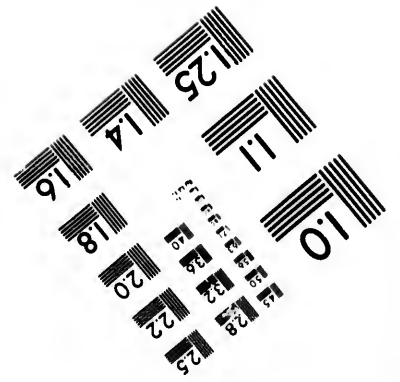
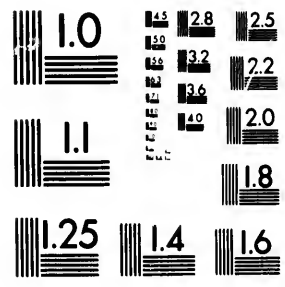


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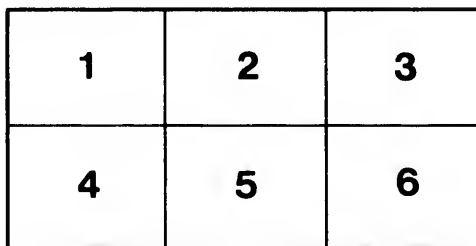
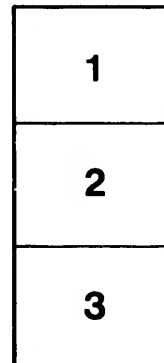
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Pamphlet Box, B5

TRINIDAD.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

FOR

Mission Circles and Bands,

BY REV. F. J. COFFIN,

OF TRINIDAD.

PRICE, THREE CENTS.

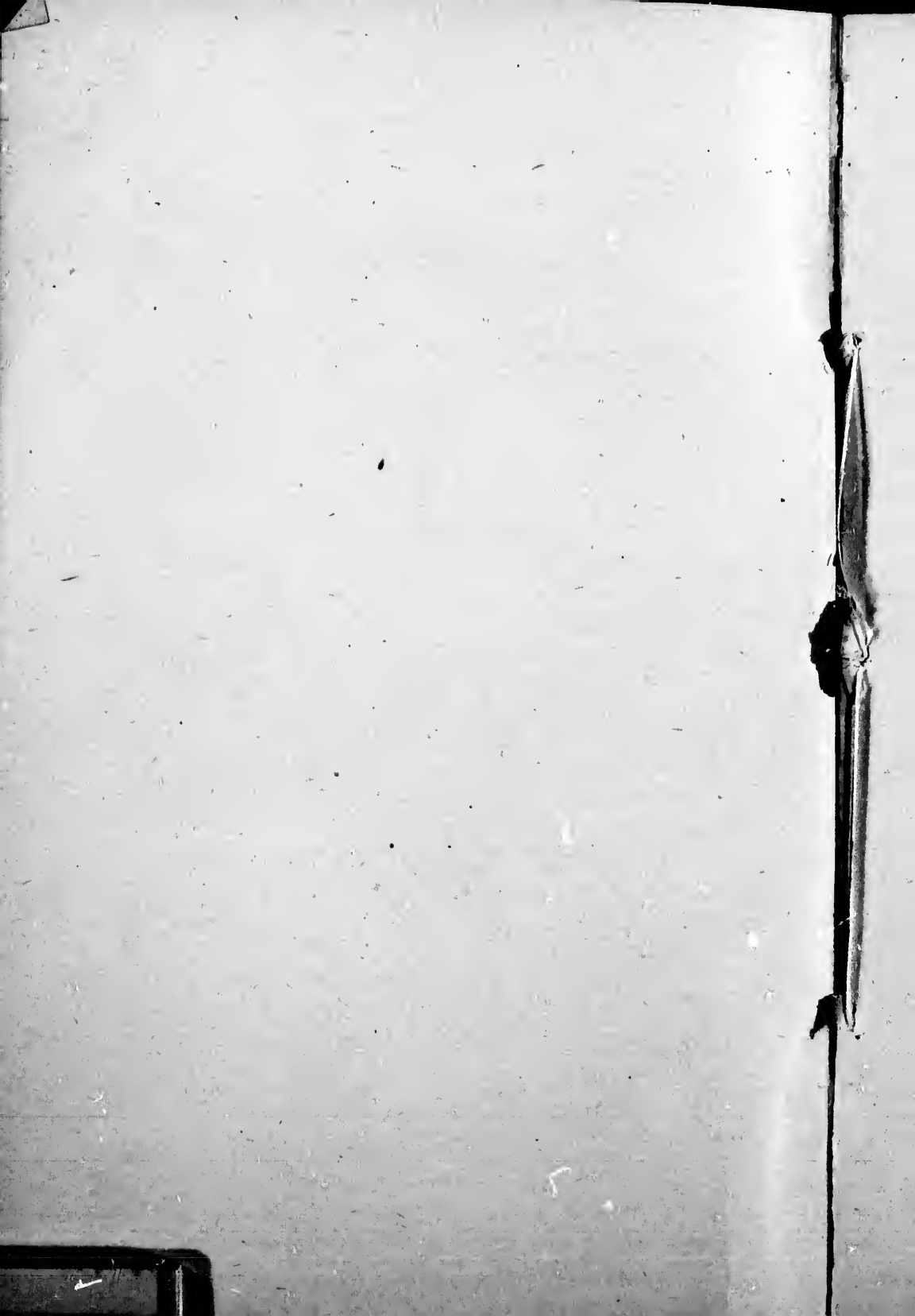
WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA.

