

A MEMORIAL SERVICE.

A number of friends of the late Chief John Smoke Johnson of the Six Nations have requested that the address delivered by Rev. D. J. Caswell at the Grove on Saturday, August 28th ult., should be printed and preserved.

The following is the address read by Rev. Mr. Caswell:—

I do not think it would be right to let this opportunity pass without speaking a few words in memory of the aged chief whose loss we mourn today. Chief John Smoke Johnson was "an old man and full of years," and has "in a good old age been gathered to his people.

Sa-ka-yew-kwa-rah-ton," or vanishing smoke, as his name implies, if he had lived till the 2nd of December next, would have completed the age of 94 years.

It seems almost incredible in this busy age of the world, when life appears so short and so rapid in its flight, that any one life could extend over a period of almost a century.

Let us recall some of the events in his life and in the world during his long period, so that we may be able to grasp the idea of a lifetime of 94 years.

First, then we must try to call to memory the fact that the venerable chief was born when George the 111 was king, and all Europe was on the eve of the great struggle which led to the French revolution. Then the great Napoleon was was hardly heard of, and he who afterwards became the terror of the nations, and whose influence extended over the world, was only in the beginning of his career.

It seems almost impossible to grasp the thought of a life that extends so far back into the history of our fathers. In 1793 when the chief was born this old church was standing nine years. In 1807, when Capt. Joseph Brant died, John Smoke Johnson was a boy of fifteen years of age, and so (as he said a few days ago at the laying of the corner stone of the Brant monument) he could remember Brant well, and had often heard of the deeds he had done in times of war.

In 1812 war broke out between the United States and Britain, our veteran was among the warriors who, under Sir Isaac Brock and other generals fought for the British flag at Queenston Heights, Lundy's Lane, Black Rock and other engagements.

In 1827, when Rev. Robert Suggester commenced the work of the mission for the New England Company, Chief Johnson was a man of 35 years of age and in those olden days gave his assistance as an inspector to the work of the missionary.

In 1829 he was a man of 37 years, when the first grant of one mile square was given to commence a village of white residents where now stands the beautiful city of Brantford.

In 1831, when the Ven. Archdeacon Nelles began his work as missionary to the Indians, Chief Johnson was 29, and lived to see that long and useful career of missionary labor among the Six Nations.

In 1832, when Capt. John Brant died, our veteran chief had reached the age of 40 years, and was in middle life.

When we come down to 1853 we find the removals were going to the S. W. side of the river and our Indian people locating on their present

Reserve. Chief Johnson was then a man of 61 years of age and continued to give his assistance as interpreter in the work of the mission, when once in the month this ancient church was open for the Holy Communion. The removals had, at that time, caused the old church to be closed for the most part, except for purpose of Holy Communion.

In 1860, when the Prince of Wales visited Canada, and coming amongst you took such an interest in the Indian people, our veteran chief had reached the age of 68 years.

An in 1865, when the church at Kanyenia was erected, Chief Johnson was among the aged men present at the opening of the church, having reached the age of 73 years.

And now for 21 years (while some have grown from infancy to manhood) as an aged patriarch he has lived among his people, and has gone in and out among them "doing good."

For a few years after your people removed to the present Reserve he lingered near the scenes of his youth, till his aged partner was taken from him, and he also removed to the Reserve to live and die amongst his people.

As Catechist and Interpreter he has been of great assistance in the work of evangelizing his Indian brethren, and has done good service in the church for many years.

Let me say he has been loyal to the church in which he was baptized. Whilst others in their fancied wisdom have fallen off and gone astray, he has always been loyal to his church as he was loyal to his country. He lived to bring up his sons to be a credit to his nation, and lived to see his sons' sons, and "peace upon Israel."

He was a "man of war" (in the real sense of the expression) in his youth, and as a warrior he went forth to fight the battle of his country in the war of 1815. But he lived to be "man of peace" and to use his abilities to advance the kingdom of the Prince of Peace, and to fight manfully under His banner as a good soldier and servant of Christ.

Like all mortal men, no doubt, he had his weaknesses, and many to-day will remember some of his failings, but we must remember that the best of the Bible heroes are not represented as men without fault, but are described as "men of passions with ourselves," and we are only encouraged to follow their footsteps as far as they walked the paths of righteousness.

Like our aged brother we may say that with all his human weaknesses his heart was set upon the right and the true and we will join in giving him credit for the purpose of his heart in seeking to do good in his day and generation.

His voice has always been on the side of righteousness, seeking to give good advice to his people. For years past as Catechist he has been unable to do more than read the ten commandments in church in the Mohawk tongue, and thus he tried to do what he could.

And though some in their fancied wisdom look upon the ten Commandments as antiquated, he wisely saw that the day had not yet come when we might lessen our teachings of morality, nor might we believe indeed that God's laws can never change, but are rather like the Holy Son of God himself, the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

Altogether then, speaking of our loss in the

decease of the venerable chief many of us feel that a "great man has fallen in Israel," that in him we have lost a good man and true and good men are to scarce for us not to feel their loss. It is enough almost to make us say we never shall look upon his like again, and yet we pray that God may, in his providence, raise up faithful men among us who will walk in his footsteps in so far as he followed Christ.

His happy countenance full of Christian brightness, will be missed among us, and his readiness to speak words of encouragement and love, and to point others to Christ, will long leave their impressions upon us. I myself shall long remember his words of Christian welcome, spoken on my entering upon his mission in a new and untried field of labor. Welcome to-day to lay him down in the shadow of the dear old church which he loved so well, where his aged wife is already laid, and, where in his youth and early manhood, he heard the words of life which first won him to Christ. We lay him down in deep regret because of our loss, and yet we are assured that our loss is his everlasting gain. We lay him down in hope; in the words of our beautiful liturgy we lay him down "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us pray that God may enable us also to be faithful during the few short years it may be ours to continue here in life, so that we may walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ our Saviour and guided by His Holy Gospel, we may at last "attain the light of everlasting life," and be "numbered with His Saints in Glory everlasting."

ONEIDA RESERVATION—(RIVER THAMES.)

The Indians are busy seeding after the heavy rains. It was needed bad, as the clay lands could not be worked, for they were all in lumps.

Apples are a good crop this year.

The Irish delegates, Rev. Dr. Kane and G. Hill Smith, accompanied by brethren from London, Ont., visited the Oneida Indians and addressed them in the Orange Hall. The delegates made grand speeches. Rev. Dr. Kane is a Wesleyan Methodist minister and Grand Master of the Orange Society of Ireland; the other, G. Hill Smith, is a noted barrister. They came to this reserve expressly to see the Indians, being on their way to London.

The Grand Lodge of the United Temperance Society met at Oneida, in Ogwalli Hall, on October 6th, 1886.

The Oneida Agricultural Show was held on October 14th and 15th.

An interesting case occurred on this reserve after the division of the estate of the late Thos. Homer, deceased. Three of the children wanted one thing and the other three wanted another thing, as to how the property should be divided. Two of the boys took the team and drove to Grand River the next day. Constable Doxtator took after them, and overtook them at Paris, where he arrested them. He sent the boys to London, where they are now awaiting a trial.

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