

Ontario Institution for the Education of the Blind

BRANTFORD, ONTARIO

ALTHOUGH thirty years have elapsed since the Ontario Institution for the Education and Instruction of the Blind was established at Brantford, many persons are still unacquainted with its character and objects. Yet in that period, seven hundred and forty-eight pupils have been admitted to a participation in the privileges it offers, and a large proportion of these are scattered over the Province of Ontario and enjoying the fruits of the education they have received within its walls. The purpose of this little pamphlet is to answer enquiries as to what the Institution does or attempts to do; what class it proposes to benefit; and on what terms those who are eligible can be admitted. A few words as to the site and surroundings of the Institution, and a brief account of its origin will first be in order.

Origin The Ontario Institution for the Blind was one of the several plans of the first government of the Province for disposing, in the interest of the community at large, of the considerable surplus of income over expenditure which had accumulated in the four years succeeding Confederation. The work was carried on under the administration of the Hon. Edward Blake and completed about the time in the fall of 1872 when the Hon. Oliver Mowat assumed the office he subsequently held for nearly twenty-four years. It was built and is supported exclusively by Provincial funds voted by the Legislative Assembly. Although it is not connected with the Education Department, the grants made are of the same nature as those for the Public Schools, only that the latter are supplemented by local rates or taxes, while the funds of the Institution being required for the youth of the whole of Ontario, come as already mentioned, entirely out of the common Provincial Treasury.

Site The site selected was an elevation at the western limits of the town (now city of 18,000 inhabitants) of Brantford, overlooking the valley of the Grand River, and including some sixty-five acres of land since increased to nearly one hundred acres. Part of this is laid out ornamentally and part is in farm land or orchards, the produce of which supplies roots, tree-fruits, and potatoes for domestic use, and food for the cattle kept to furnish the large quantity of milk required for daily consumption. The oppor-