

AN INDIAN'S JUDGMENT
ON MODERN CIVILIZATION.

Civilization, even in Christian and Protestant countries, is far from having attained its advancement to perfection. And various anomalies exist in the most improved nations, which surprise savages. A striking illustration of this fact we find in the judgment of Brault, the celebrated American Indian, who had been favored with an education at Dartmouth College. In reply to the inquiries of a gentleman, of European descent, he is believed to have written the following letter regarding his view of our various customs in civilized society. The document is a rare literary curiosity; but it is especially remarkable, as being full of just and weighty observations by one partially emancipated from the degradation of savage life, after having taken a limited, but shrewd, survey of the condition of mankind, in its utmost improvement, in the United States and in Europe:—

MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter came safe to hand. To give entire satisfaction, I must, I perceive, enter into the discussion of a subject on which I have often thought. My thoughts were my own, and being so different from the ideas entertained among your people, I should certainly have carried them with me to the grave, had I not received your obliging favour.

You ask me, then, whether, in my opinion, civilization is favourable to human happiness? In answer to the question, it may be answered, that there are degrees of civilization, from cannibals to the most polite of European nations. The question is not, then, whether a degree of refinement is not conducive to happiness, but whether you, or the natives of this land, have obtained this happy medium. On this subject we are at present, I presume, of very different opinions. You will, however, allow me, in some respects, to have had the advantage of you in forming my sentiments.

I was, sir, born of Indian parents, and lived while a child among those whom you are pleased to call savages. I was afterwards sent to live among the white people, and educated at one of your schools; since which period I have been honored much before my deserts, by an acquaintance with a number of principal characters, both in Europe and America. After all this experience, and after every exertion to divest myself of prejudice I am obliged to give my opinion in favour of my own people.

I will now, as much as I am able, collect together and set before you some of the reasons that have influenced my judgement on the subject now before us. In the government you call civilized, the happiness of the people is constantly sacrificed to the splendour of empire.—Hence, your codes of criminal laws have had their origin; from hence your dungeons and prisons.

I will not enlarge on an idea so singular in civilized life, and perhaps disagreeable to you; I will only observe, that among us we have no prisons—we have no pompous parade of courts—we have no written laws, and yet judges are as highly revered among us as they are among you, and their decisions as much regarded. Property, to say the least, is as well guarded, and crimes are as impartially punished. We have among us no splendid villians above the control of our laws. Daring wickedness is here never suffered to triumph over helpless innocence; the estates of widows and orphans are never devoured by enterprising sharpers. In a word, we have no robbery under the colour of law. No person among us desires any other reward for performing a brave or worthy action, than the consciousness of having served his nation. Our wise men are called "fathers;" they truly sustain that character; they are always accessible,

I will not say to the meanest of our people, for we have none mean but such as render themselves so by their vices.

The palaces and prisons among you form a most dreadful contrast. Go to the former places, and you will see, perhaps, a deformed piece of earth assuming airs that become none but the Great Spirit above; go to one of your prisons—here description utterly fails. Kill them if you please—kill them, too, by torture; but let the torture last no longer than a day. Those you call "savages" relent; the most furious of our tormentors exhausts his rage in a few hours, and despatches the unhappy victim with a sudden stroke. Perhaps it is eligible that incorrigible offenders should sometimes be cut off. Let it be done in a way that is not degrading to human nature; let such unhappy men have an opportunity, by the fortitude of their death, of making an atonement, in some measure, for the crimes they have committed during their lives.

But, for what are many of your prisoners confined? For debt. Astonishing! And will you ever again call the Indian nation, "cruel?" Liberty, to a rational creature as much exceeds property as the light of the sun does the most twinkling star. But you put them on a level, to the everlasting disgrace of civilization.

I knew, while I lived among the white people, many of the most amiable contract debts, and I dare say with the best intentions. Both parties, at the time of contract, expect to find their advantage. The debtor, we will suppose, by a train of unavoidable misfortunes, fails; here is no crime, nor even fault; and yet your laws put it in the power of the creditor to throw the debtor into prison, and confine him there for life!—a punishment worse than death to a brave man; and I seriously declare, I had rather die by the most severe tortures ever inflicted on the continent, than languish in one of your prisons for a single year!

Great Spirit of the Universe! And do you call yourselves Christians? Does, then, the religion of him whom you call your Saviour inspire the spirit, and lead to these practices? Surely not! It is recorded of him that "a bruised reed he never broke." Cease, then, to call yourselves "Christians," lest you publish to the world your hypocrisy. Cease, too, to call other nations "savage," when you are ten-fold more the children of cruelty than they!

A CURIOSITY OF LITERATURE.

MAIDSTONE JAIL, March—, 18—

DEAR MOTHER—It is with a broken heart I inform you that my death warrant arrived last night. I hoped I should have got off for transportation; but that was not to be. Your poor son Jack is to be hung on Monday morning. Pray dear mother, come over and see me once before I die. My heart is too full to say any more. From your poor broken-hearted son.

JOHN—.

CATHAM, March—, 18—.

DEAR SON JACK.—I am very sorry you cannot be transported insted a bein' hung I would come over and see you only Mrs. Thompson's great wash is on Monday, and I want to yarn a shillin wen I can. I am told Jack Catch has the clothes what people are hung in. Do not, dear Jack, be hung in your coat. Put on your jacket, leave your coat with the turnkey, and I will get the carrier to call for it. May the Lord have mercy on your soul; and pray dont forget to be hung in your jacket. I remain your fectinate mother

MARYAN—

RICHES.—Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly.

