

After paying tribute to the guest of honor, the Provincial Treasurer, whom he described as a good friend of Muskoka District, Mr. Boyer referred to the development of Bala since Thomas Burgess had first arrived in 1868. He told of the reasons which compelled the Ontario Government in the 1870's to construct the Bala dam, and of what this had meant to the Muskoka Lakes communities and summer residents. Bala had been incorporated in 1914 and had enjoyed good municipal leadership over the years, until today the town is one of the best-known places in Ontario.

In conclusion, Mr. Boyer congratulated the School Board and Bala Council upon the success of the planning to construct a new school building, and they could take satisfaction from the fine result. Similarly, he congratulated the architect and contractors. He said he would extend best wishes to those taught and who studied in the new school, hoping that the students would continue on through high school and that most would find it possible to

take still further education. There had been many who had attended school in Bala over the years who had made a fine name for themselves. They would join in wishing all success to the boys and girls of Bala as they prepare themselves, with the better opportunities they have, to meet the world.

Indian Affairs

Representing the Dominion Department of Indian Affairs, H. B. Rodine, of Toronto, spoke of the part his department had taken in the arrangements for the new school building. (A cash grant of \$17,535 was paid by the department). He noted that across Canada the numbers of Indian children now attending public schools has risen considerably, and he was particularly pleased with the arrangements for the Gibson children at Bala. He said whereas only a few Indian boys and girls had gone on to high school only a few years ago, now the number is in the thousands. Young people of Indian extraction can take their place in Canadian life, and he said the president of the elementary school section of the Ontario Educational Association, elected in Easter week, is an Indian. He extended to the people of Bala the greetings of Honorable Ellen Fairclough, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Mr. Rodine asked that Chief Gordon Sahanatien, of Gibson Reserve, speak. The Chief made a brief address, congratulating the Board and as to the attendance of children from the Reservation at the school, said, "We wouldn't have it any other way."

The chairman told the Chief that insofar as the people of Bala were concerned, they wouldn't have it any other way, either.

Gordon S. McIntyre, former school inspector here, now superintendent of schools at Richmond Hill, spoke of the planning of the School Board for their splendid new school. He admired the way in which the school had been built and finished, and withal so economically. He had left Muskoka in the midst of the planning for the school, but had wished to return for the celebration at the time of the official opening.

A chorus of boys and girls from the school, directed by Mr. Bradley, who played the piano accompaniments, sang several much-appreciated choruses, among them "Vive la Compagnie," "Early one Morning" and "How Great Thou Art."

Joseph A. Thatcher, M.R.A.I.C., P.Eng., the architect of the school building, formally presented the keys of the building, with his good wishes, to the Board, and they were accepted by School Trustee Mrs. Baker.

Provincial Treasurer

W. Fred Hammell, B.A., B. Paed., introduced the speaker of the evening, Honorable James N. Allan, Ontario Provincial Treasurer, but before doing so spoke of the pleasant relationships he had enjoyed with the people of Bala.

Honorable Mr. Allan said it gave him great pleasure to be invited to come to one of the most beautiful parts of Ontario to participate in the opening of a new school. Bala people were to be complimented for creating fine facilities for education, of a kind which puts them in the front rank of the Province-wide school system. "I must say I envy today's children, and I am sure most adults here do the same. When we were young school wasn't like this; in fact life as a whole was different—not so full of opportunities, challenges and rewards, and was much less comfortable, too. The changes since I was a youngster are nothing short of amazing, but I know today's young people will live to see further changes in their lives still more amazing and wonderful," he said.

Others could learn by the example of Bala in constructing a school at an economical cost, for he had learned the building had been completed at the estimated cost of \$55,000. He was also interested that child-

ren from Gibson Reserve were attending the school, and it was good to see the descendants of the original Canadians having opportunity for a first-class education. One of the very central policies of the Government of Ontario is to provide educational and other opportunities for the Indian population, so that they may enter fully into the main stream of life and progress in the Province. One of the chief aims of Premier Frost is that no doors are closed to enjoyment of equality of opportunity on the part of our Indian people, he said.

A large part of the cost of Bala Public School is borne by the Provincial Treasury under the school grants system, and one of his jobs as Provincial Treasurer is to find the money with which the Province pays its share. The latest budget of the Province totalled \$896 million, and because of tremendous economic and social changes in Ontario, the budget has multiplied by almost nine times in 20 years. A chief reason for this growth is the spending for education. Education spending by the Province is over four times what it was ten years ago, and nearly 20 times greater than 20 years ago. This year about \$20 million was added to the school

grants budget. There is only one department which at present spends more than Education, and that is Highways, but Mr. Allan said he felt that soon educational requirements would exceed the amount spent on highways and roads.

Growth is the keynote of Ontario's educational system—growth in numbers and in costs. In 1945 there were only 650,000 students in Ontario's schools. Today there are twice that number, and not only are there many more children in the school-age groups, but a larger proportion of them are going to school and for a longer period of time. Mr. Allan continued by giving figures of the requirements of additional classroom accommodation required—such has been provided for 750,000 pupils since World War II at a cost of over \$600 million dollars. It used to be said that a new school or addition had been opened on an average of one for each day in the year. This was three or four years ago, but there were 498 school construction projects in 1959 and it is likely that in 1960 there will be 527 new projects, to accommodate 96,825 pupils and costing \$90 million. If local school authorities had been left to do the entire job and providing adequate facili-

ties, their budgets and taxpayers would have had difficulty in standing the strain.

"The Provincial Treasury has never been overloaded with money, but the Government decided that the Treasury of the whole Province would have to be employed in meeting these pressing school needs. Accordingly a scheme of Provincial educational grants was instituted, and this year it will involve us in the distribution of some \$167 millions to school boards, making up nearly 19% of the total Ontario budget. I might add that the Province is relieving local taxpayers, those who support municipal councils as well as school boards, to the extent of \$343 million this year, which accounts for a total of 46.6% of our total revenue," he said. "The Provincial Government believes it has a definite responsibility to see that educational standards are reasonably high and uniform from one end of Ontario to the other, regardless of the level of wealth in any one area. The grants system is constantly being reviewed with this in mind."

Mr. Allan said Ontario was still a long way from the peak as regards school enrolment and construction, and educational costs. The total school population will keep increasing by 75,000 per year, and it is calculated that when school opens less than five years from now there will be at least 25% more pupils sitting down for lessons. Secondary school enrolment will be even greater; 220,000 this year it will rise to 320,000 in 1964, about 45%. Everyone connected with education has his work cut out for him

in the years ahead, including the school trustees, taxpayers, teachers and the Provincial Treasurer. But Ontario has a duty to provide good education, for the future of the Province requires many trained men and women.

In conclusion, Honorable Mr. Allan declared the new school officially open.

Following this, prayers of dedication were offered by the

Rev. Peter S. Park, and the program concluded with the National Anthem.