

B62 The Epistles from our Brethren of Ohio and Indiana Yearly Meetings were now read, and their salutary contents were comforting and edifying.

The Standing Committee on the Indian Concern, produced the following Report viz:
To the Yearly Meeting

The standing Committee on the Indian Concern, report, that a short time previous to the Yearly Meeting last year, our valued friend, Philip E. Thomas, who had for a long time acted as Secretary of this Committee, was removed by death.

Our deceased Friend was appointed by the Yearly Meeting, on the Committee on the Indian Concern, in the year 1863, and by said Committee, as its Clerk or Secretary the same year, the duties of which he continued to perform to the time of his death in 1861, a period of fifty-eight years. The records he made of the proceedings of the Committee, nearly fill four large ledger volumes. To his steady, disinterested, and untiring devotedness to what he believed would contribute to the true welfare and best interests of the Indians, many of us are witnesses. To serve his Red brethren was the engrossing object of his unflinching vigilance, and we believe his efforts were a means, under Providence, of averting the danger of ultimate extinction as a distinct people, with which this interesting body of Indians was so strongly threatened, and of giving stability to their position among the races of mankind.

It having been many years since any of the Friends officially visited these Indians, a joint delegation, composed of five members of this Committee, and six members of the Committee of New York Yearly Meeting, during the past summer made a visit to the Indians residing on the Cattaraugus and Alleghany Reservations, on a mission of love, and in order to become better acquainted with them personally, and with their present condition and wants; to examine their schools, and endeavor to ascertain, from personal observation,

whether there are any means within our reach by which we can be additionally serviceable to them. The Report of the Delegation was very satisfactory to us, and some of the results of their observations, inquiries, and labors, we deem of sufficient general interest to have a place in this Report, as tending to impart valuable information respecting the present habits, condition and circumstances of these people. They are as follows:

The Delegation were much gratified with their visit to the Asylum for Orphan and Destitute Indian children, and while they could have wished that the great philosophical truth stated by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that as "for generations, the pursuits of the Indians have been physical rather than intellectual, this fact should not be overlooked in any system of education adopted for them," had been practically acted upon by those who have the direction of the children's studies; yet they believe the Institution is in charge, and under the superintendence, of those who are deeply interested in the Indians' welfare; and that the orphan and destitute Indian children may be very safely and advantageously entrusted to their guardianship.

Very comfortable, airy and commodious provision is made in the asylum for the accommodation of these orphan Indian children, of whom there were in the Institution over fifty, at a cost for schooling, board and clothing, and all expenses, of sixty dollars a year for each scholar. Every thing about the establishment was neat and in good order, and the Delegation were favorably impressed with the system of Government of the Institution, and the kind and affectionate family influence that seemed to prevail. We contributed two hundred dollars from the Indian Fund this year, in aid of the Institution.

After school the boys had each immediately his bow and arrow, of his own manufacture, in the use of which they gave evidence of great expertness. It was stated that occasionally, in their walks, when they would see a bird, the temptation to try their skill thrown with their bow and arrow, would be too strong to be resisted, but that, in all other respects, the greatest kindness and humanity are exhibited by these Indian children, so that the birds build their nests freely, and raise their young safely, on the trees,