

to take up school work on the first of October and have been at it daily till the present.

To this was superadded another work. The Governor requested Lal-Bihari and myself to act on a committee with two Government officials to draft a marriage ordinance suited to the circumstance of Indian Immigration. This engaged our attention several evenings. After making our draft we invited the leading Hindus and Mohammedans in this whole district to meet us in a Panchayat or Council. Our invitation was heartily responded to, and this afternoon at the Court House here, a meeting of unusual interest, it may be of historic importance, was held. Quite 150 representative Indians were present. The clauses of the ordinance were considered seriatim. Hindus and Mohammedans preserving the utmost decorum, rose and calmly expressed their views. Thankful would I have been if the friends at home, who so cheerfully support this Mission, could have looked in on our assembly and listened to the arguments urged. I never formed a more favourable opinion of our Indian friends, and I think Mr. Macrae, who was also there, shared my feelings.

One difficulty in legislation is in the fact that the Indian Government insists in recognizing her people here as in transit—sojourners for a season—whilst in point of fact less than twenty per cent. return to India.

Again the Indian Government eyes most jealously any legislation that would appear to infringe on the time honoured customs and religious ceremonies and observances of the emigrant abroad. It would have the people marry within their own caste, but as a matter of fact a very large proportion of persons living in the relation of husband and wife do not conform, they are different castes.

The Indian Government would have us recognize child marriages, but probably not more than ten per cent. of those married in childhood are found together in later years. Would it be wise for our Government to undertake to keep the ninety per cent. in line by legal enactments? Would it be wise to import the efete customs of India, which even there in the presence of advancing European civilization are now felt to be an incubus? Child marriages may be maintained when backed by national usage, and when females are kept under the parda or veil and limited to enclosures surrounded by walls, but in Trinidad where no such restraints are found child marriage is scarcely expected to stand. On one occasion I remonstrated with all possible earnestness with a high caste man who proposed to give his daughter (a

child) to one of his own caste who was entirely unsuitable. His reply was I don't expect they will continue to live together, but I have discharged my duty as her parent when I entrust her to one of my own caste.

A deep blood stain runs through our criminal records for the last 45 years. A few months ago there was a case of complete decapitation in this immediate neighborhood, and a few days ago the man who committed the deed was executed. The Government wants to register marriages, to afford redress to the injured when there is any interference, and to wipe out as far as possible the reproach of illegitimacy. The Panchayat of to day will lead to some modifications of our draft, and we are very hopeful that our labours will not be in vain.

We advise civil marriages for all Indians, allowing registration a year earlier than in England. A certificate of registration to be a sufficient warrant for any religious service that any Hindu or Mohammedan, Protestant or Roman Catholic may see fit to observe. It would not be interesting to your readers for me to go into any details. I might just add as an indication of the difficulties one or two facts. At our meeting today one Mohammed stated "Our Koran allows us to marry four wives, will this allow it," another stated "The women of my nation can't appear in the presence of men, and hence can't go to the Registrar, and asked if the Registrar would visit such families, and ask the woman's consent whilst she stood unseen behind a screen." When reminded that the women were exposed on board ship and as labourers, his reply was that was a matter of necessity.

THE BAPTISM OF A BRAHMIN YESTERDAY.

For twelve years Regnandan has persistently fought against christianity. His father was a much respected Brahim and a bigoted Hindu. The son trod in his father's footsteps, but he had a strong craving for knowledge. To get at new sources he did not content himself with acquiring a knowledge of Hindu, he strove to acquire English too. This brought him under our influence. His mind gradually opened, at one time he would be prepared to yield, the mists scattered, truth stood out full and clear, this state of mind might continue for a few days or weeks, and then a darkness that could be felled down upon his mind, to be followed almost by despair. In this condition he continued until about 3 months ago when he appeared to be under an influence even stronger than intellectual conviction. The heart as well as the intellect was captivated. He sought Baptism, but feared Brahminical opposition. On Thursday last when he came