EASTERN SECTION.

1893.







TRINIDAD.

Questions and Answers

FOR

MISSION CIRCLES AND BANDS.

1. Where is Trinidad?

Trinidad is a West Indian Island, lying near the northeast coast of Venezuela, South America. It is about 700 miles north of the equator, and the most southern of the chain of islands which separates the Atlantic Ocean from the Caribbean Sea.

2. What is the shape of the Island?

On looking at the map of the world you will see that it somewhat resembles France in shape, being almost a square, with two long horns projecting from its northwest and southwest corners towards the coast of Venezuela enclosing the Gulf of Paria.

3. What is its size?

It is, next to Jamaica, the largest of the British West Indies. Its area is about the same as that of Prince Edward Island, viz: 1800 square miles or more than one million acres.

4. How do we go from Canada to Trinidad?

Large steamships now leave Halifax, N. S., regularly for Trinidad. The voyage takes two weeks,

and in fine weather is very pleasant. After sailing three days we reach the beautiful Islands called the Bermudas; three days more bring us to St. Thomas, the first West Indian Island at which we touch. From St. Thomas the trip down the Islands is very interesting, and we see many things new and strange to us. At length we reach Trinidad, and pass into the Gulf of Paria, through the Bocas, and are landed at Port-of-Spain, the capital of the Island.

5. State some facts about the Gulf of Paria.

The Gulf of Paria, as you know, lies between Trinidad and the mainland of South America. It is entered on the north from the Caribbean Sea by several passages called *Bocas* or mouths, through which all large ships going to the island enter. The Serpents mouth, only a few miles wide, between the southern extremity of the island and the mainland, connects the Gulf with the Atlantic Ocean. This Gulf forms an excellent harbour for the many ships that call at the Island. The great river Orinoco partly empties its waters into the Gulf and bringing down large quantities of mud and sand gives its waters a peculiar yellowish appearance.

6. Describe the surface of the Island.

Parallel ranges of mountains run along the north and south sides of the island, near the coast. More irregular ranges are found in the east and centre of the Island. The North mountains reach the greatest height, over 3000 feet. Looking from the Gulf of Paria they resemble a horse-shoe in shape, while the level plain in the centre, open to the Gulf, forms the fertile agricultural section of the island.

7. Describe the climate of Trinidad.

As in all tropical countries it is like perpetual summer, being as warm in March as in August. There are two seasons, the wet and dry. The dry season extends from January to May and the wet season from June to December. It being so warm the houses do not require chimneys as in Canada, and cooking is generally done in a separate building.

8. Are hurricanes or earthquakes experienced in Trinidad?

Earthquakes are frequent, but seldom do much damage. Hurricanes are very rare, the island being out of their usual track. They are very destructive in some of the West Indies further north.

