

CHAPTER VIII.

INDEPENDENT ORDER OF RED MEN.

EARLY FOUNDATION OF THE ORDER—VERNACULAR HABITS AND PECULIARITIES OF THE RED MEN PRESERVED—ORGANIZATION IN MUNCIE—DATE OF INSTITUTION—PLACE OF ORGANIZATION—SUBSEQUENT PLACES OF MEETING—RANK—GRAND COUNCIL OF SACHEMS—CHARTER MEMBERS—FIRST OFFICERS—PRESENT OFFICERS.

THE origin of this order dates back to a period commencing during the last decade of the fifteenth century, with the discovery of the American continent by Christopher Columbus, in October, 1492. One of the purposes for which the organization was consummated, appears to have been the preservation of the habits, peculiarities customs and vernacular of the native tribes as they were observed by the early discoverers of America. True, in the preservation of these customs, peculiarities and characteristics of the aboriginal inhabitants of this country, by the inauguration of this society—it was not contemplated that anything more than the most striking of their peculiarities should find emblematical representation here, discarding all others—organizing upon a strictly practical basis affording charity, accumulating revenues and dispensing the material elements which most redound to the benefit of the needy and the alleviation of the distresses of all who are lighted by the friendly glow of the council fires.

In Muncie, this benevolent order organized a wigwam on the twenty-sixth sun of the hot moon, G. S. D., 381, common era, June 26, 1873, by W. P. Berry, of Fort Wayne, Ind., who was made a special deputy for the purpose, by Daniel McDonald, Great Sachem of this State. The institution took place in the Odd Fellows' Hall, on the north side of East Main street, between Walnut and Mulberry. In this hall the order continued to hold its meetings until November 19, 1872, when it moved to the hall in the northeast corner of the opera house. Here the fraternity met and performed its mystic rites for a period of six years and a half, ending May 8, 1879, when, after having fitted up the present hall at an expense of \$500, and effecting a lease for five years, with Messrs. Adamson and Goddard, they established their wigwam there. This hall is located on the east side of Walnut street immediately north

of Jackson, and is one of the finest in the city. The order carries an insurance policy of \$300 on furniture and fittings. It has a membership of sixty-five, with a Widows' and Orphans' Fund of more than \$200, all safely loaned and a general fund of \$100, or more, which, also, is safely loaned.

In size and importance it ranks third among the benevolent orders of Muncie, being excelled only by the Masonic Fraternity and the Odd Fellows. The Great Council of the State was held here in August, 1877, in attendance upon which were representatives from the subordinate wigwams located in the principal towns of the State. At this Grand Convocation, the Odd Fellows kindly tendered them the use of their hall, which was gladly and fraternally accepted. The impression left by this vast assemblage of the bright lights of the order upon our people was that of profound regard for the fraternity in its efforts to alleviate the distresses and administer to the wants of a common humanity. The original, or charter members were John R. Ervin, John Kirk, Harry E. Gatterell, William Glenn, J. C. Worcester, James N. Templer, Frank Ellis, Milton James and E. C. Kennedy. The first officers were:

William Glenn, Sachem; James N. Templer, Senior Sagamore; John C. Worcester, Junior Sagamore; Harry E. Gatterell, Chief of Records; John R. Ervin, Keeper of Wampum; E. C. Kennedy, Prophet. The present officers are:

Charles Gass, Sachem; George Dick, Senior Sagamore; David Wilkins, Junior Sagamore; J. F. Sanders, Chief of Records; George F. Leager, Keeper of Wampum; W. W. Berry, Prophet.

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