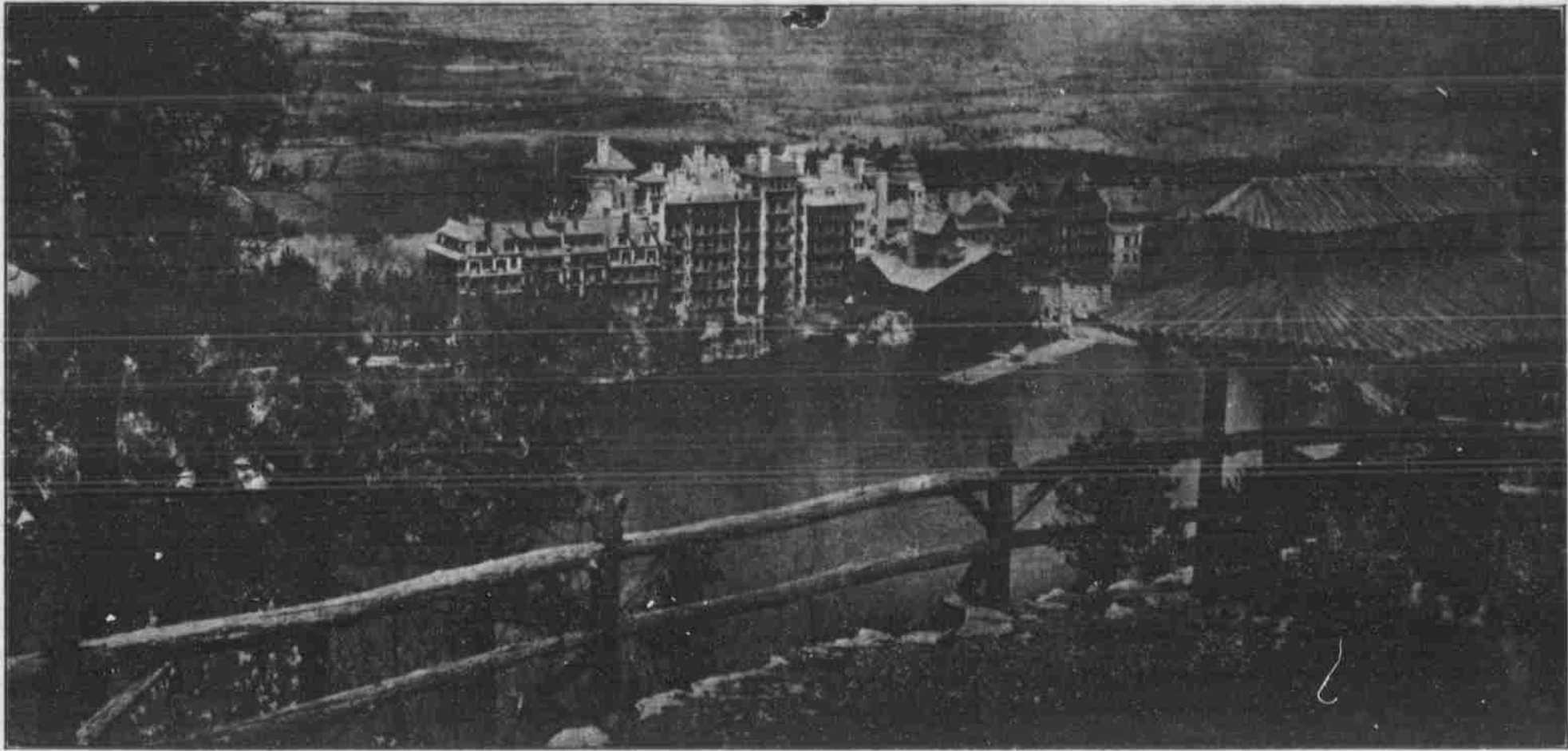


The Lake Mohonk Indian Conference

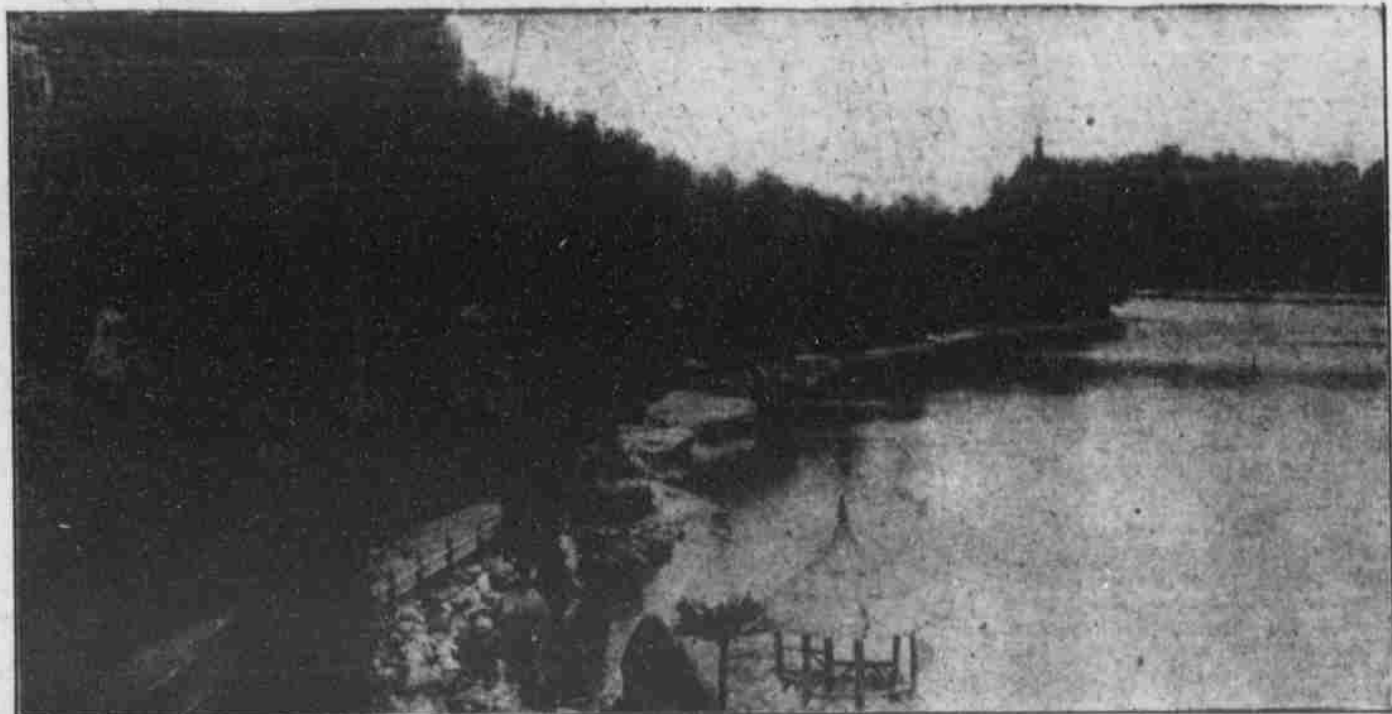


LAKE MOHONK HOUSE, WHERE THE CONFERENCES ASSEMBLE.

UNIQUE alike in its natural setting, in its acquired features and in the purpose to which it is dedicated is Lake Mohonk, the famous summer resort among the Catskills. In each of these respects it stands quite alone and unrivalled in America if not in the world. Perched on a mountain summit amid towering battlements of rock and frowning precipices, beside a tiny lake of the clearest and coldest water, the place has not a little resemblance to some of the lofty castles to be seen along the Rhine land in other parts of the Old World. The likeness to a baronial fortress of the old time is borne out in some degree by the appearance of the Mohonk hostelry itself, which stretches along the one open shore of the lake, under the shadow of the cliffs, in a series of towers, pinnacles and archways, strongly suggestive of the scenes and times made familiar in romance and chivalry. It is, indeed, a truly magnificent and lordly domain over which the owners of Lake Mohonk hold their firm and strong yet peaceful and gentle sway. From the 300 acres immediately about the lake which came into Mr. Albert K. Smiley's possession in 1869, the estate has gradually grown from year to year until it comprises a tract of over 4,000 acres, lying in five different townships and embracing the whole region along the crest of the mountain for a space six miles in length by a mile in width. And in this little mountain realm the utmost care has been taken to preserve every natural charm and its wild, rugged and picturesque scenery has been in nowise marred by the many miles of fine walks and broad, smooth roadways that have made every point accessible with comfort, ease and safety.

From Sky Top, the highest peak in the Mohonk estate, towering 300 feet above the lake, the vision sweeps over as noble and magnificent a range of scenery of lofty mountains and lovely valleys as may be seen in any land under the sun. To the west lies the rich and fertile farm lands of the Rondout valley and beyond them the Catskills, rich in romantic and historic memories. Directly below the peaks of Mohonk lie the meadows and orchards of the Walkkill valley, with the Dutch settlement of New Palts nestling among its trees and gardens, and miles beyond these, still eastward, the Highlands of the Hudson. And in those rare days, when the sky is soft and clear, the pilgrim in this favored land looking out from the heights of Sky Top may catch glimpses of the Berkshire-hills of western Massachusetts, of Vermont's verdant mountains and sometimes may extend his vision even to the ranges of the Alleghenies beyond the Pennsylvania border.

