

THE INDIAN MISSION OF SHEGUIANDAH, DIOCESE OF ALGOMA.

By REV. C. A. FRENCH.

WHEN requested once by the Bishop of Algoma to take the duties of the Rev. Frederick Frost (then in England), I walked as far as Kagawong, a distance of ten miles. I overtook Mr. Humphrey May, who was returning to Little Current, and he kindly drove me the remaining thirty-two miles. On the following day through the good offices of Mr. Henry Sims, of Little Current, I was enabled to sail over to Sheguiandah. Here I saw something that astonished and delighted me. On the shores of the lovely bays of the grand Manitoulin Island is situated a neat Indian village of some ten or a dozen houses. About it there are manifest tokens of material prosperity, when taken in conjunction with what I have seen of other "Reserves" in Ontario, and almost in the midst of the village is one of the prettiest wooden churches I have for a long time beheld. It may interest some of your readers to have a short sketch of Sheguiandah history. As far back as fifty years ago there was not much known of

the Manitoulin Island and its aboriginal inhabitants from a Protestant missionary point of view, until the late Rector of Port Hope, Dr. F. A. O'Meara came to the island and established the Manitowaning Mission. Here he labored for a considerable time, and it was through his exertions, as far as I can learn, that Sheguiandah became lightened with the light of the Gospel. The Rev. Peter Jacobs (Pah-tah-se-ga) succeeded Dr. O'Meara, and after his death the Rev. Jabez Waters Sims was sent up to this island. Mr. Sims was ordained by the then Bishop of Huron, and sent by the then Bishop of Toronto to Manito-

waning in 1864. In 1866 he removed to Sheguiandah and commenced what we all hope will be a great work. In the same year he built the old log church with its massive brass cross in the forest land as a token that Christianity was to take a permanent hold on this part of the island. For three years he worked amongst the Ojibways, both in Sheguiandah and on the north shore of Huron, when, alas! he was drowned as he journeyed towards Killarney. The work was not, however, allowed to lapse. The Rev. Rowland Hill followed the much lamented Mr. Sims, and he labored in

the mission some thirteen years. On his resigning his incumbency a couple of years ago the Rev. Frederick Frost was appointed. Through his exertions and through the exertions of Bishop Sullivan the new church was erected. When I got over to the village at the time I speak of I found that a son-in-law of the Chief's, (Manitowassing), was very ill. To the best of my ability, I ministered to the spiritual necessity of the invalid, and as I was about to go away he asked for the Holy Communion. On the following morning I administered it to "Joe Sky" and to six others of the tribe. On the Sunday morning I preached to a congregation of some forty-five of both

sexes. As I discoursed of "God's love" I could not but see abundant evidences of it here. There are still the elongated features and the dark hair, but the savage expression is gone. For all this I do not like one thing about the Indian. The down-cast eye betokens a degradation begotten of poverty and dread of the whites. Our contact with them has not been what it should be. There has been, there is, too much "firewater" and ruffianism in our backwoods villages to benefit the child of the forest. Thank God there are some who think of "raising the condition" of the Indian. It is a hard task and one that requires



PAH-TAH-SE-GA (Rev. Peter Jacobs).