

## PETER JONES.

## KAH-KE-WA-QUO-NA-BY.

By Rev. John McLean, Missionary to the Blood Indians at Fort McLeod.

Continued.

Such was the desire of many for the truth, that they journeyed long distances, hunting and fishing by the way, that they might hear for themselves the great things that God was doing for his own. Solitary and silent the Indian has travelled through the woods, over very bad roads, bearing a heavy pack on his back, to reach the homes of the Christian Indians, that from their lips he might learn the ways of peace. Notable conversions occurred among the people, medicine-men forsook their incantations and magical arts, and sat as learners at the feet of the Christian missionary. There were many strange and stirring scenes witnessed at the Indian religious services. An Indian camp was visited. An old Indian named Johnson stepped forward and said: "Brother, we thank you for visiting us to tell us the great words of the Good Spirit. Brother, we want you to tell us what we must do to serve the Great Spirit, for we are as yet very weak and ignorant. All these young men have been trying to keep the good words you told them last winter, and not one of them will taste or smell *Skootawahpoooh*. Brother, we like to pray to the Great Spirit, and to be taught the good way, and as a token of our sincerity we cast in our mites." He handed to the missionary half a dollar, all the others following his example, until the sum amounted to nearly eight dollars. Many similar examples might be given of the desire manifested by the red race for the Gospel, and their genuine anxiety for the spread of religion among their benighted brethren.

The power of the Gospel transformed the filthy and indolent into cleanly and industrious members of society. The Christian teachers went out into the field and taught the Indians how to toil. In a short time the wandering and lazy community assumed a different aspect. The people became frugal and energetic, and it was a pleasure to witness their efforts in seeking to be independent, comfortable and useful.

Skilled mechanics were hired to teach the men and women useful arts. The Indians at Sauguen Island made in two weeks, one hundred and seventy-two axe handles, six scoop shovels, fifty-seven ladles, four trays, forty-four broom handles, and four hundred and fifteen brooms.

Peter Jones took the census of his own people, with the following results:

Population, 226, as follows: Men, 64; women 74; children, 88. Houses, 30; lands under cultivation, 61 acres. Wheat, 65 bushels; oats, 22 bushels; Indian corn, 1,045 bushels; onions, 9 bushels; beets and carrots, 16 bushels; cabbages 670 heads; pumpkins, 30 cart-loads. Cows, 27; oxen, 18; horses, 11; hogs, 122. Ploughs, 4; one wagon and one harrow. Births during the year, 17; marriages, 2; deaths, 19; baptisms, 40. Church members, 132.

These Indians a short time previous to the taking of this census, owned nothing but some

filthy blankets, a few old guns, and a motley band of wild and emaciated dogs.

Before the Indians embraced Christianity, they gave themselves up, soul and body, to the vices of their white neighbors, being chiefly influenced by the use of intoxicating liquors. Their lives were changed as the result of heart-purity, obtained by locking unto God. The songs of drunken revelry were exchanged for the nobler songs of Zion. Their souls inspired by the Spirit Divine longed for holiness and a deeper knowledge of divine things.

At a love feast an Indian said: "I have overcome, by the help of Jesus, my worst enemy, whiskey, so that I have no more desire for it. I have also overcome lying, speaking bad words, and hatred: I now love all my brothers and sisters, and hope we shall see each other in our Great Father's house above."

At the annual Government payments, the Indians invariably indulged in liquor, and would sell all the presents that they had received to obtain it, but the Gospel changed this state of things, until we have it recorded, that at these gatherings, not a drunken Indian was to be seen. The love and peace that they enjoyed through obeying the divine teachings, induced many of them to become the messengers of the glad tidings to their pagan brothers.

Bands of them accompanied the missionaries on their visits to distant tribes, to bear testimony to the power of religion to grant them moral purity and spiritual life. Some of them acted as preachers of righteousness and rejoiced in telling the story of salvation through Christ.

In 1832, only a few years after the Gospel had been preached to themselves, there were nearly one dozen native preachers, as the result of the labors of Peter Jones and his white brethren. Happy indeed were the people to listen to such glorious principles and clear testimonies in their own language. Freed from the inconveniences and many difficulties attending the use of an interpreter, the living word came with a power to their hearts and consciences. The converts gave freely of their substance to help send the Gospel to their brethren. Many of them gave the widow's two mites, all they had.

The wigwams became palaces to the Christian Indians, where they could meet together and hold converse with the Great King. The medicine man ceased to shake his rattle in the presence of death, for the dying saints had strength sufficient and holy consolations that sustained them in the valley of the shadow, and they passed away with songs divine upon their lips, to be "forever with the Lord."

Hundreds of the Indians rejoiced in salvation through faith, and whole tribes forsook their native religion and all the immorality they had so long practised and became useful members of society and an honour to the church of their choice. During the first eight years of missionary labour among the Indians, nearly two thousand were baptized. In 1828, there were in connection with the Methodist Church in the province ten Indian stations, twelve schools, about three hundred scholars and eight hundred members of the church. Up to that time nearly one thousand two hundred had been baptized. Truly the work had not been in vain,

The Rev. Wm. Case urged Peter Jones to translate the Lord's Prayer into Ojibway, and by so doing marked out a path, in which during his career was to make him eminently useful. He translated the Apostles' Creed, prepared an Indian Spelling Book, an Indian Wesleyan Hymn Book, an Indian Dictionary, wrote a history of the Ojibway Indians, and translated extensively the Scriptures. The Indian Spelling Book was printed in Toronto. He examined the Mohawk translation of Luke's Gospel by G. Hill and found it to contain some errors, which were corrected. The Young Men's Bible Society of New York bore the expenses of printing the Mohawk translation of the Gospel of Mark. The Indian Wesleyan Hymn Book was printed in New York in 1826, and great was the delight of the Indians when they received it. He spent some time in fasting and prayer before he began translating the New Testament. On Christmas Day, 1829, he read to his Indians the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, and explained it. This was the first chapter that they had heard read in their own tongue. His Excellency, Sir John Colborne, said in an interview, that he would be most happy to have the translations of the Scriptures printed at the Government press in Toronto. Sir John ordered two thousand copies of the first seven chapters of Matthew to be printed. The English and Indian were on opposite pages. The appearance of the translation incited the young people to learn to read, that they might be able to study the Scriptures for themselves. The Toronto Bible Society had also offered to bear the expense of this translation being printed, but he accepted Sir John Colborne's generous offer.

This Society urged him to continue translating the New Testament, and all the expenses would be paid. Subsequently the Toronto Auxiliary Bible Society printed one thousand copies of his translation of Matthew. He was assisted in his translations by his brother, John Jones. The printed translation of the seven chapters of Matthew was said by competent authority to be "as perfect as the Chippeway language would admit." The British and Foreign Bible Society was anxious to have him translate the Bible into the Chippeway tongue. Mr. Case urged him to continue the work of translating and to pay special attention to the department of missionary labour. John Jones translated the Gospel of John, and Peter, that of Matthew. During his trip to England, while crossing the ocean, he was busy revising his brother's translation of John, which he afterwards transcribed, and the Society published one thousand copies of it. A copy of this he had the honour of presenting personally to King William IV. He continued the work of translating until the end of his life, and he had the inestimable joy of bequeathing the highest proofs of his affection for his people in the priceless gems of literature. He was enthusiastic in performing this labour, knowing the great benefits that would flow from it. In spite of his incessant travels and numerous appointments, he carried on this special work, and these remain as glowing testimonies of his zeal and ability, while the influence they still exert will continue as long as the eternal years.

(To be Continued.)