9. What are the chief products of the island?

Sugar and cocoa are the chief products of the island, the cultivation of which gives employment to the greater part of the population.

10. Name some of the fruits.

Bananas, pine-apples, oranges, lemons, limes, bread-fruit, cocoa-nuts, guavas, mangoes, sapadillas, tamarinds and many other tropical fruits.

11. Name some of the roots and vegetables used as food.

Yams, tannias, Cassara, sweet potatoes, beans, corn, &c.

12. Are flowers and shrubs common?

There are many beautiful flowers, but, perhaps, not so fragrant as in colder countries. Crotons, of many varieties, cactus and hibiscus are very common and form beautiful hedges.

13. Is the whole island under cultivation ?

Not more than one-fourth is yet under cultivation. The remainder is largely covered with forests in which many magnificent trees are found, as the mountain palms, cedar, balata, poni and others.

14. What is the great natural wonder of Trinidad?

The Pitch Lake. This is situated near the southwest extremity of the island, at a place called La Brea. It is a lake of pure pitch, nearly a mile in circumference and of unknown depth. It is now largely exported to the United States and Canada, and as asphalt is much used in the construction of sidewalks.

15. By whom was the island discovered ?

Trinidad was discovered by Columbus, in the year 1496, and called by him, Trinidad, a Spanish word meaning *Trinity*. It is said to have been so-named, because he first saw its mountains rising out of the sea, on the morning of Trinity Sunday.

16. Were there any people on the island when it was discovered by Europeans ?

A tribe of American Indians were found there by the Spaniards, called Caribs, and hence the name of the neighbouring sea—the Caribbean Sea.

17. Are they still found on the island ?

They are now almost extinct, but many Indians are yet found on the mainland of South America, and are frequently seen in Trinidad, selling baskets; hammocks, made of roots, and other articles.

18. What European country first took possession of the island ?

From the time of its discovery by Columbus until the year 1797 it was held in possession by the Spaniards. After Spanish rule of three hundred years it became a British possession and still remains a Colony of Great Britain.

19 What other Europeans came early to the Colony?

Besides the Spanish element many French people have made Trinidad their home. They came before it became a British Colony and their descendants are still influential residents of the Island. The Spanish and French are generally Roman Catholics, so this accounts for the strength of that Church in the colony up to the present time.

20. How is it that so many Portuguese have made Trinidad their home?

About fifty years ago a colony of Portuguese from the Island of Madeira came to Trinidad. They were converted from the Roman Catholic faith to Protestantism through the labours of Dr Kalley, a Scotch physician, who laboured long and faithfully for their best interests. Being persecuted by the Portuguese authorities in Madeira, they came to Trinidad that they might be able to worship God as they thought right. At the present time a flourishing congregation of Presbyterians in connection with the Free Church of Scotland is found in Port-of-Spain, the members of which are chiefly Portuguese.

21. Are there many British people in Trinidad?

Since Trinidad has become a British Colony,

many English and Scotch people have made it their home, being engaged in business in the towns, or in superintending the work on the plantations.

22. Are negroes a large part of the population ?

In Trinidad, as in all the West Indian Islands, the negroes, and the coloured or mixed races form the largest part of the population. All persons born in the West Indies are called Creoles, and may be white, coloured or black.

23. Did slavery ever exist in Trinidad ?

The negroes were brought as slaves from Africa for many years and were compelled to work on the sugar plantations for their masters. Slavery was abolished in 1834 in all British possessions.

24. Among what people do the Canadian missionaries labour ?

The mission of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (E. D.) is to the East Indian Immigrants in the colony.

25. How has it come about that East Indians are found in Trinidad and other West Indian Islands ?

When slavery was abolished the planters could not obtain a regular supply of labourers for their estates, so the immigration system was introduced and East Indians were brought to the West Indies under this system.

