

From the first establishment of the mission much was made of school work. But Mr. Wheeler had a more comprehensive plan. In 1859 he succeeded in opening a school into which children could be gathered from wigwam life. For many years, the Odanah boarding-school afforded the best educational facilities that the Wisconsin Ojibways have yet enjoyed. It was judged worthy of governmental recognition and aid.

But with the realization of his cherished hope came an ominous change in Mr. Wheeler's health. A hemorrhage from the lungs, in the spring of 1859, warned him that he must never again sleep out of doors in the bitter cold of a Lake Superior winter night, with the thermometer at twenty-eight degrees below zero. He must take no more journeys that would bring him home with feet bleeding from cuts made by the thongs of his snow-shoes. Yet his work was not done.

The years of the War of Secession were years of anxiety and danger. The little mission church of Odanah made its offering of precious life. The rascality of certain officials, in dealing with the Indians, threatened disturbance. Mr. Wheeler went to warn the government of impending danger. While he was gone, the frightful Sioux outbreak occurred in Minnesota (August, 1862), and an embassy came to stir up his own people to revolt. But these remained loyal to the influence and teaching of the missionaries. They wished even to raise a company to help the Great Father in Washington subdue his enemies, with the particular thought, it may be, of making war upon their own traditional enemies, the Sioux. But it was not thought best that they should engage in warfare, or be led to believe that their Great Father could not do without their help.

After serving these humble people for a quarter of a century, Mr. Wheeler's special labors in their behalf came to an end in October, 1866. The wasting of consumption compelled removal, and left him but six years more of life. These were spent at Beloit, where he was engaged in a manufacturing enterprise, which provided