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# Our Forest Children.

Vol 1. No. 5.

SHINGWAUK HOME.

June, 1887

ANY NUMBER OF

## Copies Sent Gratis

to those who will interest themselves in the educating and christianizing of the

## 25,000 Indian Children

of schoolable age scattered throughout our country.

### Mr. Wilson's trip to the Rocky Mountains.

I stayed six days with the Rev. J. W. Tims, C.M.S., Missionary to the Black-foot Indians, and it was exceedingly interesting. The blackfoot teepees were all around us, and the kitchen generally full of Indians, either come to ask for medicine or to see the new comer. There are 6,000 of these people divided into three tribes—the Black-foot proper, the Bloods, and the Peigans. They all speak the same language, and are nearly all without exception pagans. Over them presides the renowned chief Crowfoot, and he reigns like a Czar, enforcing his will if necessary by violence. He has his native soldiers under him, and if any of his people refuse to obey when he orders to move camp, or to assemble for a sun dance, he sends his soldiers to pull down their teepees, tear up their blankets, and kill their dogs. Under Crowfoot are three second chiefs, next to him in authority—"Old Sun," reigns over the northern black-foot, "Red Crow" over the Bloods, and "North Axe" over the Peigans; and there are again petty chiefs under these, such as "Big Plume," "White Pup," "Eagle Rib," etc. I made very good friends with these people, and they did me the honour of adopting me into their tribe, giving me the name "Natusi Asamiu,"—the sun looks upon him. I had been warned not to say anything to them about having an Institution

for Indian children, as the people are so entirely set against civilisation and education, and seem to be in constant dread that the white people will take away their children from them. "If they find out that you have got a school for Indian children, and want to take some of their children away," said Mr. Tims, "I know just what they will do—a young man will be sent round to every teepee in the camp, to warn the people not to go near you; he will go round to every teepee and shout into it 'Dont go near that man, he is going to steal your children! Dont go near that man, he is going to steal your children!' Why the Roman Catholics said Mr. Tims have got an Institute built for them by government, only thirty miles from here, at a cost of \$25,000, and they have not got a single Blackfoot, Peigan or Blood child; the people will not send their children to them." So I took Mr. Tims advice, and for the first two or three days refrained from saying anything to the people about my schools. Then, one evening when they were all gathered together to listen to me, I thought I would tell them. Are not all these things in God's hands, and cannot Almighty God turn the hearts of men and influence them by the secret voice of his Holy Spirit; and so I told the people right out about my Homes; how they originated how the Ojibway chiefs took part in setting them on foot, and how they were now filled with pupils almost to overflowing, and then I asked them to let a couple of their boys go back with me, just for one year to be educated. I told them I wanted to learn their language, so that when I came again I might be able to speak with them, and I would surely bring the boys back again at the end of the year. By the

grace of God I won my way with them, and next day there were two or three offers of boys to go back with me. I could see the people desired to give their children, but were evidently afraid of one another, and especially afraid of their chiefs. If our boys go they said we must not let Crowfoot know. One old blind man came with his wife begging me to take his son, a lad of sixteen, "I want him to learn something good" he said, but don't let any one know, take him away quietly, and as soon as he is gone, I and my wife will slip away, and travel one hundred miles off, as there is sure to be trouble in the camp. Another boy who wanted to come with us was afraid his elder brother would make trouble if he knew about it; but his elder brother was just then away at McLeod, and would not be back for several days, and he wanted to slip away with us before his brother returned.

TWO BLACKFEET BOYS.

The end of it was that when I started to return home two Blackfeet boys accompanied me, nice intelligent looking fellows. Appikokia aged 18, and Etukitain 16, both heathen, and both wearing their long black hair in plaits. Appikokia had been living more or less for the last year with the missionary and consequently had doffed his blanket and taken to coat and trousers, but Etukitsin, son of the old blind man, was still in regular Indian dress, blanket, leggings, moccasins, necklace round his neck, brass rings on his fingers, and wearing no hat or cap. The boys behaved uncommonly well during our long journey of 1200 miles by rail and made no attempt to run away. Neither of them could speak a word of English, but I had picked up a little of their language and had got a number of words and sentences written in Blackfeet on cards which I carried in my pocket and so was able to make them

understand me. On arriving at Port Arthur they were greatly astonished to see the great lake and the steamboats, as they had never seen anything larger than the narrow Bow River before. As we had two days to wait for a boat I took them to visit the Ojibway Indians at Fort William. We went on the little local steamboat the Kakabeka; the engineer took them down in the hold to see the furnace and they both jumped back as though they were shot when he opened the furnace door. The Fort William Indians, who are comparatively civilized, were very much edified at receiving a visit from a couple of Blackfeet of whom they had only heard about before. They assembled in large numbers in the Council House, and I introduced the boys to them and told them a number of things about their heathen practices which interested them very much. On the 12th of June we arrived home at the Shingwauk. It was Sunday and Sunday school was just over. The Wawanosh girls and all present, and great was the astonishment depicted on all faces when I drove up with my two wild looking companions. I am allowing the boys to keep their hair long as it would offend both them and their people very much if it were cut off; I am also allowing them for the present to smoke. They must be let down gradually and not be frightened by any too sudden changes. At present they seem to be quite happy and contented and ready to make friends with the other boys tho' not understanding any of their languages. We have already started them at trades, Appikokia carpentering and Etukitsin bootmaking. They both show marked aptitude.

A Branch Home at Banff.