26. Explain the immigration scheme.

The Government of Trinidad has an agency in Calcutta, the object of which is to engage men and women to come to Trinidad to labour on the estates for a term of years. The people come chiefly from

the Ganges valley. Having been examined in Calcutta as to their fitness for the work, they are then taken on board large sailing ships, fitted up for the purpose, and after a voyage of three months reach Trinidad. They are then distributed to the different estates, under engagement for five years. They earn one shilling for every task or average day's work and have free houses. When sick they have also free hospital, and medical attendance. Having completed their engagement, after five years further residence in the island, they are entitled to a return passage to India, free of charge. Formerly grants of land from the Government or a sum of money was given on condition of them forfeiting the right of a free return passage to India, but this has now been discontinued.

27. How many East Indians are now in the island?

When our mission was opened there were 25,000; the number has now increased to nearly 80,000.

28. How many come yearly, and how many return to India?

From two to three thousand come yearly and about seven hundred return to India.

29. Are there East Indians in any of the other islands?

There are several thousands in Grenada, St. Lucia, Jamaica and a large number in Demerara and Surinam; in all about 300,000 East Indians in whom we are interested.

30. What kind of work are the people engaged in during the period of their indenture?

They are engaged on the sugar plantations, cultivating the sugar-cane, and during the crop season many are employed in the sugar mills. Some are also employed on cocoa plantations.

31. When they have completed their term of five years service, where do they go?

Many remain on the estates as free labourers; others remove to the neighbouring towns and villages, and continue to work on the estates, or become shop-keepers, merchants, or tradesmen. Many buy land from the Government, and form settlements in the interior of the country.

32. Do many settle permanently in the island?

The greater number do, and many have become quite wealthy as land-owners, shop-keepers and merchants.

33. What is the religion of the East Indians?

About four-fifths of those who come to Trinidad are Hindus, and their religion is called Hinduism; the remaining one-fifth are chiefly Mohammedans.

34. Do the Hindus worship idols?

Many of the educated would not acknowledge that they are idolators; but Hinduism at the present day is practically the grossest idolatry and superstition.

35. Do they build temples in Trinidad?

The Hindus have no temples in Trinidad, but very many continue to worship their idols, consecrate holy places to their deities, and retain their old superstitions and idolatrous notions. Several Mohammedan *mosques* have been built in different

places, and they are even more persistent than the Hindus in the observance of their religious rites.

36. Do the Hindus continue to observe *caste* in Trinidad?

Owing to their surroundings in Trinidad, and the system of labour on the estates, it is impossible for them to strictly observe all caste regulations, but the caste feeling is thoroughly ingrained in their nature, and is continually manifest in almost every act of their daily life, and in their dealings with one another.

37. Do many educated East Indians come to Trinidad?

Very few of the immigrants are able to read, even their own language, and coming principally from the rural districts, where little missionary work has yet been done, they know nothing of the truths of the Gospel.

38. Do the East Indians continue to wear their native dress in Trinidad?

The greater number do, but many of the Christians and some others have adopted European costume.

MISSIONS.

39. What led to our Church undertaking this Mission in Trinidad?

In the year 1866, the Rev. Jno. (now Dr.) Morton, then our minister at Bridgewater, N. S., while on a visit to the West Indies, spent some time in Trinidad, and became acquainted with the condition of the East Indians in the Island. He endeavoured to stir up the churches already at work in the colony among the English-speaking peoples, to take

up Mission work among the East Indians. None of those churches saw the way open to do so ; and after full information being given to our Synod, it agreed "to establish a Mission in Trinidad for the special benefit of the East Indians."

40. When did our Church take this step?

At the meeting of Synod held in James' Church, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, June 27th, 1867.

We read in Minutes of Synod for that year that "the Board of Foreign Missions submitted correspondence arising out of an offer of Rev. Jno. Morton to go on a Mission to the Coolies (East Indians) on the island of Trinidad should the Synod undertake such an enterprise."

41. Was ours the first Mission to the East Indians in Trinidad?

Some years previous to this the United Presbyterian Church in the United States had opened a Mission, but it had been discontinued. On being requested to resume the work they could not see their way clear to do so, but recommended the Field to our Synod and offered to make over to us their Mission premises at Iere Village.

