

Youths' Department.

OUR MISSION.

"In our country many children
Know not of a Saviour's love,—
Know not that He died to save them,
For a brighter home above.
Let us gather in the children,
Sinful outcasts though they be,
Tell them of the blessed Jesus,
How He died to make them free.
Let us teach the distant heathen,
Sending them of God's rich store,
But do *not* forget the children
Who are living at our door!"

—Selected.

SISTER BELLE.



Our readers will be glad to see the face of Sister Belle, Mrs. J. B. Halkett, of Ottawa, whose admirable articles in *THE LINK* and other papers have interested so many.

Our sister was the first to offer herself as a lady missionary to our Board, but, though circumstances hindered her going, her interest

in the work has never waned; but by pen and speech and prayer she has ever promoted it.

BABIES.

There is a baby-boy who lives next door to me, a merry, bright-eyed little fellow who had his first birthday in August. He certainly rules as king in his home, and my young folks help to spoil him. Little Scott rides out in his beautiful carriage, or toddles along over the grass, making friends with all who see him. You boys and girls may have just such a dear baby to love and care for. Shall we talk to-day of some heathen babies in their homes? Who knows where the island of Madagascar is? In that land there are what the people call lucky and unlucky days.

If a baby is born on an unlucky day the parents say it will never do to let him grow up for he would surely bring sorrow to all around him. Sometimes they drown him at once. Others give him one chance of life. They put the little one in a gateway where cattle have to pass, and if it escapes being tramped to death it is allowed to live. One baby was placed right before seven oxen. The first put its nose down to the baby, (people kiss each other by rubbing their noses together in that land,) so the mother thought the ox had kissed her baby. Then it jumped right over it, all the seven oxen followed this good example, so baby was taken home in safety. In one part of Africa a baby who cuts a top tooth before a lower one is considered unlucky, and is often put to death that the rest of the family may not be harmed. In China many a baby girl is drowned, as kittens sometimes are in Canada, because the parents think girls do not pay for bringing up, or she is thrown out in the street for the scavenger to pick up in his cart next morning. Among the Indians of North America a baby is strapped to a board and hung up to some tree while the mother is at work. Some tribes pack the little head around with pads so it will become flat, as flat, square-shaped heads are thought the most beautiful. Many an Italian baby sleeps as sweetly in a wooden box strapped on to the hand-organ as little Scott does in his dainty hammock, swinging in the balcony in his home. Some African babies are tied to their mother's back with their little heads bobbing about all day in the burning sun or pouring rain, while she works in the fields to get food for her husband. In India babies are carried strapped on the side of their mother, or in a basket on her head. In Egypt babies are taught to sleep on the ground or on stone benches without pillows so their backs may be straight. In Burmah a "white baby" is a great curiosity and heathen mothers wonder at it being dressed, for their babies wear nothing until they are five or six years old unless it is silver rings on its ankles, or silver beads around the neck.

But the *LINK* will be too full for a long article this month. Next time I will tell you how people name their babies in heathen lands. Let us all thank God that our baby is safely sheltered and loved in a Christian home in Canada.

Ottawa, Oct., 1904.

SISTER BELLE.