

## THE PLAN OF STUDY.

FOR THE CHILDREN.

Conducted by Rev. R. D. Fraser.

## Topic for week beginning March 12.

## The East Indians of the West Indies.

Rev. Dr. Morton, who has been laboring among the East Indian immigrants in Trinidad for thirty-one years, says, "one cannot enjoy two working lives, but a second, were it possible, would be gladly given to this mission. This is a grand spirit. It is the spirit of all our men and women there. No wonder that they succeed.

Dr. Morton and Mrs. Morton left their congregation and home in Nova Scotia in 1867 to work in Trinidad. It happened curiously.

Three years before, he had set out for the West Indies in search of health. He had not intended to go to Trinidad, but the vessel sailed there because there was a good market in Trinidad for the oak staves with which she was loaded.

Mr. Morton remained two months, and was so saddened and startled by the needs of the East Indian Immigrants that he and Mrs. Morton resolved to spend the rest of their lives among them.

These people have come from the East Indies to labor on the sugar plantations. Some of them have grown rich, but the great mass of them are laborers and poor. They are Hindus and Mohammedans. The Hindus are of course idol worshippers. They are all ignorant and slow to learn what is good.

Dr. Morton has now been on the island for thirty-one years. Rev. K. J. Grant, now Dr. Grant, followed three years later, and a number of other devoted missionaries have helped. One lady teacher, Miss Blackadder, has been there for twenty-two years.

It is hard work, as the climate is hot, the people for the most part very careless, and the heart of the heathen is always hard; but our missionaries have been patient, and very large numbers have been gathered into the schools. Over six thousand were on the rolls of the schools last year.

There are sixty seven Sabbath Schools, with their three thousand scholars, who are studying the same lesson as we study and a great many

people have been led to the Saviour and are good Christians.

A number of young men have been trained as teachers and preachers and without these the work could not be carried on.

The missionaries have very large districts. One missionary will have twenty or thirty places where regular Sabbath services are held; hence the need of trained native helpers.

Each of the missionaries at first trained his own helpers, but these five years past there has been a college or training school conducted by the missionaries, in which this work has been chiefly done. When the hearts of these east Indians are touched it is wonderful what they are willing to do. For example, Dr. Morton tells how, last year, in one of the settlements, the people had got wood and given contributions for a church. Some christian women sold their silver ornaments to erect a place of worship. It costs in all \$200.00 and only \$56.00 of this was given from outside. The poor people themselves did the rest.

The children of the East Indians in Trinidad are very different in looks, in habits, in training, from the children of our homes, but they are after all not so very unlike. They are full of mischief, and fond of play. They are quick to learn at school, when they are so inclined.

They enjoy the pretty cards and picture rolls and Christmas cards, and presents, just as the children of our Sabbath Schools do, and when the story of Jesus and his love for children is told them, their hearts, too, are touched, and one of the great joys of the missionaries and lady teachers is to see one and another of these little E. Indian children brought to know and love Christ, and to try and follow him in their lives.

One of the great hindrances to mission work is drunkenness. The children learn this habit early in life. The missionaries try to keep the young from this evil by forming Bands of Hope in all their central schools. These Bands often have entertainments, with recitations and music to interest the children and their parents, and a great many of their pieces are temperance ones, showing the good of it and the evil of strong drink. Thus they try to help and save the young.