

would paddle in the country and villages about, getting in return sometimes cash, sometimes food or clothing. Though they would at times get rather wild with whiskey, they were on the whole inoffensive, and seldom, if ever, dishonest. White people frequently visited their encampments, often with propitiatory gifts, and were never received with worse than stolid indifference, or better than a quiet smile or a gurgle of delight. They were regarded with considerable awe by the younger portion of the community, who had heard or read of the bloody deeds their race had done. They were treated with good natured indulgence by the older people, as being, after all, the rightful, or at any rate, the original owners of the land.

But what if the white man had not crossed the great water? In all probability the name and memory of the Indian tribes, whose descendants we have with us still, comparatively civilized, on their reserves, would long ere now have vanished from the continent. As Parkman tersely phrases it, the Indian in his tribal relations and local haunts, was "mutable as the wind." One tribe destroyed or absorbed or displaced another with bewildering facility. Had it not been for contact with the Europeans the process of annihilation would have been kept up for an indefinite length of time. If the aborigines of this continent are a moribund race, and if they are to become one day extinct, they are at least dying a slower death than the tribes that at present exist would have done if the white man had not appeared on the scene. There is some solace in that thought.

Two families of tribes as far as we know had to do with this part of the country. These were the Algonquins and the Huron-Iroquois. These were radically different in language, their tongues differing from each other as much, say, as the Gaelic does from the English. Within, the tribes differed in dialect as, for example, Cockney does from lowland Scotch. The latter family had much the larger brains, larger, in fact, than any other aboriginal race of America, and by dint of their intelligence and energy of character would possibly have established their ascendancy over the whole northern continent if the whites had not arrested them.

To the Algonquin family belonged the Mobicans, the Abenakis, the Delawares, the Crees, the Ojibwas, and many other well known tribes, of some of which the memory and the name alone remain. They were spread over a great part of the Atlantic slope from Labrador to Virginia, and reached as far westward as the Rocky Mountains. The Ojibwa tribe was the branch that had most to do with Ontario. The name assumed several different forms, Chippewa being the one now most met with it. Mississaugas were a sub-tribe of the Ojibwas. Nearly three hundred years ago Jesuit missionaries found the Mississaugas near the mouth of the river which now bears their name.

The chief divisions of the Huron-Iroquois family, though closely allied in race, were deadly enemies, as kinsmen sometimes are. The Hurons or Wyandots lived in villages (there were as many as thirty-