

LETTER FROM MRS. MORTON.

Tunapuna, Trinidad,
Sept. 15th, 1897.

My dear children,—

Sometimes, when I know it is time to write you again, there seems to be nothing new to tell; things go on much the same in Trinidad all the year round, and our work is much the same one month as it is the next. Palm trees and bamboos wave green in the wind, whether it is August or January. There are roses in the garden every day, and there is always at least one brown face at the door wanting something. Often it is medicine, sometimes it is a quarrel to be settled, or to let us know that somebody has cursed them.

Monday morning, when I opened the door, Pussy came in first, as she nearly always does; it was only half-past five o'clock, but there was somebody behind Pussy wanting medicine—a heathen woman. She, no doubt, felt that she had a right to ask for the medicine, for had she not come to church the day before? And though she did find it tiresome, and got out as quick as she decently could, had she not, before leaving, put into my hand with great ceremony a copper for the collection?

There is always a great deal of sickness among the East Indians; they are not a strong people.

Too often the sickness arises from uncleanly and unwholesome ways of life. All the schools in the island are low in attendance just now, and have been so more or less the whole of this year; whooping-cough fever, and dysentery are everywhere.

In August there were two weeks' holidays, and we are just getting well into working order again. The children never all come back for the first week or two after holidays.

You know I am working among little girls now. Sometimes I work among big girls, and keep them in a "Home;" but just now we have no big Christian girls who need to be taken in this way. Three large girls come to me every day for Bible class and sewing;

the rest, over twenty, are all very small, because their sisters, a little older, are either married or kept at home to work.

My little girls are all scholars in the Tunapuna school. From a quarter past twelve till a quarter past one nearly every day they come to my house to sew. They are not at all quiet in sewing class, but they are very happy.

First thing all wash their hands with plenty of soap, which must be quite a treat to some of them. Then they take their places, the smallest on a big table, fold their hands and shut their eyes for a little prayer. After that I give out the work. The smallest ones hem strips of white cotton with colored thread; those a little further on sew patchwork, make dolls' dresses, etc.; and two girls are beginning to sew pretty well.

While sewing they talk more than I like, and snarl at each other, and sometimes call names. Often they begin to sing, "Lord, teach a little child to pray," or a Hindi hymn. Sometimes they repeat in chorus things they have learned. Lately the favorite chorus has been "Sheedrach, Meshach, Bednego." One said, "Madame we can't say Abednego"—though she was pronouncing it very nicely at the time.

Occasionally a little one who is not very well will fall asleep, and twice they have fallen off the table; but I suppose they are used to tumbling about, for there was no damage done.

Yesterday, after class, I brought out a basket of bananas and gave each one. What do you think they said? Most of them forgot to say "Thank you," and began to call out, "Madame, give me a rotten one." This in the hope that after each had got a good one, there might be a few, partly spoiled, left in the basket.

I wish you could see these little girls. Though they do not know how to behave like you do, they are very interesting, and often very pretty, and I love every one of them.

SARAH E. MORTON.