Two conferences have been held at Lake Mohonk each year for some years past which are quite as unique and notable in their way as the place itself. Both owe their inception to Mr. Albert K. Smiley and are a natural outgrowth of the spirit and purpose which dominate the life and control the conduct of this peace-loving, large-hearted and broad-minded Quaker philanthropist and educator. One of these conferences held each year in May is devoted to the cause of international arbitration, bringing hither at each session for the discussion of that vital and important subject some 200 or 300 of the most eminent educators, publicists, diplomats and statesmen of the Old World and the New. Prac-

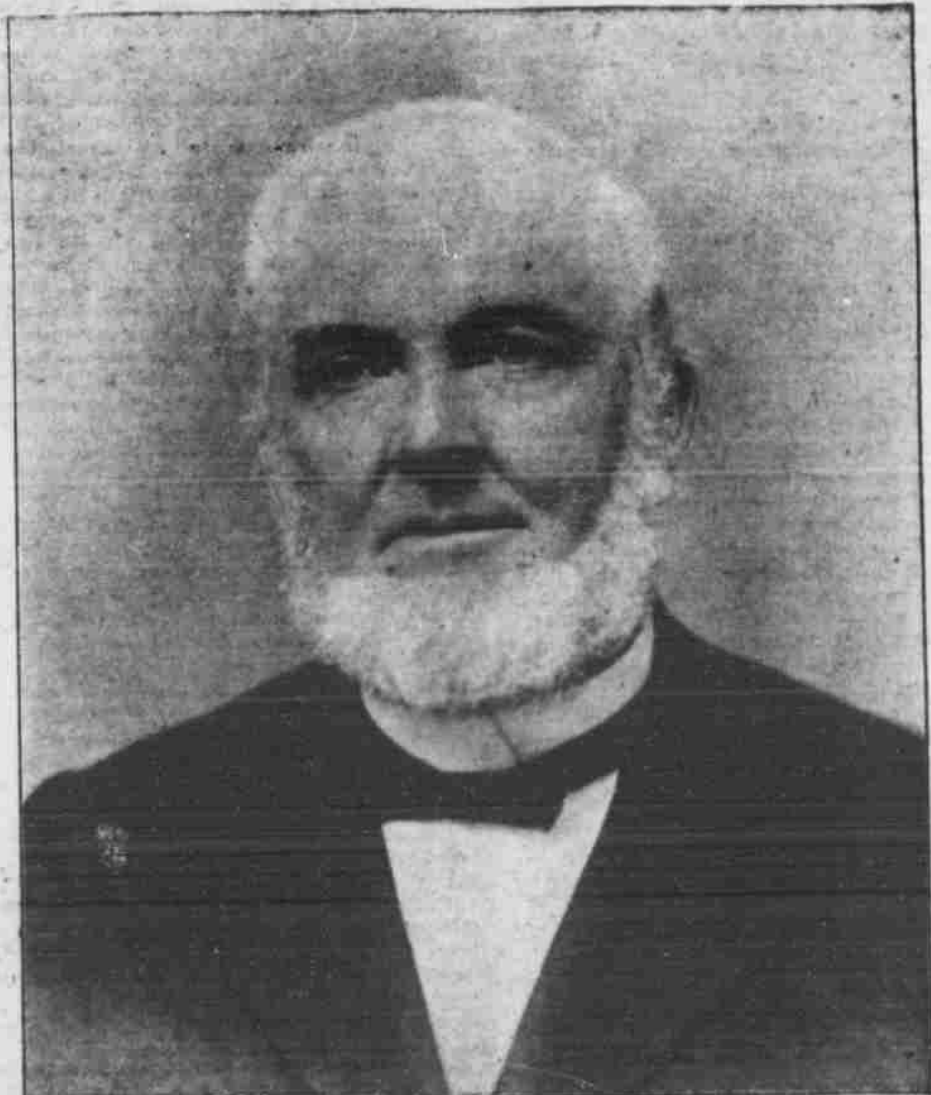


LAKE SHORE ROAD, MOHONK, N. Y.

tically a whole week is given up to the sessions of this arbitration conference, all of the members of which are here by special invitation of Mr. Smiley and are entertained as his personal guests.

Another conference held under similar auspices and conditions closes the Mohonk season in October, this in the interest of the Indians. The Indian conference is much the older of the two, the first session having been held in October, 1881. This Indian conference grew out of Mr. Smiley's personal interest in the welfare of the aborigines, to the promotion of which he has long been identified in other ways. He has been a member of the Board of Indian Commissioners since 1879, under appointment from President Hayes; he has been intrusted by the government with several important commissions connected with the Indian service. In 1889 he was chairman of a commission charged with the selection of a reservation for the Mission Indians of southern California. His experience and observation in connection with these duties convinced Mr. Smiley of the need of more coherency, system and union in the work for the Indians, and for this purpose he has called together year by year for twenty successive years these assemblies of men and women, carefully chosen because of their special knowledge and intelligent interest in the Indian affairs. These conferences Mr. Smiley declared at the first session will be held "until every Indian has his rights."

The late General Clinton B. Fisk presided over the first conference, which brought together between fifty and sixty persons prominent in the Indian service. General Fisk continued as the presiding officer of these gatherings until his death in 1890, since which time the chair has been occupied, until 1902, by Dr. Merrill Edwards Gates, formerly president of Amherst college and latterly the efficient secretary of the Board of Indian Commissioners. At



ALBERT W. SMILEY.

(Continued on Page Eleven.)