In the course of my travels I visited Banff which is about 100 miles beyond the Blackfoot Reserve. It is like a

little Swiss village up among the Rocky Mountains and is noted for its hot springs which attract numbers of invalids and other visitors. I have thought that an Institution on a small scale established in this picturesque spot might prove both attractive to visitors and also help to dispel the false ideas that people have as to the uselessness of attempting to educate Indians. It would also be an excellent centre, as we should have the Blackfeet Indians on one side of us, the British Columbia Indians on the other side and a number of other tribes to the north. I have opened correspondence with the Indian Department in regard to the scheme and have some reason to hope that my proposals will be acceded to. In that case I shall try probably to place my present Homes at Sault Ste. Marie in other hands, at any rate for a time, and move my quarters to Banff to try and inaugurate this new work.

### A Branch Home at Elkhorn.

Our readers are aware that I have for some time past been desirous of establishing a Branch Home either in Manitoba or Assiniboia, and the way seems now to be opening towards the accomplishment of this purpose. During my recent trip to the North West, I was offered a free grant of land in an excellent position on the outskirts of the village of Elkhorn, close to the railway, and in one of the few spots on the prairies where good water is abundant. We have about \$2,000 in hand and it is not unlikely that we may commence building operations this season. Our idea is to put up a small Institution with accommodation for about 15 pupils, and to place a clergyman in charge, who will also undertake the duty at the village church. There are numbers of Indian Reserves all around in the neighborhood, and if after a year or two the school seems likely to

succeed we shall be able to enlarge and to take more pupils.

### A Monthly Magazine.

We are sending round the following circular letter to the heads of all existing Protestant Institutions for Indian children in Canada, and would solicit also the kind attention to the subject of all interested in the Indian cause:—

### The Indian Canadian.

DEAR SIR:—Above is the title of a 16 page monthly magazine which with your cooperation and help I propose to publish in the interests of Indian education and advancement. I have long felt that the number, position, needs and capabilities of our young Indian population is not yet known or understood by the people of Canada, and I propose, by God's help, to make the above magazine a medium for such information. I also feel that in order to stem the rapid progress of Romanism, we who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, whether belonging to the Church of England, or the Presbyterian, or Methodist, or other protestant denominations, must band together and aim to bring the whole Indian population under our Christian influence. I think a magazine such as I propose, supported by us in common, will form a pleasant means of intercommunication between us and may also become a power for good. The title of the magazine will, I hope, commend itself to you. As we have French Canadians, Irish Canadians &c. in the country, so our aim is to convert the Indians into Indian Canadians, and offer to their children all the advantages of education and civilization which we ourselves possess.

I may mention that I have lately been travelling in the States, and have formed a connection with several of the largest Institutions for Indian children in that country. Our magazine will

## OUR FOREST CHILDREN

be exchanged with theirs, and thus we shall be able to keep our readers informed of the good work going on across the border, as well as of what is being done in Canada. I propose that the magazine shall be illustrated, well got up, and made as attractive as possible. If you approve of the scheme will you please send me a few lines which I may make use of in the first sample copy, which, if I meet with sufficient encouragement, I propose to issue. Kindly give me a few little items of interest also about your work, and say to what extent you will be prepared to support the movement.

Yours faithfully,  
EDWARD F. WILSON.

### Receipts Indian Homes. MAY 1887.

St. James' Mission Union, Carlton Place, for boy	\$ 37.50
St. Matthias, "Ladies Aid" Montreal, for boy	18,75
St. Stephens' S.S. Toronto for girl	1,76
St James' " Perth for girl	37,50
Miss Ballachys' S. school class. Brantford,	3,06
St. Mark's Missionary Association, for boy	26,49
Grace church S. S., Brantford, for boy,	37,50
St James' S. S. Dundas for Homes	10,00
Trinity S.S. Liverpool for Wawanosh	5,50
Holy Trinity S. S., Toronto, for boy	15,00
Laura Ide, for Homes	50
All Saint's S.S. Toronto for girl	25,00
Per Miss Yielding, Children's church Guild	50,00
Memorial S.S. London for boy	18,75
St Peter's Guild Sherbrooke for girl	18,75
All.Saint's Niagara, South, girl's Guild, for Wawanosh	2,70
Port Rowan, Woman's Auxiliary, for Homes	10,00

Church of Redeemer, S.S., Toronto, for boy	18,75
St Peter's S.S. Quebec for Shingwauk	10,00
St. Paul's S. S., London, for Homes	7,00
Per S. Belcher, Sutton S. S. for Shingwauk	1,50
Per S. Belcher, St George's S. S., Portage du Fort Sh'gw'k	4,00
Per S. Belcher, Grace church, S.S. Montreal for Homes	7,54
Per S. Belcher, Grace church, Band of Hope	5,00
Girl's Friendly Society, Cornwall, for girl	12,50
St George's S. S. Montreal, for boy	75,00
Ch. of Redeemer S. S., Deer Park, for girl	6,25
Miss Wright for Wawanosh	4,20
St. George's Cathedral S.S. Kingston, for girl	12,50
St. John's S.S. Berlin. for boy	9,38
	\$49,2,38

### Receipts Shingwauk Extension.

MAY, 1887.	
St. James' S. S. Farnham,	3,00
Per Miss Pigot. Mrs. Geo. Bryan	1,00
J. M. Burke, Belleville	11,00
Rev. All Saints, Niagara South, Girls' Friendly Society	2,30
	\$17,30

### Branch Homes.

MAY, 1887.	
St. Peter's Sunday School, Quebec	5,00

## Our Forest Children

EDITED BY THE

**REV. E. F. WILSON,**  
**SAULT STE MARIE. - ONTARIO**

10 cents per Annum or 12 of each Issue for \$1.00 per Annum.

It is intended to issue 15 or 20 numbers in the course of the year, and friends of the cause are asked to keep them on file, they will thus have a history of this movement from the beginning.