

## LITTLE GIRLS OF INDIA.

"Why, Sister Belle, we know all about them!" says our "Mission Band" girl. Well, see how many things you can tell me of these poor, wee maidens.

"Nobody wants them to be born. A mother thinks it is a great disgrace if her baby is a girl. Many a baby is killed by the father's orders just because she is not a boy. Little girls often wear rings and bracelets before they wear any clothes. They have to get married so young, and if the husband dies the little widow never has a good time any more. Someone told me that there are one hundred thousand widows under nine years old in India. One little girl over there said the first thing she could remember was not being treated like any other girl. Nobody loved her, or cared whether she lived or died, and it was just because her husband died when she was only three years old. Fashions do not change in India. The girls just get some yards of cloth, and wind it about their bodies and up over their shoulders and head. Then they are all dressed for the whole year. It must be nice not to get dresses fitted like we have to in Canada. I forgot to tell you that they wear rings on their toes as well as on their fingers, and in their noses as well as their ears. If they cannot get good jewelry, glass or tin, or iron, or brass, will do. The poor little girls never get rice enough to satisfy their hunger, and the rich ones are shut of in the darkest, poorest part of the house, with no carpets, or books, or pictures, or toys. They cannot even look out of the windows, for they are away up near the roof. If they did have books, very few could read or write. Then they all pray to idols of some kind. Our missionary said she saw a whole family worshipping a pain-killer bottle because that medicine had cured them when they were sick. I guess that's all I know about little girls in India." Pretty good for one girl to remember so much she has learned at the Band. The sad part of it is that these things are all true, and your heathen sisters in India have no happy Christmas time to look forward to, for they have no Jesus Christ to worship. If a husband dies they tell the little widow it is all her fault, that she is a great sinner and the gods have punished her. Then they all abuse her, too, for fear if they smile or speak kindly to her their husbands might die. How good

to know that our dear lady missionaries visit these little girls of India with the good news of a Saviour who loves each of them! You have heard of the schools begun for them, and how happy they are if allowed to go. They learn to sing about Jesus, and to love Him because He loves them. "Do they find it hard to be good?" asks our wee girl. Yes, indeed they do, for they have been taught to lie and steal and use bad words ever since they can remember. They have seen people quarreling and fighting over such little things all their lives, and it is very hard to forget all the bad, and only remember the good. But our missionaries have so much love and patience with them. They teach the same truths over and over again until the little heathen heart takes it in and tries to do what Jesus wants her to do. By and by, when we all get "Home" in the beautiful place Jesus is preparing for those who love Him, there will be thousands of little girls from India there, many of them who would never have heard about Jesus if it had not been for your "Mission Band."

Do you think all the little girls in Canada are expecting a home in Heaven? Are you asking Jesus to take you there?

SISTER BELLE

Ottawa, December, 1905

## THE SNOWBIRD'S CHRISTMAS.

A tiny little snowbird  
Was shivering in the cold,  
When Flossie at the window  
Shook her bright curls of gold,  
And said, "Just see this birdie!  
I don't believe it knows  
That this is merry Christmas:  
I'm 'fraid it's almost froze.  
It hasn't any stockings  
To hang up, I most know,  
And didn't get a present,  
All barefoot in the snow!"  
She opened wide the window,  
And scattered crumbs and seed  
Upon the frosty pavement,  
To meet the snowbirds need.  
And when it came to get them,  
She clapped her hands in glee,  
And cried, "Come, barefoot birdie,  
Keep Christmas Day with me."

--Laurene Highfala