

own. It becomes then a trial of skill as to who shall get and keep the ear of the assembly. I was thus interrupted at a meeting lately. A Coolie begged to be heard, and began by saying he could read and knew plenty, and that I was wrong, for was it not undoubtedly true that God had a father, and four brothers, and a wife, &c. Oh, I replied, you mean Ram, whose wife was Sita, and his brothers Lukshman, &c. I know all about that, but then Ram was not God. This assertion, so strange to them, I endeavoured to make good, and as I thought I was carrying my point the Coolie again struck in. It was all one he said, only a difference of name; the Englishman called him God, the Frenchman Dieu, and the Coolie Bhagawant or Ram. I said not Ram, for many things were true, or at least told of Ram, which could not be true of God who was the same by whatever name different nations might call him. After that I was allowed to speak on without further interruption.

The number of murders committed by Coolies upon one another is exciting considerable attention both here and in Demarara. Last week one was tried and found guilty in Port of Spain. And it is not more than a month since a man murdered his wife at Couva. He confessed that he did it, because his wife had left him and gone to live with another man. During the last five years there have been twenty-seven Coolie murders in Trinidad—a larger proportion than has occurred either in Demarara or the Mauritius. The victims are generally women, and the cause jealousy or revenge. The marriage tie is treated very lightly among the Coolies. Wives frequently leave their husbands if they become sick or poor, and take up with another man. When this occurs revenge sharpens the husband's cutlass, generally against the wife, sometimes against the seducer. Such a state of things too naturally fosters a jealous disposition among husbands, which sometimes falls upon the innocent. The evil seems traceable, at least to some extent, to the disproportion of the sexes. The Mauritius has two hundred and twenty thousand Coolies, and there the law requires that there be forty female immigrants for every hundred males. Demarara with seventy-five thousand, and Trinidad with twenty-five thousand Coolies have a lower proportion of females, namely one for every three males—thirty-three to one hundred. Some allowance has to be made for the fact that some of the men are too young to marry, and others leaving wives in India, in obedience to Hindoo custom, do not marry here, tho' their wives in India may be little girls. But after every allowance the sexes seem out of proportion. Women are in

demand. Girls marry at an age far too young for either their own good or the good of the country. Men in easy circumstances coax away—apparently without much difficulty—the wives of their less comfortable neighbours. A wife—and more particularly a handsome wife—becomes a very precarious possession.

The governments seem ready to move for a higher proportion of females; but already the agents in India, in anticipation of such an event, are protesting vehemently. The Chinese Coolies intermarry freely with the black and coloured women of the Island, and when well doing, seem to find no difficulty in procuring wives. But the natives of India do not. Indeed I do not know a single instance in which an Indian Coolie has married a Creole.

The Chinese who come here seem to leave their gods behind and quickly to forget both them and their country. They never speak in raptures of their native land as the Hindoo does, nor express any desire to return. They build no altars; they pay no priests; except, perhaps, in eating and drinking they forsake the customs of their fathers. They are famous for their industry, and infamous for their thieving propensities. If baptism would transform them into consistent christians, it would not be difficult to report numbers of converts. Their children, of mixed blood, will likely accept the faith of the mother, and lose the name, and it is to be hoped the character, of heathens. But it is not so with the Hindus. They stand alone refusing, to a large extent, to yield to the social influences around them. They build their altars, support their priests, and slay their sacrifices. They keep their Hindu feasts, sing their idolatrous songs, and initiate, in set form, their children into the faith of their fathers. Their faith is Hinduism, tho' not, in every respect, the Hinduism of India. One great and pressing want is schools—schools all up and down the Island, wherever a sufficient number of children can be found. These might be expected to show important results in due time. Then we want very pressingly and at once another missionary. Every one interested in the Mission here feels that to occupy this district at all profitably, there ought to be a missionary at San Fernando, whose influence would meet and second that of the missionary at Iere Village.

*Dec. 21st, Monday.*—On Saturday I visited an estate in this neighbourhood. Altho' a stranger to the Coolies numbers of them promised to meet for worship on Sabbath. I accordingly held two meetings on the estate yesterday. The first was held under the gallery of one of the barracks, and was attended by thirty Coolies, men and wo-