

Rev. Thomas Cornelus.

The Rev. Thomas Cornelus was born on the Reservation of the Oneida Indians in the year 1809. He died at the same place Dec. 28, 1884. He was the son of one of the chiefs, a youth of rare promise and great integrity of character. His ideas of what religion is may be inferred from a remark he made when quite young, as he saw the inconsistent lives his people were living at this period: "Christians like other men; they get drunk, they swear, they do just as they want to, their religion all outside, all name."

By this we can see that early in life he had exalted views of what a religious life should be. In the year 1828 William Doxtler, a Mohawk Indian from Canada, visited the tribe. His soul was stirred at the great lack of vital piety on the Reservation and he commenced meetings, which were continued every evening for a year. Attracted by the earnest preaching and the spirit of God, nearly the whole tribe professed to experience a change of heart. The next year the tribe in council declared themselves Methodists.

Thomas Cornelus, then about eighteen or nineteen years of age, was one of the first converted in the great revival. He was soon licensed to preach and afterward was ordained an elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church, which office he filled with acceptability until his death. By his long, consistent Christian life he leaves an example worthy of imitation by all. He was constant in his labors, preaching to the people who were always glad to listen to his words. He preached in every reservation in this State. He believed in the necessity of repentance, a new heart and a holy life; he was very affable and pleasing in his address, making friends of all. He ceased preaching only when the infirmity of age compelled him to, but he was in his place of worship long after it became evident to all that death had marked him as his own. He died in Christian triumph, giving glory to the God he had loved and served so long and we bore his body to the last resting place of his people. He was a noble man, a grand representative of his nation and in his death the cause of Christianity sustains a great loss and the pastor loses a faithful co-worker for the Master. His noble Christian life and triumphant death stand forth as a monument of Christianity, towering above the mass of his people, honored and respected by all. Peace to his memory.

ELIAS ANDREWS.

Scrapbook
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