

BLACK-CHIEF'S DAUGHTER.

Forty years ago, Black-Chief was Sachem of the clan of Senecas residing at Squawky-hill, in the valley of the Genessee River. He was famous for his skill and bravery in war and the pursuits of the chase; and withal, endeared to his people by his amiable temper and generous qualities. After his death, his clan honored with their esteem the only daughter of the chief, remarkable for her beauty and intelligence, and resembling her deceased father in native goodness of heart. Indeed, so highly was she regarded, that, by a formal decree in council, notwithstanding her extreme youth, she was clothed with the authority of a princess. The brightest fish from the waters, the sweetest flowers, and the richest and rarest fruits of the forests, and the proudest trophies of the hunt, were left, in reverence, at the door of her wigwam. Old men prayed daily to the Great Spirit that her years might be long in the land; for their ancient seers had assured them that during her lifetime the former glories of the Senecas would be in part restored.

But, as with the white man, so with the Indian, it is well that the future is a sealed book. A malignant fever, which had nearly depopulated the flourishing village of Connewangus, extended its ravages to Squawky-hill. The strong man was laid low, woman grew pale, and, with the infant at her bosom, perished.—The dog howled over the festering carcase; and hunger, in alliance with the fell distemper, filled the cup of misery to overflowing. In vain every precaution was taken to arrest the blow from the head of their beloved princess. After the panic had in a great degree abated, and signs of returning health became visible, the Destroyer entered her lodge, and amid wails of grief, and groans of despair, her young heart was stilled for ever.

When a distinguished individual expired, it was the custom of the Senecas to deposit the remains in a simple structure of unhewn logs, called "The Cabin of Death!" But such was their enthusiastic affection for their chieftain, that they departed from this ancient rite, by erecting a high scaffold in a neighbouring grove. After adorning the body with beads, shells, feathers, and other primitive ornaments, they placed it in an upright posture, on the rude throne they had thus raised. A drum, formed of the untanned hide of a deer drawn tensely over a section of the hollowed trunk of a tree, and beaten upon by a war-club, gave out its dull and dismal note, whilst men, wo-

men, and children, moved in a slow and solemn dance around the dead.

Swift runners were despatched with the melancholy tidings to the Seneca towns of Tonnewanta, Connewangus, and Caneadea; and the principal men of those places accompanied them back to assist in the sorrowful ceremony. Garlands of flowers, ears of corn, and valuable furs, were thrown in profusion at the feet of the lifeless object of their idolatry. By night, fires were lighted, and watchmen stationed to guard the hallowed spot, and keep the lurking wolf at a distance. Every morning the solemn rites of the preceding day were renewed. After a partial decomposition of the body had taken place, it was removed, and committed to the earth, with tears and loud lamentations.

These rites were not peculiar to the Senecas, or to the Five Nations. The Chippewas, who pitch their tents on the shores of Lake Superior, (proudly called the "Father of Waters,") and other nations of the far north-west, honor their dead with similar obsequies. It has been conjectured that the Chippewas derived their picturesque funeral observances from the Iroquois, who were their enemies of old, notwithstanding the vast wilderness that separated their hunting-grounds. Na-de-wa-we-gu-nung, in Michigan, nine hundred miles from the Great Council Fire at Onondaga, was the scene of a terrific battle between them "a long time ago." On the death of a sachem, or other person of note, the Chippewas, after dressing the body in the vestments of the living, and, by the aid of colours extracted from plants and clay, giving a life-like appearance to the countenance, deposit the relics on two cross pieces fastened with thongs to four posts set firmly in the ground. With pious veneration they plant near the poles the spreading wild hop, or the flaunting woodbine, in order that the revolting process of decay may be rendered less offensive by the refreshing verdure of vegetable beauty, and, in a short time, the corse is thickly embowered with leaves and flowers. There is something strikingly poetical in these simple rites of the untutored savage. Whilst the enlightened pale-face yields to the sunless custody of the tomb the beautiful and brave, his wild brother of the woods mourns over the loved and the lost with a lasting sorrow, and deems it hard to cast into the cold embrace of the earth

"Countenances benign, and forms that walked,
"But yesterday, so stately o'er the earth."