

original Tribes to an equality with their white brethren in condition and character. If the scattered remains of the once proud and mighty possessors of the whole land are allowed to continue in a state of degradation or ruinous decay, a mountain of reproach will rest on those who have supplanted them as lords of the soil, without imparting any equivalent therefor—supplanting only to destroy, instead of to civilize and to save.”

From a careful perusal of the correspondence relative to the Indians, which has of late years passed between the several Secretaries of State for the Colonies, and the Governors of Upper and Lower Canada, (published by order of the House of Commons) and upon a due consideration of the doctrines therein laid down, I assume it to be a fixed principle of the British Government, that in all arrangements respecting the Aborigines, their concerns should be under the exclusive care and superintendence of the Crown, to which, whether under French or English dominion, they have ever been taught to look for paternal protection. The Sovereigns of Britain have always been accustomed to call and to treat the Indians of North America as their children, and in this there has been manifest justice as well as advantage to the Indian. His situation has been precisely that of an infant requiring a guardian.

The Indians of New Brunswick were first converted to Christianity and taught the principles of the Catholic Faith, by the Jesuit Missionaries, a class of men of whom it must be admitted, that whatever may have been their faults in the old world, they have in the new, been known chiefly as the protectors and civilizers of a race forsaken or trampled upon by all beside. When they baptized their converts, they conferred upon them names selected from the calendar of saints, and those names are yet borne very extensively among the Micmacs. The Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and other parts of the service of the Mass were taught by means of the hieroglyphics in use among the Indians themselves, which the Jesuit Fathers added to and improved. Manuscript books of the chants and church service, in these very curious symbolical characters, are still in common use among the Micmacs, who prize them highly, and part with them very unwillingly.

Since the Crown of England succeeded to the Jesuits, no advance has been made in the education or instruction of the Indians; but on the contrary, ground has been lost. A long period of neglect has elapsed, during which they have been left principally to their own unassisted efforts; yet in spite of these disadvantages the Indians have not failed to afford sufficient evidence in various instances of their capacity for the ordinary pursuits and arts of life, and of their readiness to enter upon them whenever they had opportunity or encouragement. They are far from being a degraded race; they possess all the higher attributes; their minds are strong, their imaginative powers highly fertile, and their morals, in their natural state, pure.

The first step towards the real improvement of the Indians is to gain them over from a wandering to a settled life, and to form them into compact Settlements, with a due portion of land for their cultivation and support. They must be induced to remain stationary on the land during the principal part of the year, without which they cannot attend to Agriculture, have any of the comforts or good habits of domestic life, or cultivate religion or education. To effect this would not, in my opinion, be very difficult. The Indians have already, by their own unaided exertions, and their constant intercourse with the whites, made very considerable advances in civilization. Many of them have adopted the habits and customs as well as the dress of Europeans; they have abandoned the wigwam, and built small dwelling houses for themselves, which they have furnished to the best of their ability with household goods, while in other respects they have conformed to the manners of the neighbouring settlers and farmers. The superior degree of comfort enjoyed by those who have made this improvement, has greatly stimulated the other Indians to imitate their example and attain the same desirable position, it being quite certain that one example of industry and consequent increase of property in a member of their own tribe, affords a far more effectual lesson to an Indian than a score of similar instances among the white settlers. Their strong desire to possess comfortable dwellings and a piece of ground over which they may exercise the rights of absolute ownership, could be gratified without any very considerable expense, and by these means they might be attracted to any favorable situation, where they would soon feel and fully appreciate the blessings of social improvement and the numberless comforts of civilized life.

The next great object to be attained would be, the establishment of Schools, affording elementary instruction not only in the common branches of education but in the rudiments of Agriculture and Mechanics. Infant Schools, which have been so universally successful elsewhere, would here be found of the greatest advantage, and I should place great reliance on their beneficial effects. If attended with a reasonable degree of success, it may not be too much to anticipate that they would lead to the perfect civilization of the rising generation of Indians, who being regularly trained and instructed from the earliest possible period, and associated in the Schools with the children of the whites, would grow up with all the habits, thoughts and feelings of the other inhabitants of the Province. They would, as a matter of course, learn to speak the English language perfectly, and thus all distinctions between the different races would be at an end.

