

THE
Mechanics' Institute,
OF WINDERMERE, MUSKOKA, ONT.



WINDERMERE, June 1st, 1886.

To the friends of Literature and Mental Culture and Recreation, who frequent the Muskoka Lakes in Summer.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We respectfully submit for your consideration the following particulars of a Literary Institution, about to be established at Windermere :

Windermere is pleasantly situated on the eastern shore of Lake Rosseau, four miles from Port Carling, and nine miles from Rosseau Village.

Its fishing and bathing facilities are not surpassed by any other place on the lakes ; the surrounding scenery is beautiful and delightful, and the locality is pre-eminently healthful.

One of its peculiar advantages is a never-failing spring which, even in the hottest days of summer, gushes forth cold as iced water, and beautifully clear.

It has not been analysed, but has the credit of possessing medicinal qualities of a high order, which however do not disqualify it for ordinary domestic use, and as a refreshing and palatable draught.

During the past year Windermere has been considerably enlarged. Among the buildings recently erected are Cottages for the use of visitors ; a large and commodious boarding house for long or short term visitors and tourists ; a good sized general store and a Methodist Church.

Services are held in the church every Sabbath throughout the year. At Deebank, two miles to the east, a Presbyterian congregation meets every Sabbath in the school-house.

In the immediate vicinity of Windermere, and for a considerable distance around are excellent farms, from which can be had an abundance of butter, milk, eggs, mutton, beef, etc. ; also fruit and other garden produce.

The origin of the project which we especially desire to bring before your notice, was as follows : For some time past we have had in our neighborhood a literary society. Its primary objects were—the acquisition of knowledge, and the mental improvement of its members ; the culture and study of literature, and the adoption and furtherance of measures, tending to the intellectual and moral advancement of the inhabitants of the neighborhood and district.

A want, in the shape of a library, soon made itself pressingly felt. As the circumstances were such as would not justify an outlay sufficiently large to supply the necessity, the Minister of Education was appealed to for assistance. This the Minister very generously consented to give, provided we changed our institution to a Mechanics Institute, and became incorporated under Chap. 168, R. S. O. The members of the Society gladly embraced the offer, and steps have been taken towards incorporation. It has been resolved, also, to extend the original idea, and construct a building, suitable for a reading room and library. Building operations will commence at once, and, it is hoped, will be completed by the end of June. The site which the building will occupy, is prettily situated about 150 yards from Windermere Wharf, on the base of the angle formed by Harcourt Point, with Paton Bay on the one hand and Windermere Bay on the other ; each of which possesses a splendid sandy beach. The library will

contain volumes on Philosophy, Mechanics, Science, Arts, History, Poetry, Biography, and general literature. A complete Sportsman's Library, including literature relating to hunting, angling, and camping out in Muskoka, will be procured for the benefit of those of sporting proclivities, who may visit us in Summer. The reading room will be furnished with chess, draughts, dominoes, periodicals, standard magazines, the daily Toronto newspapers, and one or two of the New York and Chicago dailies. Provision will be made for the giving of lectures and other literary entertainments.

It is not intended that the undertaking shall be, in any sense, a speculative enterprise. The aim of the promoters is to provide good sound reading for the people of this region; to elevate the general standard of intelligence, and by the pursuance of the objects heretofore mentioned, make the institution wield an influence for good, which shall be *felt* throughout the length and breadth of the district. In order to make the project a greater success than it otherwise could be, the co-operation of every lover of literature and literary institutions, who is interested in these parts, is respectfully solicited.

As help is urgently needed, in placing the Institute upon a firm foundation, we hope your encouragement and material assistance will be extended to us, believing, as we do, that our endeavour will meet with your hearty approbation. Contributions, however small, in money, books, or material for the adornment or furnishing of the Institute, will be thankfully received, and contributors shall be entitled to the privileges of the Institute for a definite period, to be hereafter determined by the Board of Directors; or something tangible will be done to commemorate their generosity.

Contributions in Toronto may be left with—

Messrs. WILLIAMSON & Co., No. 5 King St. West ;

Mr. C. MACKENZIE (The Shedden Co.), No. 10 Front
Street East ;

Mr. JOHN PATON (London & Ont. Investment Co.), No.
84 King St. East ;

or they may be sent to any of the members of the Provisional
Committee at Windermere, who have the honor to be,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servants,

GEORGE PATON, *President.*

R. MCGREGOR, *Sec. Treas.*

J. R. BOYD.

DAVID FIFE.

THOS. AITKIN.

*Provisional Committee of The Mechanics'
Institute of Windermere, Muskoka, Ont.*