42. Was their offer accepted?

"It was unanimously agreed that the offer of Mission premises at Iere Village made by the Board of Foreign Missions of the United Presbyterian Church of the United States be accepted and the cordial thanks of the Synod returned." (Minutes of Synod 1867.)

43. When did our first Missionaries leave for Trinidad?

Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Morton, our first Missionaries, sailed from Nova Scotia in December, 1867, and began their work at Iere Village early the following year, occupying the Mission premises that had been made over to us from the U. P. Church.

44. Did other Missionaries soon follow?

Rev. K. J. Grant, who was settled for several years as pastor of Merigomish, N. S., accepted the invitation of the Foreign Mission Board to be the second Missionary to Trinidad on March 31st, 1870. Mr. and Mrs. Grant sailed from Halifax in Nov. of same year and began work in San Fernando early in 1871.

45. When was the first school opened?

From Dr. Morton's first report we learn that the first school was opened at Iere Village on March 1st, 1868, and had thirty-three pupils enrolled during that year.

46. Who was one of the first teachers in this school?

One of the first native teachers was Charles Soudeen. At this time Mr. Morton speaks of him as follows:—"we hope he will prove of great service to the Mission." His hopes have been fulfilled. He is now a great strength to the Mission, a much respected and capable worker, and represents our interests as a member of the Board of Education for the colony.

47. Who was the third Missionary appointed to the Field?

The Rev. Thomas Christie was appointed to the new field of Couva in 1873. He laboured there for

nine years when, owing to failing health, he was compelled, with his family to return home. A little later he died in California. Mrs Christie returned to Halifax and died some years later. Those who have followed Mr. Christie in Couva can, perhaps, best testify to the good results of his labours, and the difficulties of his situation in the early days of the Mission.

48. When was the fourth Missionary appointed?

The Rev. Jno. W. MacLeod, fourth Missionary to Trinidad, was appointed in 1880, and entered upon his labours, beginning of following year.

49. How were the Missionaries located after Mr. MacLeod's arrival?

Mr. MacLeod was appointed to Princetown, while Mr. Morton removed to Tunapuna, after thirteen years' labour in the former field. Thus the division of the Mission into four districts, as at present, was made, viz:—(1) San Fernando, (2) Princetown, (3) Couva, (4) Tunapuna.

50. What changes have occurred in the Mission staff since that time?

No changes have occurred in the Tunapuna or San Fernando districts. Dr. and Mrs. Morton in the former and Dr. and Mrs. Grant in the latter have all been spared for abundant labours. Mr. McLeod, after five years' faithful service, died at Tunapuna in 1886. Mrs. McLeod and her two boys returned to Nova Scotia. Mrs. McLeod has since died. Rev. W. L. McRae was appointed to Princetown in 1866. Mr. and Mrs. McRae arrived in time to take up the work beginning of 1887.

Mrs. McRae died in 1889, while Mr. McRae still labours faithfully in this district.—In the Couva district Rev. J. K. Wright, of Ontario, was appointed in 1883 as successor to Mr. Christie. He laboured with success for five years, but, owing to the illness of Mrs. Wright, he was compelled to return to Canada. In 1889 Rev. F. J. Coffin was appointed to Couva and remained until close of 1891, when on the opening of the College in San Fernando he removed there, and Rev. A. W. Thompson who was appointed fifth Missionary in 1890, has since been in charge of this district.

51. Give the names of the Missionaries, and Canadian teachers on the staff at the present time.

Station.	Missionary	Can. Teacher.
1. Tunapuna	Rev. T. Morton, D. D.	Miss A. Blackadder
2. San Fernando	“ K. J. Grant, D. D.	“ M. Kirkpatrick.
“	“ F. J. Coffin	“
3. Princetown	“ W. L. McRae	“ A. T. Archibald.
4. Couva.	“ A. W. Thompson	“ Lucy Fisher

52. Give the names of other Canadian teachers who have been connected with the Mission.

Miss Copeland (now Mrs. T. G. Grant of San Fernando); Miss Graham, who has returned to Nova Scotia; Miss Semple (now wife of Rev. D. Clarke); Miss Minnie Archibald, who died at Couva in 1887.

