

THE INDIANS OF WESTERN CANADA.



OUR Indian missions have completed the first thirty years of their history. It is a history that exhibits many signs of incompleteness, both because thirty years is a comparatively brief period in the life-time of a people, and missionary history is life history in a very real sense, and because it is only within the last ten years that we have come in any general way to realize and practise the main principle, as to method, laid down by the first man in our Church who gave his life for Indian missions. The Rev. James Nisbet said in 1869: "I am perfectly convinced that the plan we have laid out for the mission is the proper one, if we seek for permanency to our work—educate the young and do what we can to induce families to settle: hence it is that I am pushing building and farming as much as I can, satisfied for the present to dig away at the rough foundation work that we may all the sooner be able to lodge and feed a number of these little wanderers, and to assist families in their first efforts to become settlers." Here is the germ of the industrial school system, which is now proving so valuable a factor in Indian mission work everywhere.

NEED OF CIVILIZATION.

It is necessary to make prominent at the beginning, the fact that the relations in which we stand to the Indians are different from those which connect us with any other heathen. We owe the gospel to them as to others, but in addition they live within the bounds of our land, they are the wards of our Government, and the moral and social ideals that prevail among them must