

THE INDIAN.

—A PAPER DEVOTED TO—

The Aborigines of North America,

—AND ESPECIALLY TO—

THE INDIANS OF CANADA.

SUBSCRIPTION \$1.50 A YEAR IN ADVANCE

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BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS.

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The Six Nation Indians Addressed by Sir John A. Macdonald.

Who Clearly Explains the Effect which the Franchise Act of 1885

Has in Placing the Indian upon an Equality with His White Brother.

On Monday, Sept. 6th, Sir John Macdonald, Premier of Canada, visited the Six Nation Indians' reservation near Brantford, and in the afternoon addressed the Indians at their council house. The proceedings were commenced by a speech by Chief George Buck, the fire-keeper of the great council, who welcomed Sir John Macdonald on behalf of the Six Nations, and said that they were prepared to hear what the great chieftain had to say.

Sir John Macdonald, on rising to reply, was greeted by the dignified councillors with loud applause. He said: Chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations: I must thank you most cordially for your kind reception of me to-day. I had long wished for an opportunity of visiting your band to see for myself the state in which Providence has placed you. I had always heard of the prosperity of the Six Nations, of their obedience to law and order, of the progress of education among them, and that as farmers, as good citizens, as good members of society and loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen, whom we all reverence, they were not excelled by any portion of Her Majesty's subjects in the Dominion of Canada. (Applause.) I have been travelling as you know, in the great west for some time. I have been through from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, and I have met your red brethren from one side of the continent to the other, and now I have the pleasure of finding myself among the loyal and true hearted band of the Six Nation Indians. (Applause.) I think it was two years ago that a deputation from the Six Nations was in Ottawa, and I then promised that deputation that I would do myself the honor and pleasure of visiting you here. Cir-

cumstances prevented me from fulfilling that promise until now, but here I am in fulfilment of that engagement. (Loud applause.) My first object in making that promise was that I might make the acquaintance of my friends, the chiefs and principal warriors on the reserve. It was my duty to do so from the office her Majesty has been pleased to confer upon me as Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs, and in pursuance of the solemn oath of office which I then took I have been trying to perform these duties to the best of my ability. While here I will be glad to hear from the council of the Nation if there is anything I can do.

TO FORWARD THEIR INTERESTS.

If anything has been neglected or omitted which ought to be attended to in order to forward these interests, it is my desire to remedy it and do all in my power to increase the development of civilization and prosperity. (Applause.) Another great object, and perhaps the particular object of my coming here to-day, is for the purpose of explaining to you, in my position as Superintendent General of Indian affairs, the effect that what is well known among you as the franchise bill, passed in 1885, will have upon the Indians. When the Government of which I am First Minister made up their minds to extend the franchise and give more people the right to vote, I introduced that bill in parliament as the head of the administration, and while that bill was being prepared I had to think of my duty to the whole population of the Dominion of Canada, who were fit to exercise the franchise and vote and who were unfit, and who had a moral and political right to have conferred upon them the privilege of voting. It was also my special duty to see that those who were particularly my wards, those who came under my charge in my capacity as Superintendent-General, should not be neglected; that they should be put on an equality with all other loyal subjects of her Majesty. You all know that every white man having the necessary property qualification, has the right to have a vote; and I was satisfied that the Indians of the older provinces were equal in intellect and education to the white and colored population that we were going to give the franchise to. (Applause.) Her Majesty, in her wide dominions, which extend to every portion of the world, has subjects of various nations; take India, for instance: there she has two hundred millions of subjects, and not one of these two hundred millions is a white man, but every one of these people are British subjects and if they came here to Canada would have a right to claim a vote if they had the necessary qualification. Her Majesty has colonies in Southern Africa, she has built a great dominion there; they are all black people there, but if any one of them came to Canada and had the necessary property qualification he would be entitled to vote. In other portions of the world she has brown subjects and yellow subjects and, except that by special legislation the Chinese race are prevented, they have all the right to vote if they came to Canada and had the necessary property. And I asked myself and I asked my colleagues and I asked parliament, is it right for every one of her majesty's subjects, no matter what their color, race or antecedents may be, if they come

here and have the necessary property,

TO HAVE A VOTE,

the right to stand in a position of political equality with every other British subject, yet the red men of Canada, the original owners of the soil, who were found by the white men when they came here as usurpers that they who have the same education and capacity, have taken the same stand amongst the civilized races of the world with all the other races of men that call her Majesty their most gracious Sovereign, that they in their own country should be considered inferior and placed as inferior by the law of the land to all those other races whether black or brown, and should be placed in such a position by the laws of their own country? I considered this a foul wrong to your great race, a wrong that might be remedied and remedied at once. (Loud applause.) It is admitted by everyone that you, for instance, in your reserve, stand in intellect, civilization, and education, in a position in equality with your white brethren who surround you, and why should you be stamped with inferiority, why should you not occupy the same position as free men sharing in the government of their own country and help to send to parliament the man who you think can best serve the interests of your great race. (Loud and continued applause.)

He then went on and further explained his reasons for giving the Indian the right to vote, our space not allowing us to give them.

Chief William Smith, replying on behalf of all the chiefs of the Six Nations, thanked Sir John A. Macdonald for his commendation of their progress in education and agriculture, and hoped they would continue to merit his good opinion of them. He assured Sir John that the patriotism and loyalty which had characterized the Six Nations on former occasions when they had fought side by side with the British against the invaders of our soil was still as strong among them as it was among their ancestors, and they are just as ready to-day if occasion required to go out to the front and take up arms with their brother Canadians and fight in defence of their common country. In conclusion he thanked Sir John for his explanation of the Franchise bill, and said that the matter had been discussed by them in the council on several occasions, and that now after hearing the great chieftain's words they would consider the question in the new light thus shed upon it and come to a decision regarding it.

AT THE PICNIC GROUNDS.

Sir John Macdonald and his party were next escorted by the chiefs to the picnic grounds, where a vast crowd of both Indians and white people were patiently awaiting him. They received him with thunders of applause, and it was some time before quiet was restored, the cheers being renewed again and again.

Addresses were then presented to him by the chiefs and warriors of the Conservative association in the constituency of the south riding of the county of Brant and of the Grand River reservation, the warriors of the Six Nations, and by the directors of the Six Nations' Agricultural Society.

The assemblage was then addressed by Mr. J. J. Hawkins, of Brantford, who was followed