

METHODIST MISSIONARY NOTICES,

APRIL, 1876.

REV. JOHN SUNDAY,

alias

“SHAH-WUN-DAIS.”

HERE is a man born of pagan parents, in the deep, dark forests of Canada—of parents who could neither read nor write; of course, without family records or literature of any kind, while the very traditions of their old men were rendered almost valueless by their dispersions and their frequent wanderings to and fro, not to speak of the besotment and frenzied state of their minds by the deadly “firewaters”; and yet, remarkable for the qualities of his mind, the energy of his character, his abilities and successes as an Indian preacher, his power of interesting an English-speaking audience, his labours abundant, and for his sterling excellencies as a Christian man.

CHIEF SHAH-WUN-DAIS.

John Sunday belonged to the Missisauga section of the great Ojibway nation, his own particular band having been wont to roam from the Gananoque River to the River Trent, and from the Bay of Quinte to the water-shed, which throws the northern streams into the great Ottawa River. Belleville, Bath, and Kingston were their frontier haunts. Relative to his age when he died, whether 80 or 90, there has been a discussion, which, till settled, will leave the time of his birth indeterminate. Without going into the argument *pro* and *con*, the writer inclines to the former opinion. He was converted in 1826, and he said to the senior Secretary of Missions, “Thirty years I lived in darkness;” adding the fifty years intervening between 1826 and ’76 to those, will make eighty, and throw his nativity back to 1796. Joined to the

Secretary’s recollection, the remembered young appearance and vigor of Sunday at the time of his conversion, render it probable that our brother must have confounded his narrated age at conversion with the time when he began to preach, or when he entered the Conference. This would leave him 18 or 19 years of age during the war of 1812-’15, in which he served his Majesty George III.

Shah-wun-dais was rather above the medium size, and without any marked external appearances; was of uncommon muscular strength and agility, and his determination was equal to his strength. Although usually good tempered, even to laughter-provoking drollery, yet, if provoked, especially when maddened by whiskey, the strongest and most resolute had occasion to flee before him.

He had none of the Indian’s na-