

# THE INDIAN.

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Where are our Chiefs of old? Where our Heroes of mighty name?  
The fields of their battles are silent—scarce their mossy tombs remain!—OSSETAN.

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## LIFE OF JOHN SUNDAY.

SHAWUNDIAIS.

By Rev. John McLean, Fort McLeod, Alberta.

John Sunday was a Missisaga Indian. The Missisagas were a band of the great Ojibway Nation. In the days when the red men reigned supreme in Canada, a treaty was made between the Iroquois and Ojibways which was maintained for two centuries. Hunting parties of young men of both nations occasionally met and from words came blows until some of the Ojibway Chiefs were slain. The Iroquois tried to heal the wound thus made and for a time succeeded, but at last from some uncertain cause a deadly war began. During the progress of the war claims were set up by each nation to a vast extent of territory in Western Canada which had belonged to the Hurons.

Peace came slowly and not until both longed for the renewal of the ancient bonds of friendship. Wampum belts were exchanged, and in accordance with a symbol on one of the belts, they were no longer to be as allies, but brothers. That treaty now two centuries old has never been broken. When John Sunday in the strength of his manhood was engaged among his brethren as a missionary of the Gospel of Christ. The Missisagas on the River Credit Reservation were compelled to give up their lands. They appealed to the Iroquois on the Grand River Reservation, referring to the treaty and the wampum belts. The Six Nations listened to their request and granted them a large tract of land where they reside at the present day.

The Ojibway nation was one of the most populous on the American continent and was scattered over a wide expanse of territory. These people were to be found along the shores of the Mississippi and Red Rivers, around the chain of lakes leading from the haunts of civilization to Manitoba, Kewatin and the valley of the Saskatchewan, and in Michigan, Minnesota and Dakota. The man who thoroughly mastered the Ojibway language had a field opened up for him where he could employ the energies of a score of devoted Christian heroes, who might win trophies of grace that would adorn their crowns in after life with God. When these Indians entered a town they were in the habit of engaging in their begging dance. They began at one end of the town, danced from door to door, begging as they went. The string of wampum and the pipe of peace were the necessary accompaniments of the dance, as the precursors of friendship and benevolence. A peculiar custom of adoption by force prevailed in the tribe.

When a son or daughter died, the parents had a man to procure a substitute. This man acting as captain took some men with him, as if going to war. A black wampum belt was wrapped around the head of the prisoner, who when delivered to them was received with much affection in the place of the deceased. If the prisoner was a white man his head was shaved and painted. When any of the people were sick, dogs were slaughtered, the patient partook of the flesh, and the "medicine men" performed their incantations.

Their ideas of future state were sensual. To them heaven was a happy hunting ground.

As an instance of their burial customs, a chief who was buried with great honors may be given. He was dressed in his best suit of cloths, had his face painted red and was placed in a coffin. A wreath made of silver buckles encircled



JOHN SUNDAY.

(SHAWUNDIAS.)

ed his head, while apples were placed on one side and onions on the other. Wampum belts ornamented with silver decorations were wrapped around his neck and arms. His knife and flint, pipe and tobacco pouch lay by his hand, and beside the other were a loaf of bread, lead for making bullets, his powder horn and hunting pouch, a pair of shoes lay at his feet and beside them a hatchet, spoon, pot and bowl.

Sacrifices were made to the sun and moon, and prayer was sometimes made to the evil spirit that he might not hurt the petitioner.

John Sunday was born of this race about 1796, in the State of New York. His boyhood was spent amid the disadvantages arising from the peculiar habits of the Indians and the unholy influence of immoral white men. The Ojibways were industrious until the introduction of whiskey by the whites which induced them to live in idleness and vice. They built canoes that were so light that two men could carry the largest of

them and so strong were they that they could sail through the heaviest billows of our lakes and suffer no harm.

In the winter men roamed the forests in search of game. The furs were sold and the meat afforded them subsistence. When the spring opened, sugar making began in the woods and when the season was over and a visit had been made to the nearest town to dispose of the produce, the fishing season was near at hand.

The selling of the detestable fire-water transformed the industrious community into a lazy and filthy Indian camp. Then the wild revelry of drunken men, and the loud yells of debauched women filled the midnight air. Obscenity and all kinds of immorality prevailed. The children were neglected during these seasons of delerium and many were the tales of suffering that were told. John Sunday spent the years of boyhood and youth amid the darkness of heathenism. His parents were pagans, his companions were ignorant and degraded, and there was none to reach forth a helping hand or speak an inspiring word that would lead toward civilization or the enjoyment of the blessings of the religion of Christ.

The nation to which he belonged despite the influence of disease and immorality is still a very populous one. There are residing in the province of Ontario nearly eight hundred Missisagas. In the United States there are about ten thousand Ojibways, and in Canada about fourteen thousand, not including the Sauiteaux of the North West Territories who number a few thousands and speak the same language.

This notable Indian was one of that band known as the Bay of Quinte Indians. They roamed from the county of Northumberland to that of Leeds, making Kingston, Bath and Cellville their chief places of resort. John Sunday's Indian name was *Shawundias* which means the "sultry heat which the sun gives out in summer just before a fertilizing rain." He was a man possessing a very strong physical frame and rather above the medium height. There was nothing prepossessing in his appearance, and had not the Gospel touched his heart and changed his life, there would have been nothing to make concerning him. Previous to his conversion his sole education consisted in the training he received in studying nature as a child of the forest. He was very apt in telling stories of a ludicrous nature, and oftentimes did he entertain audiences of red men and pale faces with his humorous tales that threw them into convulsions of laughter. He was a successful hunter and a notorious drunkard in these early years. Naturally quiet and inoffensive, once roused the fire of his anger, and he became an untamed lion that none dared approach. His striking