

PETER JACOBS'S HISTORY OF HIMSELF.

Twenty-eight years ago I was a Heathen, and so were all the tribes of Canada West. When I was a lad, I never heard an Indian pray, as Christians pray, to the Great Being. Our people believed in the existence of a Great Being, the Maker of all things; but we thought that God was so very far away, that no human voice could reach Him; and, indeed, we all believed that God did not meddle with the affairs of the children of men.

I, as well as the people of my tribe, were very cruel and wicked, because there was no fear of God in our heart, and no fear of punishment; but every man settles his own affairs by the force of his tomahawk; that is to say, by burying his tomahawk in the people's heads, and that ends all disputes. The Indians made their women do all their work, and the men did little or nothing, in heathen life. The women made the wigwam, and removed it when necessary, carrying it on their backs; and they chop the wood, and carry it home on their backs. They brought the venison home, when the deer is killed by their husband; they dress the skins for their husband's clothes; and make the coats, shirts, mocassins, which completes the Indian dress, as you now see in the picture. All was done by the women. Notwithstanding the poor women done all this, they got very little gratitude from their Heathen husbands.

I will just relate to you one of my prayers in Heathen life. "O God, the Sun, I beseech you to hear my prayer, and to direct my steps through the woods in that direction where the deer is feeding, that I may get near him, shoot him, and kill him, and have something to eat thereby." And this was all the prayer I ever made. There is nothing about soul-salvation in that prayer. Some pray for fish, or ducks, or rabbits, or whatever they wish to get.

At length the Missionary came, and began to preach about Christ, and how he died for me; but I first said, "No, that is the white man's God and white man's religion, and that God would not have anything to do with the Indians." But he assured me that God would save me, if I would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and, as a proof, he read portions of Scripture to me, again and again. And then, at last, I began to think that he must be right, and I must be wrong, because he read the "book of God" (as we call the Bible) to me. Then I began to pray, for the first time, in English. I only then knew a few words. I said, "O God, be merciful to me, poor Indian boy, great sinner." And the word of God had now got hold of my heart, but it made me feel very sick in my heart. I went to bed, and I could not sleep, for my thoughts trouble me very much. Then I would pray the words over and over again, and got more and more sick in my heart. I was very sorry that God could not understand my Ojibway. I thought God could only understand English; and when I was praying, tears came spontaneously from my eyes; and I could not understand this, because I had been taught from infancy never to weep. In this misery I passed three or four weeks. I then met with Peter Jones, who was converted a few months before me, and, to my surprise, I heard him return thanks, at meal, in Ojibway. This was quite enough for me. I now saw that God could understand me in my Ojibway, and therefore went far into the woods, and prayed, in the Ojibway tongue, to God, and say, "O God, I was so ignorant and blind, that I did not know that thou couldst understand my