

THE CANADA TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE,

DEVOTED TO

TEMPERANCE, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE AND NEWS.

VOL. X.

FEBRUARY 15, 1844.

No. 4.

Indian Tragedy.

A Michigan correspondent of the Rochester Democrat details the following tragedy in savage life. It is an Indian could write the story, he would head it "The Scathe of Fire Water."

In the spring of 1837, Nogisqua, an Indian of the Potawatamy tribe, residing in this vicinity, having pawned his gun and a part of his clothing, from time to time, to a man named John N——, for intoxicating drink, the trader proposed to the Indian that if he would sell him a certain cream colored poney, belonging to his squaw, and a present from her father, Bawbish a chief of their tribe, he would give up his gun and clothing, and let him have more strong drink from time to time until the price agreed upon was paid. To this, Nogisqua agreed, and privately gave up the poney, which was sent off farther West.

It appeared that his squaw, having some suspicion of what was going on, employed her younger brother to watch the result, and inform her; which it appears, he did. Upon the return of the Indian to his camp, partly intoxicated, his squaw, highly enraged, accused him of selling her poney. She became more and more enraged at his indifference about the affair, and at length declared she would kill him. He handed her his scalping knife, and drawing aside his hunting shirt and making his bosom bare, coolly exclaimed "*Kina poo*"—(kill away.) She instantly plunged it to its handle in the Indian's breast, which caused his death in a few minutes.

Her father, the Indian chief, being then absent some 20 or 30 miles east, a runner was despatched to inform him. Soon after, Mr. Fowle says he saw him pass by his house with a sad countenance for the place of the murder.

A heart-rending duty now developed upon the old chief. His word was to acquit or condemn his agonized daughter, according to Indian usage from immemorial. Horror reigned in the breast of her father. His daughter was the handsomest squaw of her tribe, and a darling child; and the wails of his relatives, together with his own sympathies, rolled upon the mind of the chief like the rushings of the mighty deep upon the lonely rock in the sweeping storm. The crisis in the chief's mind was at hand. He must judge. No other tribunal was within the Indian code of criminal justice. The performance of this duty required more than Roman firmness. He had nothing to do with the goddess of Mercy. The Great Spirit, and the blood of his murdered son-in-law, seemed to say, "Bawbish, according to the customs of your forefathers for ages past, now decide justly!"

The chief, like agonized Joseph, when he made himself known to his brethren, could contain himself no longer. His integrity as an Indian chief prevailed. He rolled his troubled eye for the last time upon his darling daughter, then upon his kindred, and upon a portion of his tribe that stood before him, and then to the Great Spirit for firmness. The storm of agony in the mind of the chief had passed away, and in deep sorrow he decided that his daughter ought to die by the hand of the nearest of kin to the murdered Indian, according to their custom for ages past. The person of the father, chief and judge then withdrew, with nothing but his integrity to console him—which the whole world beside could neither purchase nor bribe.

Upon inquiry it was decided that Jonese, a brother of

Nogisqua, then south, near Ft. Wayne, should execute the sentence. Accordingly, a runner was sent for him, and he came without delay. After hearing what was deemed his duty, the cry of a brother's blood from the ground on which he stood, strung every nerve, and gave tone to every muscle, for revenge.

There were white persons present at the execution, who relate it as follows:—The brother proceeded to the fatal Indian camp, and after sharpening his scalpingknife to his liking and performing several ceremonies customary with their tribe since their acquaintance with the Catholic missionaries, he took the victim by her long, flowing hair, and led her to the front of the camp. Then with his scalpingknife, he made an incision in her forehead, in the form of a cross, bared her bosom, and plunged the knife to the handle in her body. A shriek, a rush of blood, and a few dying groans and convulsions followed, and the fair form of the handsome squaw lay stiff in death.

From the time of the murder until the execution, the female relatives of the murderess never left her, the time being spent in lamentations over the young squaw. After the execution, both bodies were buried together in a sand bank, where they now lie, side by side. The Indian squaws became reconciled, and all seemed satisfied that no other atonement could have been satisfactory.

Since the events related, the remnant of the tribe has been removed to the great west, together with their chief, whom the strongest inducements the world could present, could not jostle out of the path of justice.

Thus perished, says my informant, the best Indian and handsomest squaw of their tribe—the victims of the whisky seller, who is far more guilty than either of the others of a moral wrong. My informant also says, that from first to last, there was manifested no desire to escape or evade the fate of the unfortunate young squaw.

Confessions of a Rum-seller.

There are few men who as they approach the farthest goal of life, do not occasionally review the scenes which they have witnessed in their earlier days. Life in the retrospect shows less of joy, but more of truth, than life in prospect. I feel that I now can more clearly see by what motives I have been actuated in my career, than I could have done at any earlier period of my life. True it is that light enough is given to us all, to enable us to walk in the path of rectitude, but our eyes are too blinded by prejudice or by interest, to suffer us to walk by that light.

Reader, a rum-seller speaks to you. My guilt is not the guilt of him who is himself a drunkard. Would to God that this were the extent of my guilt; for then, it seems to me, there might be for me the semblance of rest, at least in this world, although rest in eternity is denied to such by the declaration that "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." But no, the drunkard's guilt is, compared with mine, as the driven snow, purity itself; for I have through life been the maker of drunkards. Yes, reader, instead of living to benefit my race, to do good to my neighbours, I have lived a curse to all with whom I have dealt. Worse than the wild Arab of the desert, have I been, for while my hand has ever been raised against every man, I have not even had the excuse that every man's hand has been raised against me. Unsuspected, yea even honored