

ADMIRABLE CHARITY—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13.

marked improvement is noted, for, little by little, they are taught to think, to express what they think by signs, or on their fingers, and their whole expression becomes changed by reason of the gradual stirring of the dormant intellect. Reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, history (English and Canadian), grammar, scripture, even natural philosophy, English literature, elementary algebra and French, are all on the curriculum, and the examinations passed in these subjects would be creditable to any school. For it must not be forgotten that many, in fact nearly all, have first to be taught the names of even the most common objects, and things most in use. As far as being able to show the pupil the object and name it, this sounds easy enough. But when one thinks of all the abstract words and phrases that must be explained, then

instruction, useful trades are learned by all the boys, comprising shoemaking, carpentering, cabinetmaking, chair-caning (for the blind especially) and printing; while the girls learn dressmaking, domestic economy, plain sewing and fancy-work. Music and drawing are also taught, the former giving great pleasure to the blind, who are apt pupils. The printing done at the institute is really excellent, as anyone who has seen the annual reports, bound and printed by the pupils, can testify. And, as a result of their careful teaching, three or four boys, deaf mutes, have obtained very good positions in the Government Printing Bureau at Ottawa.

During the last year a kindergarten system has been adopted with great success for the tiny children, who are just as capable of enjoying the various plays and occupations as ordinary little boys and girls. No doubt they are even cleverer, for one always notices the deftness and gracefulness with which the deaf and dumb use their hands. And while still



Hockey Club of the Mackay Institution.

dealing with facts, it must be noted that this institution is not an asylum, but rather a boarding-school; for, while on recommendation, some are educated and looked after without charge, the majority of pupils are paid for either by friends or their own people. Nearly every class of society is represented there; though it may be added that no favoritism is shown, and the humbler ones are treated with quite as much consideration as their richer companions, and friendships are formed irrespective of wealth or position. The staff consists of the superintendent, Mrs. Ashcroft, with five assistant teachers and four instructors in the workshops, and a visiting professor of music, Mr. Septimus Fraser—he himself blind.

It is all very well to write an account of this interesting institution, but the pleasantest way of acquiring knowledge is to pay a visit oneself; for nowhere does one receive a warmer welcome. The walk out, at any season of the year, is delightful, whether

one understands, in a small measure, what unceasing labor and patience is needed on the part of the teachers.

It is most difficult to explain what the method is by which the deaf mutes are primarily instructed. For, remember, when they first enter, they would not understand the language of the hands. I have seen it demonstrated by Mrs. Ashcroft but am not sufficiently up in it to transmit the little knowledge I possess to others.

There are now three classes which are taught orally. That is, signs and the manual alphabet are not employed, but the pupils read the lips of the instructor and answer orally. Every child is given the opportunity of learning to speak, but if he or she shows no especial aptitude, too much time is not devoted to this branch of their education. Perhaps one of the most interesting exercises to watch, is that on the blackboard, when Mrs. Ashcroft writes the most extraordinary hieroglyphics, which represent the position of the tongue in the mouth when certain words are being uttered, and which are read by the children with the utmost facility. By this mode they pronounce the most unpronounceable words of any language.

Apart from, or rather together with, the usual school

the route chosen is along Western avenue, or by the more circuitous Cote St. Antoine road. And walking parties with "the Mackay" as their destination are far from unusual. Not long ago a number of us set out on this long-talked-of expedition, and it may be honestly said that the only subject of regret was that we had not more time to spend with the children and in looking into the many matters of interest. On our arrival, we spent a short while in the superintendent's cosy little sitting-room, where we fully appreciated very excellent tea after our walk in the bracing air, and a chat about pupils we had previously known. We also looked at several photographs recently taken, of especial interest being the large group of last year's hockey team, as sturdy and smartly dressed a lot of boys as any boarding-school might hope to present. Thence we went into the large sunny class-room, opening into a second room of equal size. There were seated two small boys engaged in a game of "Halma," the one a deaf mute, the other of defective hearing. The former had been hurt slightly at hockey, but looked jolly enough and both made friends with us instantly, the latter being most anxious we should know he could both hear and speak a little. Meanwhile,