

katchewan Valley.* Till then the Half-breed will remain the "Freighter." And how does he carry on the business? In the early spring, about April, he collects his ponies and oxen which have been wintering out in the open country. At the same time he overhauls his harness and his Red River carts to see that they are fit for service. The harness for the oxen is made of buffalo raw-hide, called "Shaganappi," a Cree word signifying a rope or line. This substance is the great mend-all of the country. It is so tough and durable that it is sometimes used for tying wheels. The freighter, then, having laid in a sufficient provision of flour, pemican, and tea, starts for Winnipeg, the base of supplies. He usually has in his party one man or stout lad for every four carts. The journey eastward occupies three or four weeks, and is performed "light," i. e. without any freight, save, perhaps, a few bales of peltry. If the party should happen to be luxuriously inclined, they will carry a tent, otherwise they will be satisfied to "camp" at night under a cart. A freighter not infrequently takes his family with him, in which case, he, of course, provides some shelter for them.

(To be continued.)

A SCHOOL IN JAVA.

 leading feature of modern missionary work is the careful training of the young. In this there is great strength. Indeed it is the only way in which a nation can be brought to grasp Christianity. The wisdom of gathering in little heathen children and taking care of them, educating them so that their minds will be elevated above the ordinary savage mind, and then sending them back to influence their own people, has been abundantly proved.

Some of these schools in heathen lands are most interesting. In Java, a large island in the Indian Ocean, the children seat themselves on the ground at a large, low table, and the teacher walks about instructing them. The house is built of bamboo cane and wood and has a thatched roof, but no walls. The cool breezes "blow soft o'er Java's isle," and give the little children, what many of our Canadian schools are sadly lacking in, an abundant supply of fresh air.

Every encouragement should be given to missionary schools. It is the Master's work. "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

A BRAHMIN priest said to Rev. Dr. Jacob Chamberlain.—"Sir, Hinduism cannot stand the light that you missionaries are letting in upon it. It is not the soul satisfying system that we vainly imagined it to be. Sir, Hinduism is doomed. It must go by the board. What are you going to give us in its place?"

BEFORE THE WHITE MAN CAME.

By REV. E. F. WILSON, SAULT ST. MARIE, ONT.

HEN the white man first arrived on the shores of America what people did he find? How were they living? In what condition were they as regards civilization? Are the descendants of these people now extinct or are they represented by the existing Indian population? Such are the questions with which we propose to deal in the following short article; and we believe that there are few who will not feel some interest in the inquiry.

The prevalent idea would seem to be that when these shores were first discovered the American Indian was found living in a state of barbarism, clad in coats of skin, occupying huts made of skins stretched over poles or covered with grass or mud, gaining his living by hunting and fishing,—his only implements flint knives, flint spears and arrow-heads, stone axes, etc.; and the idea seems to have been that with the advance of the white man these Indians have been gradually driven back towards the west and their numbers decimated by warfare and cruel treatment, that in the place of the thousands and tens of thousands of savages which roamed the woods and prairies four centuries ago, there are now but a few hundreds, or at the most, thousands of them left, and that they are dying out year by year, and will soon become extinct.

Such we believe has been and still is the prevalent idea in regard to the aborigines of this country; perhaps it has almost been forgotten that the first Spanish explorers, when they made their first expeditions inland on the main continent, were immensely surprised to find walled cities and fortresses, some of them protected by canals, and that they astonished Europe by their accounts of stone palaces 500 feet or more in length, and feudal castles, and kings with their lords and vassals, and slaves attending on them. No doubt these Spanish stories were very much overdrawn as were all stories of discovery in those bygone ages,—but still the fact cannot be controverted that there exist in the present day the ruins of great three or four storey buildings some of them rectangular, some of them circular in shape and covering extensive areas, and the question at once arises, could these great buildings with their sculptured stone and the terraces and their white plastered walls have been built by the progenitors of the present Indian, or are they the work of an extinct race of men of superior intellect who were in existence before the Indians came on the scene, and who were swept away and destroyed by them? This surely is a very interesting and important question. If these curious ruins were the work of the immediate progenitors of our present Indians then have we good reason to believe that our Indians of the present day are not of savage origin as has been supposed, but that they come originally of an intelligent and intellectual stock, and that it is simply the force of circumstances that has reduced them to their pre-

*Written in 1880.