

little or nothing was being done. They were as purely heathen, as when they left their home in India. And his spirit was stirred within him to endeavour to do something to give these people the light of the gospel.

Before going further, it might be well, for the sake of the younger portion of your readers particularly, to say a word or two about these Coolies—who they are, and how they come to get to Trinidad.

After the emancipation of the negro from slavery, more than 40 years ago, the planter found great difficulty in securing labor which he could command at all seasons. Just as in spring time and harvest in Nova Scotia, the farmer would greatly suffer if he could not obtain sufficient labor to enable him to sow his seed or gather in his crops; so there are certain seasons, when it is absolutely necessary for the sugar manufacturer to secure a certain number of laborers. I think we may say that naturally the negro is an indolent sort of man; and in a climate like this, the absolute necessities of life are not many. As a rule, then, he would not work except when he could not help doing so. After emancipation therefore either through indolence, or it may be a disposition to extort extravagant wages from the employer or both combined, the creole refused to labor when his services were most required. The planter would thus be left at the mercy of the laborer; and if no remedy could be provided, he must suffer ruin as indeed was the case on some others of the West India islands. In Trinidad however a system of immigration was adopted, which has been of great benefit to the island as well as to the immigrant himself. The first movement was to secure labor from China, but this was soon given up in favour of immigration from India. The result of the first effort is that there are about 1000 Chinese in this island.

The system of immigration to Trinidad seems to have reached comparative perfection. At every point the interest of the immigrant is carefully guarded. The Indian Government watch with a jealous eye, the movements of colonial agents that no undue means are employed to induce men to emigrate. They see that the terms of indenture are carefully explained before they leave Calcutta. These terms are the following:—that the immigrant labor on an estate for a period of five years, he being at liberty to terminate that engagement at the end of three years by the payment of a certain amount. When

the period of indenture is completed, the laborer is at liberty, at once to return to India, by paying his own passage or if he prefer re-indenturing himself or laboring on the island wherever he pleases for five years longer, he is then entitled to a free passage to India or a grant of ten acres of land, or a given sum of money. The very large majority prefer remaining in Trinidad. The government here exercises a most careful supervision over the Coolie. Every estate is required to provide a hospital, capable of accommodating at least one-tenth of all the Coolies upon the estate. This hospital is under the careful inspection of the district medical visitor appointed by the government. It is the duty of this official, to visit the hospitals twice every week and enquire particularly into the general health of the employees. Indeed so jealous are the government over this matter that if the government over this matter by one per cent the average mortality for five years they decline giving any Coolies to such estate.

From the above it would seem, that so far as legal enactment can go the interest of the Coolie is carefully guarded, and so strict is the government in the execution of the law that the employer not unfrequently complains, that his are the interests that suffer.

A considerable number of the Coolies accumulate money. They are, as a rule, diligent and careful, and being in these respects the very antipodes of the Creole in general they bid fair to become a very important factor in the population of this island. Though the Coolie generally is slight limbed, yet there are to be seen among them not a few, tall, sturdy, handsome men—noble specimens of humanity, and bright-eyed well-proportioned women clad in their picturesque costume, a white petticoat, a robe thrown over the head and shoulders, and literally hanging over with jewels—bangles, necklaces, nosejewels &c. they present quite a contrast to the ordinary coarse negro women.

Such is the Coolie in whose behalf the interest of Mr. Morton was awakened. An application was first made through the Rev. Mr. Brodie, my predecessor, to the Board of the U. P. Church of Scotland to take up this mission field, inasmuch as they had already a mission to the Creoles, established upon the island. But as that church was at the time inaugurating a new mission to Japan they declined to entertain the question.

Mr. Morton then laid the matter before the Foreign Mission Board of his