

with the subject, having in mind three objects: To avoid the necessity of deportation; to prevent indigent East Indians becoming a public charge upon the people of Vancouver; to provide work elsewhere for the unemployed East Indians of British Columbia, in order that they might be protected against suffering and want in Canada.

Many propositions were made and considered. The possibility of securing work for them in Fiji, Hawaii, Cuba, the Panama Canal Zone, was gone into. There were obvious objections to all these places. They were all dismissed in favour of a suggestion made to me by Rev. John Knox Wright, of Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Fairview, B. C. Mr. Wright had been a missionary in the West Indies, where there is a very large East Indian population, and his suggestion was that the unemployed East Indians of British Columbia should be secured employment in the West Indies under the indenture system that prevails there. In a letter dated Vancouver, July 29th, 1908, and addressed to the Supt. of Immigration, I reported in part as follows, in this connection:—

“To avoid the necessity of deportation, I have been sending you suggestions from time to time, as I got them.
 “It seems to me that it would be well to bear them all in mind, if any action at this stage is decided upon. The best proposed, I think, is the one that the Colonial Office should be induced to send one of its Coolie ships here and take a load of Hindus to the West Indies from here, instead of a load from India. I am told that each year the Colonial Office takes three or four ship loads of Coolies from India to work on plantations in the West Indies. The Coolies are indentured for a term of three years. They receive, I believe, a shilling a day, and the Government sees that they are provided with proper accommodation, medical attendance and such. The Coolies taken there are not of the same caste as the Hindus here. These here are Punjabii, while those ordinarily taken to the West Indies are from the United Provinces. The Hindus here are said to be a considerably better class. This difference, however, will not stand in the way of the Hindus here going to the West Indies. They say that as long as they do not have to live in the same buildings or eat with the other Hindus, there will be no trouble about the work.

“If it is proposed to do anything in connection with this proposal, I think we should without delay get a promise from the Colonial Office to send one of the Coolie ships here, if we can provide the passengers. Once we get that, we should send three or four Hindu leaders on a hurried trip to the West Indies, so they can see conditions as they are.