

CONVERTING INDIANS.

A Jesuit Priest's Opinion of the Red Men of Canada.

"Was it not very difficult to give them Christian principles? How did you begin?"

"It was all very simple," said the priest; "it had to be simple, for an Indian of eighteen is not above a white child of six years. It was hard work for them to learn to read their own tongue; but a few learned to read and sing from manuscript books written in the characters of our printed alphabet. As they are exceedingly fond of music, and liked our melodies far better than their own dull chants, they at once took to copying these hymns. Music led them on, till, finally, nearly all have learned to read their hymns and catechism now printed for them. They write a good many letters for me to carry from post to post. And in the woods they frequently give news and make appointments in the hunting-grounds by writing on birch bark, which they put into a split stick erected on some frequented route. This primitive postal service is quite reliable, and brings me news often from even the most remote families; and you would be surprised at the delicacy and strength of sentiment in some of those letters. Their earliest literature, so to speak, is geography, very accurate maps of their country drawn on birch bark to guide the first traders and missionaries; some of them are still preserved by the Hudson Bay Company, at Montreal. But to return to their conversion, their progress was comparatively easy after they became interested in the hymns."

"What do you try to teach them?" "Simply to read the hymns and catechism. Then our preaching is upon the most elemental duties and morality of Christians. They need nothing beyond this in their simple existence; in fact, they are with us so little, and have such slow minds, that it would be impracticable to do more. They can not count even beyond ten, excepting by additions to ten, as ten-one, ten-two, etc."

"Do you find any difficulty in governing them?"

"None whatever, if they keep away from the whites. They are very obedient, and they worship the missionary as veritably the representative of God. And we have to be doctor and magistrate as well as teacher and preacher to them. They take very easily the leading ideas of Christianity, and follow them pretty well; and they are very regular in their religious duties, even in the woods."

"But why don't you give them more of the material advantages of civilization, and extend their education more?" "That is scarcely practicable. They will not change their mode of life. The only way to help the Indian is to give him the simplest code of moral and religious conduct, make him feel the constant criticism of God even in his isolation, and then let him continue his natural life in the woods. They must be kept firmly under control, but only through kind and sympathetic relations, and through the influence of religious duties. I think that your Indians and every wild race could be governed peaceably by such means, instead of by armies and industrial civilization that they will not accept."

"The winter life of these Montagnais is essentially the same as that of their heathen forefathers. They all start for the woods in August in their canoes, loaded down with provisions, etc. They travel slowly up the various rivers of the coast in companies to the far interior; there each family leaves its companions as it reaches its hunting-ground, and sets up its lodge on its ancestral domain. They spend a month or more preparing snow-shoes, toboggans, etc., for winter; then, as navigation closes, they put up their canoes and begin the winter's hunt. The game is too small and scarce to allow more than a family or two to live in a given locality; so the arctic winter passes in dreary isolation.—C. H. Farnham, in Harper's Magazine.

The Bishop's False Teeth.

Many a good story has been told about the consternation and dismay produced by the sound of the Scotch bagpipes on uninitiated ears. They are said to have put to flight foes for whom a bayonet charge would have had no terrors. But the story told by Bishop Taylor about the effect which his movable teeth produced among the blacks in Africa seems to cast all the other yarns of this kind into the shade. Somehow his black brethren came to know that the good Bishop had false teeth, and one of them gently and treacherously broke the subject to him in conversation one day. Not wishing to be suspected of witchcraft, the Bishop told the children of the sunny South that in big America where he came from, when a man lost a leg, he could go and get a new one made. When his hair fell off he could buy a fresh supply, and so with teeth, when they dropped out or were pulled they could be replaced. "Then," said the Bishop, "I drew out my beautiful, white, clean porcelain set, and when they saw that you ought to have seen those darkies run and scream and gesticulate. One woman declared she had seen the wonder of the world, and was now content to die in peace."—Duffalo Courier.

A fond mother, in excusing the late hours kept by a favorite son, declared that "he had such an overplus of spirits that, not being able to exhaust them all in one night, he was forcibly driven to encroach upon the next morning to enable him properly to get through them."

A Back Number.

The truth of the old proverb, "Better late than never," appears to have been illustrated by a striking modern instance, according to an English exchange, which relates that ninety-seven years ago some person, now unknown by name, posted in Paris a number of The Gazette Universelle, directing it to "Monsieur X—," in Morges, Switzerland. It was the newspaper did not arrive at its destination until last month. It seems that The Gazette, which had been waiting for delivery ever since January, 1791, had got mixed up with a bundle of other newspapers, and was found, with its cover and address still intact, amidst a heap of rubbish in a garret. The finder conscientiously sent it to the Morges postmaster, by whom it was as conscientiously forwarded to the present representative of the X— family, still living at Morges. "So unique a specimen of postal integrity deserves to be exhibited in a postal museum, or would not be out of place among the curiosities in the newspaper museum at Aachen."—Chicago Herald.

Various Personal Peculiarities. Men betray their real characters in a thousand different ways. The professors of the art of delineating dispositions do so in various fashions. One artist will undertake to describe character from the examination of a photograph; another reads indications of tastes and feelings in handwriting; nay, an American savant has recently announced that much may be learned regarding a man by observing how he wears his boots. Every one has some small peculiarities which to the accurate observer may furnish a clew to his disposition. There have been manifold instances of strange and inconvenient resemblances between men leading to cases of "mistaken identity," and yet probably in every instance there was some trifling and overlooked personal trait which distinguished one from the other. If alike in features they differed in dispositions.—London Standard.

Origin of "Old Hickory." The story of how Gen. Andrew Jackson got the name of Old Hickory is again going the rounds, and will be new to some young readers. During the Creek war he had a bad cold, and his soldiers made for him a shelter of hickory bark. The next morning a tipsy soldier, not knowing who was under the bark, kicked it over. As the general, speechless with rage, struggled out of the ruins, the soldier yelled, "Hello, Old Hickory! Come out of your bark and take a drink!" When the soldiers saw Jackson shaking the bark from his uniform they gave three cheers for "Old Hickory," and the name stuck.—New York Sun.

A GENERAL TIE-UP of all the means of public conveyance in a large city, even for a few hours, during a strike of the employees, means a general paralysis of trade and industry for the time being, and is attended with an enormous aggregate loss to the community. How much more serious to the individual is the general tie-up of his system, known as constipation, and due to the strike of the most important organs for more prudent treatment and better care. If too long neglected, a torpid or sluggish liver will produce serious forms of liver and kidney diseases, malarial trouble and chronic dyspepsia. Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Purgative Pellets are a preventive and cure of these disorders. They are prompt, sure and effective, pleasant to take, and positively harmless.

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