



AFTER DINNER IN INDIA.

Children in India.

(By Rev. John S. Chandler, of Madura.)

The picture of the three children shows that children in India enjoy a good meal as well as those in any other land. These two little girls and one boy have been eating off plates made of banyan leaves pinned together by straws. Their food is rice with a little curry made pungent by red peppers. They have used their hands to eat with, and now all that remains for them to clear the table is to wash their hands and throw away the leafy plates where the dogs will come and lick up the remains of food. The clothing they wear, a single piece of cloth apiece and necklaces and bracelets for the girls, is the usual outfit of the majority of such small children, if, indeed, they wear anything at all. Some kind ladies in America once sent out for such little boys as this one a quantity of butterfly neckties to be buttoned at the neck. As children grow older the girls are occupied more and more in the houses, and the boys in the fields.

The young woman in the picture below has swept the space in front of the door in the street, and with great dexterity made all sorts of geometrical figures, by dropping white ashes between her thumb and forefinger. These front-door decorations are made in connection with festivals in honor of their idols, and little girls learn to make them wonderfully well. When she has finished this the young woman will go to the well, with earthen or brass vessels, to bring water for cooking and bathing purposes, and often several girls will go together for company and for assistance in raising the heavy water jars to their heads. Sometimes one

girl will carry two, and even three, pots of water on her head, one on top of the other. Certain castes have the custom of carrying the water jar on the hip instead of the head.

Another operation that requires much practice and skill is that of pounding the grain to be cooked. This is done in a solid mortar of wood or stone, by a long wooden pestle raised and brought down on end on the grain in the small hollow of the mortar. As the grain is driven out around the edge it is brought back by the hand of an assistant, or the bare foot of the one pounding. Two girls standing on opposite sides will pound alternately, and avoid interference with each other's pestles most adroitly. One of the earliest amusements of little girls is pounding a little heap of sand with a smooth stick, as the older ones pound grain.

Boys have to do more outdoor work, following usually the occupations of their fathers. The third picture shows how much of the water is drawn out of wells. They have no pumps, so they plant a stout post in the ground near the well, and place a long well-sweep across the top, so that one end can be drawn down over the well. To this end a long bamboo pole is fastened, and by it a large wide bucket is lowered into the well and drawn up full of water. The man who works the bucket stands on two stone slabs projecting from the side of the well near the top. To help him bring up the weight of water in the bucket one man mounts to the middle of the well-sweep and, when the bucket end is down, walks to the other end to carry that down by his weight and thus bring the bucket up. This requires much steadiness and practice in balancing one's self on the sweep as it seesaws back and forth. It is usually learned in boyhood, and it is a common sight to see three or four men and boys rapidly moving back and forth on a well-sweep, and thus drawing out the



DECORATING THE THRESHOLD.