

received on Sunday afternoon last. Poor people! they like to have our Church to lead them to heaven. I believe many of them will follow their brothers and sisters into the Methodist Church. Please tell all my white Christian friends that our training school will be built soon, and we hope and pray that many of the young Indians will make great preachers amongst their countrymen."

### SELF-SUPPORT IN JAPAN.

IT is gratifying to record a growing spirit of independence in regard to financial support in any part of the mission-field, but especially in the foreign work. It is such a common thing to have domestic missions assume the responsibilities of self-support, that such occurrences are scarcely noticed, but we are sure our readers will pursue, with deep interest, the following letter from the Stewards of the Shidzuoka Circuit, in Japan. Let it be understood, however, that it refers to the support of the native pastor, not the foreign missionary:—

[Translation.]

SHIDZUOKA, March 6th, 1888.

REV. GEO. COCHRAN, D.D., *Chairman of the Japan District of the Methodist Church of Canada.*

*Rev. and Dear Sir,*—We, the undersigned Stewards of the Shidzuoka Methodist Church, have much pleasure in informing you and all the members of the Annual Meeting, that our Church has sufficiently grown to be self-supporting, and that we have decided to carry this into practice from April, 1888.

Since the first establishment of our Church, fifteen years ago, we have been favored with pecuniary aid from the Methodist Church of Canada, and by her timely aid, under God's blessing, many souls have been led to Christ. The Christian kindness rendered us by the Canadian Church shall long be remembered, both in the history of our Church and in the minds of our posterity.

And we beg to ask you to report our intention as above stated, and our cherished gratitude to the authorities of the Missionary Society of the Church which you represent in this country. It is our hope that our Church will grow more and more by the help of God, and as long as she shall exist the Canadian brethren's kindness and help shall be remembered by our members.

Yours in Christ,

S. YONEYAMA,	} Stewards.
S. MATSUMOTO,	
M. KATOH,	
Y. YAMAJI,	
D. KAWA RAMA,	

We earnestly hope that the noble spirit displayed by the Church at Shidzuoka will be emulated in other places, not only in Japan, but in the home-field as well. Why should our Indian missions, for example, always be a drag upon the funds of the Society. Many of the bands in Ontario and in the North-West

are living upon good reserves, where industry will bring a plentiful return, and there is no good reason why they should not contribute toward the support of their missionaries, and ultimately become self-supporting. We are persuaded the policy of the Church towards the Indians, like that of the Government, is most injurious. It begets and fosters a pauper spirit, which is the destruction alike of self-respect and Christian activity.

### PICTURE WRITING.

BY JOHN M'LEAN, BLOOD RESERVE, ALBERTA.

THE Indians of the American Continent have three distinct forms of speech: spoken, written, and sign language. The languages and dialects are numerous, differing according to the tribes. Sometimes a band becoming detached from the tribe, as exemplified in the Siouan or Dakota family, will generate a dialect containing many features distinct from the parent form of speech. The sign language is universally employed by the red man, and such is its adaptation to the needs of this people, that, though ignorant of the spoken languages of their respective tribes, they can by means of signs converse intelligently together.

Some mode of communication was necessary, however, for conveying thoughts to persons at a distance. This was done by means of messengers, bearing wampum belts, who spoke the thoughts of their fellows. The Indian's system of telegraphy was also very successfully employed. Written communications were also necessary, and the red man employed what is called picture-writing. The language of color was very significant, and helped to express ideas. Around the lodges ran the historical record of the exploits of the owner of the lodge. Oftentimes have I gazed on the strange figures on the buffalo-skin lodges, and with the help of the Indians received a fair idea of the history they contained. Some Indians made fantastic pictures upon rocks. Historical records were sometimes written upon the insides of buffalo robes. A few days ago, a young man brought to me a paper containing a sketch of an Indian camp, detailing the different kinds of lodges, with the ceremonies going on at the time represented. Picture writing is the lowest stage of writing in use amongst men. It is crude and cumbersome, when compared with the hieroglyphic and phonetic systems in use. An Indian desirous of writing "Red Crow," the name of a Blood Indian chief, would draw the head of a man, place on the crown the drawing of a piece of wood, upon which a crow is sitting, and this bird would be painted red. Many tribes of Indians still use this method of conveying their ideas, though many others have learned