

The Indians seemed greatly pleased at the prospect of having schools established among them. At Parry Island, Capt. Skene (under the direction of the Indian Department at Ottawa) had a neat and substantial log house erected, in which we met the Indians. Subsequently Mr. Miller organized the school and enrolled between 20 and 30 Indian children. They were placed in charge of Mr. Elias, an admirable Indian teacher and missionary, who had been trained for his work at the Muncey Institute. Steps were subsequently taken by Capt. Skene to have school houses erected on the other Reservations, so that during this year schools might be organized in them. This has been done; and at my recent visit, Mr. Miller, aided by Visiting Inspector Switzer and Capt. Skene, established another school at the Shawanaga Reservation, about 35 miles north of Parry Sound. Thither we went in a steam-tug, and walked five miles through the woods to the Reserve. Owing to a slight alteration in our arrangements, we visited the Reserve a day before the time appointed. Chief James met us at the school-house, but our coming so soon had disarranged his plans. He had intended to have received us with some little ceremony, and, with his band collected, to have had the Union Jack hoisted, and to have had some other demonstrations in honor of the event. As it was, he received us very cordially, and sent round without delay to collect the members of his band and their children. After Mr. Miller had enrolled about 30 children, he, Mr. Switzer, myself, and others, addressed the company present. Our remarks were interpreted to the Indians by Mr. Elias; and at the close Chief James made a very hearty and touching speech, expressive of his estimate of the value of education to the Indians, and of the great pleasure which the day's proceedings had given him. With true Indian courtesy, he accompanied the party through the woods, five miles, back to the steam-tug, when, after giving him and his band three hearty cheers, we steamed away to Byng Inlet, 60 miles from Parry Sound, which we reached late in the evening. This is the headquarters of the Maganetewan Lumber Company. We were all pleased with the neat appearance of a village lying so far to the north. Although late at night, Mr. Miller and Mr. Switzer, our indefatigable Inspectors, aided by Mr. J. H. Buck, the Manager of the Company, and others organized a Public School Section there. We then held a very pleasant conference with the principal residents.

Next morning we started for Henby Inlet, near French River, but as the Captain of our steamer was not familiar with the navigation of the place, we had reluctantly to turn back and proceed to Parry Sound. I arranged, however, that Mr. Elias should take an Indian teacher with him and open the school there this month. When this is done the whole of the children of the various Indian bands in the Reserves along the eastern coast of the Georgian Bay will be placed under instruction. This is certainly a matter for sincere congratulation.

As to the result of the experiment, I have now no fears. I confess that last year, when the Parry Sound School was established, I had both doubts and fears as to the success of the scheme. With a view, however, to satisfy myself on the subject, arrangements were made that the pupils in the school on the Island should be submitted to a thorough and satisfactory test. This was done by Mr. Inspector Miller, in presence of Capt. Skene, Professor Croft of Toronto University, Inspector Switzer, and some of the local clergy. The classes were examined in Natural History, object lessons\*, arithmetic, grammar, spelling and writing. Making due

\*It was both amusing and interesting to watch the countenances of the Indian boys and girls as Mr. Miller held up for them to name the pictures of animals, birds and reptiles familiar to them. The bear, wolf and fox were recognized as old friends; and many a friendly "ugh" greeted the appearance of a snake, a frog and lizard, as well as the pigeon, hawk and crow. The beaver, muskrat and otter received instant recognition; and the answers of the children as to the names were greeted with pleased laughter by the parents, who entered quite into the spirit of the exciting and interesting examination in Natural History which was held by Mr. Miller.

allowance for the novelty to them of the occasion, and the natural timidity of the Indian boys and girls, it was surprising to see how well the pupils acquitted themselves. Although slow and cautious in expressing their thoughts, the answers of the children were in almost every instance correct in substance or in fact. At the close of a prolonged examination by Mr. Miller and Mr. Elias, I subjected each member of one of the largest classes to an examination in writing on the black-board. They all acquitted themselves to my entire satisfaction. At the close, the examiners, Capt. Skene, Mr. Miller, the clergy, and others, addressed the school and the Indians present. Replies were given by some of the leading Indians, including the old and young chiefs. The result of the experiment will, I trust, induce the Dominion Government to place the whole of the schools for the Indians of this Province under the supervision of the Education Department.

There was a fact and an incident connected with the exercises, which were very gratifying. Among the pupils enrolled who acquitted himself so well as to be quite noticeable, was the newly elected Chief of the Band. In this he showed an admirable example to all the young men of the tribe, and by his voluntary enrolment in the school he showed the high estimate which he himself placed upon education, as a means of elevating and civilizing his people. Chief James, too, in an address to Shawanaga, gave utterance to very enlightened views on the same subject. The pleasing incident to which I have referred was the modest manliness, and yet the dignity, with which the young Indian Chief delivered his maiden speech of thanks and welcome to his visitors. In this he was with much kindness prompted and encouraged by his rival, the unsuccessful competitor for the Chieftainship of the Band.

There was one feature of the gathering which quite interested us, and that was the general attendance from all parts of the Reservation of the Indian men and women—the latter dressed in their best—and all evincing by their appearance the happiness and prosperity in which they live on their Reserve. Even the Indian girls in their classes had a ribbon or some little bit of finery on their hats or dresses, designed, no doubt, to do honor to the occasion which was to them so interesting and important, as a new departure in their hitherto unintellectual life.

At the suggestion of Chief James, with the concurrence of Capt. Skene, we named the Indian School at Parry Island, "Byerson School, No. 1;" that at Shawanaga, "Hodgins School, No. 2;" and that at Henby Inlet, "Miller School, No. 3."

J. GEORGE HODGINS.

Toronto, 15th September, 1879.

## NEW SCHOOL-HOUSES.

*To the Editor of the Canada School Journal.*

How far a responsible Government should interfere in urging the building of school-houses is a question which recent events induced me to investigate. The causes of this interference seem to be the unwillingness of wealthy sections to provide accommodation. If, for the sake of argument, we admit that there is a considerable number of such sections, the interference shows an abnormal state of things, when the Government evinces more solicitude for the comfort of my children than I do myself.

There may exist such a thing as national maternal anxiety in the State for her subjects, and it is a pity that such tenderness should be unappreciated by the subjects merely because the State's love is stronger than her liberality. The excision of the dangerous part of the power of trustees to raise any amount of money for school purpose is fully appreciated; and whoever was author of the suggestion has the hearty thanks of everybody. This was the opinion of the ratepayers convened in a special meeting to grant liberty to the trustees to borrow \$1,000 to build a school-house;