

The roads are in good order, as are the bridges, excepting two which have been condemned, and new structures are to be erected.

Liquor continues to find its way to Indians and to the reserve, notwithstanding all the efforts to prevent it and the perseverance of the Indian Temperance Societies in discouraging the use of fire water.

The rules and regulations, or by-law, adopted by the Mississaguas, having been approved by His Excellency the Governor General in Council, were recently acted upon by that Band in the appointment of officers, and in other arrangements, necessary to render them of service to the community.

Two interesting events occurred in August and October of last year, in which deputations of chiefs of the Six Nations were invited to be present.

The first was that of the centennial of United Empire Loyalists, at Niagara, and the second, the obsequies attending the reinterment of the remains of Red Jacket and other chiefs of the Senecas, in beautiful cemetery of Forest Lawn, near Buffalo.

In the ceremony attending both these events, the chiefs took a prominent part, receiving much attention and hospitality, the committee of the city of Buffalo paying all their expenses.

Ever mindful of their duty to their Great Mother the Queen, the Six Nations honored Her Majesty's birthday in their usual happy manner.

In conclusion, it is pleasing to convey the impression that the Six Nations and the Mississagua Indians in this Superintendency are in a progressive, improving condition.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. T. GILKINSON,

Visiting Superintendent & Commissioner.

THE INDIANS AND SPIRITUALISM.

Spiritualism has been investigated by scientific men, and the verdict seems to be that, amidst almost infinite fraud, there is a grain of truth: that a force or a class of forces exists with which as yet we are imperfectly acquainted. This judgement it is not our intention just now to discuss. It is well to point out, however, that spirit rapping flourished on this continent long before the Fox girls discovered it. It is well known that the Indians believe in clairvoyance. Their medicine men undergo long fasts, and then profess to be able to look into the past and the future, and to describe occurrences going on at a remote distance. That they are acquainted with spirit-rapping is also certain. Father Arnaud, a Labrador missionary, whose evidence is quoted in "La Jongleuse," of Abbe Casgrain, the well known French-Canadian writer, declares that the Indian sorcerers in that region are able "by the force of their will" to move the tent of poles and hides in which they practice their art, and that the tent responds by raps or by leaps to the questions which they put to it. He also states that they possess surprising magnetizers. Nearly all the old missionaries and many of the best informed ones of the day testify to the extraordinary feats performed by these Indian spiritualists. The Rev. Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby), in his

history of the Objibbeways, describes a visit he paid to a jeshukon or conjuring tent during a seance. The sorcerer was inside chanting a song to the spirit with which he desired to converse, when all at once the jeshukon "began to shake as if filled with wind." Mr. Jones lay outside listening, and "heard muttering talk of "one of the familiar spirits." Four or five spirits came upon the scene, but a friend of Mr. Jones, who was lying beside him, began to pray to God to have mercy on the deluded medicine-man and "that very instant the jeshukon ceased shaking and the muttering talk stopped." This reads surprisingly like those pious stories concerning the confounding of the devil by means of the sign of the Cross which are found in such profusion in mediæval church literature, but Mr. Jones tells it for truth. Mr. McColl, the excellent inspector of Indian agencies in the North-West, states in one of his official reports that, after a prolonged feast, the conjurer or medium enters the tent, and "immediately the "breath of the spirits approaching begins to sway "it, and continues to increase its movements "until the first spirit enters, when a noise is heard "as if something heavy had fallen upon the "ground." Visitors then ask the spirits, through the medium, about the illness of friends or concerning any other pressing matter, and the spirits reply, muttering to the medium, who shouts the answer to his customers outside. Archbishop Tache, in one of his books on the North-West, says he finds it very difficult to form an opinion on the subject. He thinks that as a general thing the sorcers are simply clever imposters, but in certain cases which have come under his notice, he has been tempted to ascribe the success of the medium to some occult force. This in the main is the conclusion which many scientists have reached respecting the genuine phenomena of modern spiritualism.

The Indian medicine-man not only called up the spirits, but practiced poisoning, the medicine men in some tribes being simply professional killers. No doubt like the practisers of herbal magic amongst the Hebrews and other people, their business in the first instance was merely to dispel sickness, tell fortunes, and so forth; but it soon developed into a murderous occupation, as in France, where the practice of administering magical potions led to an epidemic of poisoning with which the infamous name of Brinvilliers is associated; or as in the United States, where many of the so-called female mediums are said to dispense a certain class of drugs for a purpose which it is not necessary to name. Modern spiritualism, in fact, appears to be simply a revival of the art of necromancy, of appealing to the spirits of the dead, which is practised to-day, as we have seen, by the Indians, which was known to King Saul and the Witch of Endor, and which must have existed amongst men from the earliest dawn of life, if Herbert Spencer's hypothesis that ancestor-worship was the first religion be true. Nevertheless it appears to be reasonably possible, or at all events not demonstrably impossible, that apart from all the fraud, imposture and wickedness employed in producing the phenomena, there may be a force or agency at work scarcely dreamt of as yet in our philosophy.—Mail.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN JOSEPH BRANT.

(THAYENDANAGEA)

BY KE-CHE-AH-GAH-ME-QUA.

That the Rev. Mr. Wheelock be desired to fit out David Fowler, an Indian youth, to accompany Mr. Sampson Occom, going on a mission to the Oneidees, that said David be supported on said mission for a term not exceeding four months, and that he endeavor, on his return, to bring with him a number of boys not exceeding three, to be kept under Mr. Wheelock's care and instruction, and that £20 be put into Mr. Wheelock's hands to carry this design into execution, and that when said sum be expended, he advise the Treasurer of it and send his accounts for allowance.

"Pursuant to this vote I clothed and furnished said David with Horse and Money for his long Tour into the wilderness, which he set out on June 10th, in company with Mr. Occom, by the way of New York; in which journey he rode above a thousand miles, and by the Advice, Direction and Assistance of Sir W. Johnson, obtained three Boys of the Mohawk Nation, who were willing to leave their friends and country and come among Strangers of another Language and quite another manner of Living, and where, perhaps, no one of their Nation then living had ever been; and among a People of whom their Nation have been of a long time inclined to entertain Jealousies. Their names were Joseph, Neyges, and Center. They arrived here August 1st, 1761, but had so much Caution in the extraordinary Enterprise, that they brought each of them an Horse from their own Country. Two of them were but little better than naked, and could not speak a word of English. The other being of a Family of Distinction, was considerably clothed, Indian-fashion, and could speak a few words of English. Joseph, accompanied by Mr. Kirtland, who was learning the Mohawk language of him, returned home Nov'r 4th, and back again on the 27th inst, bringing two Mohawk lads with them viz: Moses and Johannes, by whom Sir Wm. Johnson informed me that he expected to be able to send the Rest when they came in from hunting.

Sir W. Johnson writes in 1761 to the Rev. E. Wheelock:—

FORT JOHNSON, Nov. 17, 1761.

REVEREND SIR,—

* * * I am pleased to find ye Lads I sent have merited your good opinion of them. I expect they will return, and hope will make such progress in the English Language, and their Learning, as may prove to your satisfaction and the benefit of the Indians, who are really much to be pitied. * * * I have given in charge to Joseph (Brant) to speak in my name to any good boys he may see, and encourage 'em to except the generous offer now made them, which he promised to do, and return as soon as possible, and that without horses.

(Signed,)

WM. JOHNSON.

The other letters concerning this time are of later date,—

Extract from Mr. Smith's letter to Sir W. Johnson, dated Lebanon, Jan. 18th, 1761.