

The old Indian did not answer for several minutes, and then said in a hoarse, hollow tone—

“What should the red man know of the offspring of his mortal enemies? What! but to appoint to the sword such as are for the sword; and to cast such as are for the burning, into the flame.”

Father Daille replied firmly, “Hath the Great Spirit, whom you call good, any delight in the blood of babes? The God whom we worship hath declared that he hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.”

“Go your way,” said the hoary prophet, and teach white men not to swear falsely, and not to steal from the forest children the lands which their fathers gave. Go, and when thou hast taught them these things, come tell me the words of thy God, and I will hear them. The Indian hath had no rest since the eye of the pale race looked upon him. He asks only to hunt in his own woods, to guide his canoe over his own waters, as he had done from the beginning. But he flies, and you pursue him, until he hath no place ever to spread out his blanket. If he hide in the grave, even there his bones are found and cast out. Why say ye that your God hath made all men brethren? Your words and your ways are at war, like the flame and the waters. One rises up but the other comes down and quenches it.”

The meek Christian answered, “All white men obey not the truth. Sometimes when they desire to do good, sin overtakes them, and their hearts are found weak. So are some of your red men evil. Yet we do not condemn thy Great Spirit because some of his followers are false.”

While he was speaking to the stern prophet, St Maur perceived a man of noble countenance approaching, who, from his coronet of white feathers, and the train that surrounded him, appeared as a monarch.

He drew near, and said, “Thou seest, king of the red men, a father in pursuit of his babes. He trusts himself fearlessly among your people, for he has heard that they will

not harm the stranger in distress. In our native land the king who should have sheltered us, sought to tear from us the comforts of our religion. We could not forsake the God of our fathers, so we gave up the dear land of our birth. The ocean waves brought us to this new world. We seek to take the hand of our red brethren; for we are a peaceful race, pure from the blood of all men. Of my own kindred none inhabit this wilderness save two little buds of a stem that lies buried in the earth. Last night sadness was on my sleepless pillow, because I found them not! If thou knowest, O king, where thy people have concealed them, I pray thee to restore them unto me. So shall the Great Spirit shed his dew upon thy tender plants, and put strength into thy heart when it weigheth down heavily in thy bosom.”

The Indian monarch surveyed the speaker with a keen eye, and inquired, “Knowest thou this brow? Look in my eyes, and answer me—is their glance that of a stranger? St. Maur, regarding him attentively, replied, “I have no knowledge of thy countenance save what this hour bringeth to me.”

“The white man,” he answered, “seeth not like the Indian, through the disguise of garments. Where your ploughs wounded the bosom of the earth, I have stood and watched your people at their toil. There was no coronet upon my brow; but I was a king, and they knew it not. I saw among them neither pride nor violence. I came as a foe, but I returned a friend! To my people I said, Do these men no harm—they are not of the bands who waste us. The prophet of the Great Spirit rebuked me. He said that the shade of my father thirsted for the blood of white men.—Again I sought the spot where thy brethren dwell. And thou knowest not this brow! I could read thine at midnight, if but a single star trembled through the thick cloud. My ear would have known thy voice, though the loud storm was abroad with its thunders. I came to thy home hungry, and found bread; beaten by the tempest, and