

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

Toronto, June 14th, 1899.

The present is the twelfth annual meeting of this Society since its original organization under the name of "The Pioneer and Historical Association of the Province of Ontario." It is the second annual meeting under the new name, "The Ontario Historical Society"; and it is the first held by our association as an incorporated body.

It is interesting to compare and contrast our surroundings to-day with those of former annual gatherings. After successful meetings at Toronto, Brampton, and Hamilton, the old organization met two years ago in the old court house at Niagara. The glory of the ancient capital of Upper Canada has departed. Its beauty and historic attractions remain. Its sod covers the dust of the pioneers. Within easy distance of our place of meeting were Forts George, Mississauga, and Niagara, renowned in history. The barracks of Futler's Rangers across the common, the old parade ground, the landing place of the Loyalists, the presence of a large representation of the council of the Six Nation Indians, the lofty monument of General Brock on Queenston Heights, were impressive reminders of some of the most thrilling pages in the early history of our province.

A council of the Iroquois Indians was held during our session. In ancient days many a similar council deliberated under the walls of Fort Niagara or Fort George. Our Indian brothers wear gracefully enough the unpicturesque garb of the European; but, accustomed as we were to this every-day fact, it did not require Tammag Haggart's keen sense of humor to detect something incongruous when chiefs, whose names were borne centuries ago by Hiawatha's original associates, took part in the ritual and solemn debates of an Iroquois council appressed in Prince Albert coats, Derby or silk hats, and red neckties. Those of our members who were present will not readily forget the dignity of their procedure, the courtesy and decorum with which they conducted animated discussions.

A year ago we assembled at Ohsweken, in the council house of the Six Nations, and were favored with the presence of chiefs, warriors and women of the confederacy, to the number of two hundred and upwards. We were welcomed after the ancient ritual to their council fires. The address of welcome delivered on that occasion by the speaker of the council, Chief Dehkanenraneh (A. G.