53. What East Indian convert is now on the staff as ordained agent?

In 1882 Lal Behari, one of the earliest converts in the San Fernando District, was ordained to the ministry, and has since laboured as the faithful assistant of Dr. Grant. He is a man of excellent ability, fine Christian character and much respected by all.

54. How many native Catechists are employed by the Mission?

At the present time (1893) there are fifty catechists employed.

55. In what way do they assist the Missionaries?

They assist by preaching and teaching among the people, visiting the hospitals, and homes of the Christian people, holding services at the different stations on the Sabbath, and in general doing the work of a pastor. Speaking their own language and thoroughly understanding their fellow-country men, they are in a position to get nearer them than the European and have better opportunities of commending the Gospel to them, while at the same time supervised and directed in their work by the more experienced European Missionary.

56. How many schools are now in operation?

There are 52 schools, with about 4,500 pupils enrolled.

57. How are these schools conducted?

Most of them are under government inspection, and are conducted similarly to schools at home. In all our schools, on every day, systematic religious instruction is given and every child is thus made acquainted with the truths of the gospel.

58. Do the schools aid in advancing the work of evangelizing?

By getting the children to school, we, not only become their friends, but, through them can more easily reach their parents also. A gradual improvement in the condition of the younger people is manifest, chiefly through the influence of the schools. Many of our most hopeful converts are those who have been taught in our schools and are led to profess Christ when they come to years of maturity, while many are early led to take their stand for Christ and influence their parents in the same direction.

59. What has been done to give proper instruction to all native workers?

At the beginning of 1892, a College was opened in San Fernando for the more systematic training of native pastors and catechists. The work of the College has already borne good fruit. A training school for teachers is also to be opened early in 1894.

60. Is there any special work done for women?

The wives of our Missionaries have always given much attention to work among the Indian women. For several years Mrs. Morton has conducted a *Home* for Indian girls, with excellent results. Mrs. Grant and the lady teachers, in different ways, have advanced this department of the work very much during late years. Temperance work among the young has also received much attention.

61. How many communicants are there in the Native Church?

Six hundred, two hundred of whom have been received since 1889.

62. How much does the Native Church contribute to the support of the Gospel?

The Native Church contributed this year (1893) more than \$2800 to the support of the Gospel.

63. Has our Trinidad Mission been the means of extending the Gospel to other West Indian Islands?

A very encouraging Mission is carried on in the Island of Grenada among the East Indians, under the direction of the Church of Scotland. All the catechists and teachers have been trained in Trinidad and thus our Mission has been the means of enabling the work in that Island to be carried on.

There is also a branch of our Mission in the Island of St. Lucia, which has given very encouraging results. The progress of the work there owes much to Mr. T. B. Cropper who, for several years, has superintended the work.

64. What is the nature of the work done by our Canadian teachers?

The central school in each district is in charge of

one of our Canadian lady-teachers, and forms, we may say, the High school for that district. Their school work, in most respects, resembles that of a principal of a graded school' at home. In addition to the usual duties of a teacher they are required to give instruction to their assistants. Much time is also given to the visiting of parents, to Sabbath School work and to other departments of Mission work. Systematic Bible instruction is given daily. The influence of these trained Christian teachers, not only in bringing forward capable native helpers, but also in developing the moral character of the young is very marked.

65. What are the duties of the Missionaries?

During the earlier years of Missionary life much time and study must be given to the acquiring of the language. While doing this, he has also to superintend the work of the catechists and direct them in all matters. Much attention must be given to the schools, being manager of all the schools in the district. He must regularly inspect the schools under his charge, train the teachers, conduct the correspondence with the Government, manage the finances of the district, attend to the erection and repairs of buildings and advise on all matters that concern the people among whom he labours. On the Sabbath he attends services at three or four stations and holds an English service at the central church in the evening. The senior Missionaries—Drs. Morton and Grant, - also give part of their time to instruction in the College and many matters of general interest for the welfare of the community also must receive attention.

Books, that may be consulted with profit; concerning Trinidad:—

De Vertenils' History of Trinidad. Guide to Trinidad—Collens' "At Last," by Kingsley. Annual Almanack, Collens.

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