

beside her, at the brown mud walls, at a doorway leading to a dirty court yard which was the only outlet for the smoke from the fire and at an old woman cooking her midday meal. The brown baby felt lonesome and she began to cry.

"Let her cry," said her mother. "She's not wanted. Who cares for girls in our family? We have more now than we can look after and make marriage arrangements for."

The grandmother came over from the fire and stood looking down at the wee little thing. "All right," she said; "let's get rid of her. If we can give her away, well and good. If not, there's a river not far away and some dark night—"

She didn't finish, for just then a neighbor came through the court-yard and hearing the baby cry, looked in at the door.

"Is it a girl?" she asked.

"Yes," said the mother, "and she's a curse to us. We want to get rid of her."

"Well," said the neighbor, "one of the teachers in the Mission School told me the other day that she longed for a baby girl. If you want me to, I'll take this baby to her and tell her she may have it."

"We'll be only too glad to get rid of her," said the mother.

The next world that the baby knew was the clean, neat home of the native Christian teacher, but she was not happy there. The teacher didn't know much about babies and the milk was dirty and diluted with water that the milkman poured in when no one was looking. The poor baby got thinner and thinner and the teacher was very sad, so one day she took her to the Mission Dispensary.

The doctor looked at the wee girl and shook her head.

"She doesn't need medicine," she said. "What she really needs is proper food."

"What can I do?" asked the teacher.

"Give her to us and we'll look after her in the hospital," replied the doctor.

With tears in her eyes the teacher gave up the baby and begged the doctor to do all in her power to save her.

The third world the baby looked out

upon was the bright, sunny verandah of the children's ward in the Mission Hospital.

"Why did the doctor bring in such a dreadful little baby?" the nurses asked. "She can't possibly live. She's too weak and thin."

They shook their heads, but everyone in the hospital did her best for the baby. The ward ayahs kept her room perfectly clean, the nurses prepared the best of milk for her and bathed her with oil, and the doctor watched her carefully. Soon she began to improve, and one of the missionaries, seeing her bright black eyes, said, "She must be called Sitara, which means 'Star.'"

As the months passed by Sitara became the pet of the hospital and all the patients knew her. Sometimes the doctor would take her into the wards to speak to the patients, for she was like a little sunbeam, and even the sickest would smile when she said in her baby Telugu, "Are you well?"

One day Sitara was sitting on the verandah eating a slice of bread, and a black crow seeing something good to eat, swooped down and snatched the bread from her hands. She was too surprised to cry, but she called it a "bad crow", and whenever she ate her bread after that she kept one eye on the greedy crows.

When she was three or four years old, she was taught to say her prayers, and this dear baby girl, who was born in a Mohammedan home and who had been despised and given away by her own mother, grew to be a real star, and such a joyous little Christian that she made many dark places light by her sunny smile and loving ways.

There are ever so many more babies in India who are waiting for the boys and girls in America to send more doctors and nurses and teachers, and more money to build hospitals and schools, so they, too, may hear of the Baby who was born in Bethlehem, and learn to worship Him instead of their idols of wood and stone.

—Lutheran Boys and Girls