and send all who were in it head-foremost into the water. As for being drowned, there was no more danger of that than if they had been so many ducks.

When a Siamese boy is eighteen years old he usually becomes a priest, or rather a "bain," as the young priests are called who are old enough to take full orders. Sometimes they enter the priesthood earlier than this, sometimes later; but every boy who has any ambition to rise above the lowest rank must remain at least a short time in one of the temples. When he enters the priesthood his head is shaved and he wears a yellow robe, and every morning goes about the city begging rice for himself and the older priests. He is taught to read and write, and to repeat the long prayers, of which he does not understand a word; but his friends think it is a high honor to be a priest, and when his father and mother happen to meet him, they worship him as they do their idol. Usually he does not remain in the temple more than three months, and after that time has expired he helps his parents or goes to work in some way to make his living.

With the girls it is different. If a man has three children, two of whom are boys, and you should ask him about his family, he would say he had two children and a girl. From this you will understand that they don't think much of the girls in this country.

During the first eight or ten years of her life a Siamese girl grows up with her brother, and lives very much as boys do. Afterward she has usually a hard life. If she is bright and graceful, and her parents are poor, they will probably sell her to the owner of a theatre, to be trained as an actress; or if they are people of higher rank, they will present her to the king, and she will be confined in the palace among the king's wives until she is grown up. Here she will be as safe as anywhere else, but she must be the servant of the women of the harem, and her life is far from happy. It is impossible to explain to the Siamese children what we mean by the words "home" and "family." They have no word in their language to express either idea.

I know a young prince who was asked by an American lady how many brothers and sisters he had, and he said he did not know. She inquired if he had fifty, and he replied that he supposed so, but really could not tell. The late king had nearly ninety sons and daughters and many of the nobles have families almost as large. Often the wives live in different places, in order to keep peace with the family, and the children grow up as strangers to one another.

Thus, you see, many of the blessings which are so familiar to boys and girls at home that they forget to be thankful for them, are altogether unknown to the children of Siam.—The Missionary Messenger.