The difficulty of inducing the parents to send their children to

the Infant Schools, will be started as an objection to them; but I conceive that this difficulty may be overcome more readily than is generally imagined. A cheap uniform dress for the children would gain the consent of the mothers, who, upon finding themselves relieved from the trouble of looking after them for a considerable portion of each day, would insist upon the attendance of the children as a relief to themselves.

It should be a condition with all Indians who were assisted to build a house, or receive aid and encouragement, that they should send their children to the Schools, and if they neglected or refused to do so, they should receive no further assistance, and be debarred from participating in the advantages of the Settlement. This would be a most effectual method of securing attendance at the Schools.

With respect to the adults and those young persons who have grown up, and may be considered to have acquired, in a great measure, the ancient habits of their race, the best possible means of inducing them to change their mode of life and receive instruction, would be by the introduction of teachers of the most simple and useful arts and trades, which, as I have already stated, the Indians express the most anxious desire to learn. A recent writer on India maintains, that instruction in the arts is far more likely to effect the intellectual improvement of an uncivilized people, than scholastic education; and he says it is an aphorism “that an improved plough is an excellent missionary, and a chest of Carpenter's tools worth a dozen School masters,” because the value of education, whether secular or religious, cannot be appreciated by the uneducated, unless its connection with material improvement be distinctly shewn. He says that a perception of the vast benefits of knowledge in a material point of view, as well as the improvements effected by its agency, would in the natural course of things, introduce a higher order of civilization, and promote the cultivation of knowledge for its own sake.

The New England Company* have established a Mechanics' Institute at the Mohawk Village, on the Grand River, in Upper Canada; a proof that they fully understand and appreciate the principles above laid down.

The situations in which to form Settlements of the Indians ought to be carefully selected, as it has been found in Canada, that location is a matter of very considerable importance in effecting permanent improvement, for a variety of reasons. The Indian should not be placed in a situation where he could not follow the sports of the field, as he cannot be expected all at once to change the whole habits of his life, and on the instant, give up hunting, fishing and fowling, which he has always followed without restriction, and to which he is ardently attached. The excitement of the sport is to him fascinating, and the greatest pride of his life is to return to his Wigwam successful. To attain this success, he patiently bears cold, hunger and fatigue to an extent which a white man could scarcely endure. He must at first be allowed to pursue fishing and fowling during some part of the season, and be gradually induced to give less time to them, and a greater portion to more profitable employment.

Mr. Jardine of Richibucto stated to me that the Indians in his employ would quit work at certain seasons, when the shooting and fishing were good, and absent themselves for several days together on sporting expeditions. He found it useless to object, and allowed them to follow the bent of their inclinations. When the sport was at an end, or they were satisfied, they returned immediately to their employment, and resumed work with a very cheerful and contented manner.

Another consideration with respect to Indian Settlements, is to place them so as to bring them near the Settlements of the whites, so that the children of both races may if practicable, be associated in the Schools, and particularly in the Infant Schools, while at the same time the Indians may be benefitted by the practical experience and example of the white settlers, and be so far removed from towns, as to prevent their intercourse with the idle and depraved as much as possible. To prevent the frightful mortality among the children, it will be absolutely necessary to have a medical man at each Settlement, or within such reasonable distance, that he could visit them frequently, and be within reach, if required on any sudden emergency. A small sum paid annually to a respectable physician for medicines and attendance, might save a great number of the Indians who now perish from the want of proper relief.

As favourable situations for settlements, I beg to recommend the Indian Village of Saint Anne, (near Fredericton,) for the Micmacs of the Saint John; Burnt Church Point and the Eel Ground for the Indians of the Miramichi; and Big Cove for the Indians of the Richibucto. These places would suffice for a beginning, and as they possess the requisite facilities and advantages for Settlements, they would have every reasonable prospect of success, under efficient management.

As a preliminary measure with respect to the Micmacs, it is of

* The New England Company were incorporated by Royal Charter 7th February, 4th Charles II. They state that they maintain Missionaries, Schoolmasters and Teachers of the most useful arts and trades at the Company's expense, for civilizing, educating and instructing Heathen Nations of America in the Christian Religion, and also in such kinds of learning and of arts and trades as are suited to their condition. They profess to act in the execution of certain Trusts. They had formerly an establishment at Sussex Vale in this Province, which being mismanaged, was broken up about 1825.