

THE INDIANS OF HURON DIOCESE.

There is in Canada, no subject of greater importance than the present and future of the Indians. They may be a source of strength to the Dominion. This has been proved by the records of the past. The Indians proved their loyalty to England at the time that the States separated from the Old Country, and again in the war of 1812. Were we even to ignore the blessings of Christianity to immortal souls, it must be admitted that religion is essential to loyalty, and all the blessings of civilization. This is the basis of our hope for the well being of the Indians, not merely for themselves but also of the Dominion.

Thanks to the Christian liberality of the missionary societies of England, and to the indefatigable labours of the missionaries here, there are now few pagan Indians in the diocese of Huron. In Munceytown, Oneida, Moravian-town, Walpole Island, Sarnia Reserve, and other places, the Church clergy, catechists, and schoolmasters have been blessed in their labors, and above all others the Six Nations on the Grand River, have worthily followed in the footsteps of their loyal Christian chief, Joseph Brant. We merely speak of our diocese; the other dioceses, we believe can point to an equal good record. With the Huron diocese the Indian records are inseparably connected. From one of the nations that owned this district ere the white man explored its old forest, our diocese assumed its name. The Huron nation as well as others has ceased to exist, being ruthlessly slaughtered in their internecine wars.

Will the Indian race become extinct? This query is answered in the affirmative by many. Many tribes have become extinct, and hence, they argue, that the time is at hand when the aborigines of the continent will only be known from the pages of history. We admit that some nations, some tribes of Indians have ceased wholly to exist, and others have decreased in number. But there is at present a conservative power influencing the nations that were dying from the destructive habits of paganism. Nations were dying away, as results of vices and diseases, many of which had been introduced by Europeans. The causes were incessantly going forward, while not a single preservative principle of social life was in any force. Virtue, the great conservator of national existence, was unknown. With the introduction of Christianity into the land, that state of society passed away.

Were additional proof needed to convince those who believe that the Indians are becoming extinct, we have the statistics now furnished by the Dominion Government. The only decrease recorded by the late census, is in the Mohawk nation, a decrease of sixteen, and this entirely due to exceptional circumstances. A trifling decrease such as this is no proof of the decadence of a race now numbering in the Dominion 129,522 souls.

If every farmer would cut down the burdocks, nettles, thistles, mullein stocks and pig-weed, beside the road next to his own land, would not the landscape be improved, at least to a farmers eyes? It is probable that next year he would not have as many weeds to hoe from the corn and potatoes on the other side of the fence.

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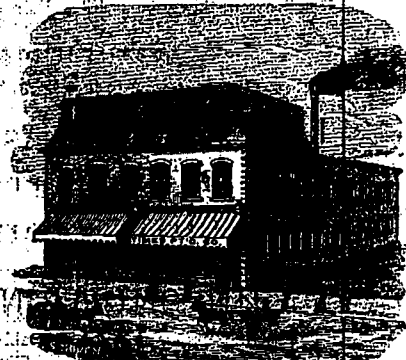
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