CURIOSITIES OF ARITHMETIC.

An eastern prince was so much delighted with the game of chess, which had been devised for his amusement, that he desired the inventor to name his own reward. The philosopher, however, was too modest to seize the opportunity of enriching himself: he merely begged of his royal master a grain of corn for each square on the chess table, doubling the number in proceeding from the first to the sixty-fourth square. The king, honoring his moderation, made no scruple of consenting to the demand: but on his treasurer making the necessary calculations, he was somewhat surprised to find that he had engaged to give away the impossible quantity of 87,076,425,546,692,656 grains of corn, or near two hundred millions of bushels.

The story of the horse shoe is of the same kind, and, like the above, is usually met with in books of scientific recreation. A man selling a fine horse is to receive for it nothing more than the value of the twenty fourth nail of the animal's shoes, supposing that the first nail is worth a farthing, the second two, and so on doubling each time. The bargain is a tolerably good one, since the twenty-fourth nail at this rate proves to be worth eighty thousand dollars.

Suppose that all the prodigious number of eggs in a female herring, only 2000 come to maturity, and that each of them in its turn gives birth to the same number, half males and half females. In its second year, we should have a family of twelve millions; in the third, of two thousand millions; and in the eighth, the number would be expressed by the figure 2 followed by 24 ciphers. This number of herrings would not find room even if the earth were turned into a globe of water, as its whole volume would furnish only about a square inch for each fish.

A sprig of henbane sometimes produces 50,000 grains; but if we take the average at 10,000, the number of sprigs in the eighth generation would be expressed by 1 followed by 16 ciphers. At this rate, it would take nearly the entire surface of the globe to contain all the henbane produced from a single plant in four years.

The population of the globe is supposed to be under a thousand millions. If, then, says a French writer, all mankind were collected in one place, every four individuals occupying a square metre, the whole might be contained in a field ten miles square. Thus, generally speaking, the population of a country might be packed, without much squeezing, in its capital. But the mean idea this gives us of the number of the human race is counterbalanced by its capability of extension. The new world is said to contain of productive land 4,000,000 square miles of middling quality, each capable of supporting two hundred inhabitants; and 6,000,000 of a better quality, capable of supporting five hundred persons. According to this calculation, the population of the new world, as peace and civilization advance, may attain to the extent of 4,000,000,000. If we suppose the surface of the old world to be double that of America (and notwithstanding the comparative poverty of the land, this calculation may be accepted, if we say nothing of Australia and the various Archipelagos,) it would support 8,000,000,000; and thus the aggregate population of the entire globe might amount to 12,000,000,000, or twelve times the number.

How many curious speculations suggest themselves here! What space will it take for the inhabitants of the earth to increase to twelve times their present number? Will such increase ever take place? Supposing the epoch to approach when 'the table is full,' what will be the condition of the then races of mankind? In what way, through what proximate causes, will the number of births adjust themselves to the number of deaths?—Will war be once more resuscitated from

the ashes of ages—for war must have been dead to admit of the completion of the ranks of the species? Will hatred, want, misery, follow as usual the footsteps of the destroyer, and the earth swallow up the children which her uncalculating instincts have produced! But it is folly to perplex ourselves with inquiries upon subjects which are obviously beyond the grasp of the intellect. All we know with certainty is, that the human world has gone on for at least four thousand years, without attaining to more than one twelfth part of its possible extent.—Our knowledge is limited and must be always so. Not to talk of the interior of the earth which we can learn but little about from hammering upon its crust, we are each individually ignorant even of our fellow beings on the surface.—One of us may know something of insects, and so on; but the mind does not exist which is able to comprehend the organic world in its entirety. It is said that there are 100,000 species of vegetables, five or six times that number of insects, about 1200 of quadrupeds, 6800 of birds, and 1500 of reptiles. The sea we know almost as much about as the interior of the earth; but as its bottom is at least double the extent of the surface of our continents and islands, we may roughly take the number of its species animal and vegetable, as equal to that of the species which require atmospheric air. As for the microscopic world, there we are entirely lost; but in all probability it is as rich in species as the world that is cognisable to our ordinary senses. But if we take the entire number of organised beings at only 2,000,000, what human intellect is capable of studying them to any purpose? If a man gave himself up to the task as the business of his life, attending to the examination of each species but one minute, and working incessantly during ten hours in the day, he would not accomplish the cursory unreflecting survey in less than twenty years! These considerations should at least teach us humility, and for the rest, we may safely trust in the Creator of these unspeakable wonders: that His almighty hand will sustain the work which His omniscient wisdom conceived, and that the same power which originated the plan will extend to its consummation.

COMBAT
BETWEEN A HORSE AND A LION.

A nobleman, in the early part of the reign of Louis XV., having a very vicious horse, which none of the grooms or servants would ride, several of them having been thrown, and one killed, asked leave of his majesty to have him turned loose into the menagerie against one of the largest lions. The king readily consented, and the animal, on a certain day, was conducted thither.

Soon after the arrival of the horse, the door of the den was drawn up, and the lion, with great state and majesty, marched slowly to the mouth of it when seeing his antagonist, he set up a tremendous roar. The horse immediately started and fell back, his ears erected, his mane raised, his eyes sparkled, and something like a general convulsion seemed to agitate his whole frame.—After the first emotion of fear had subsided, the horse retired to a corner of the menagerie, where, having directed his heels towards the lion, and having reared his head above his left shoulder, he watched with extreme eagerness, the motions of his enemy. The lion, who presently quitted the den, sidled about for more than a minute, as if meditating the mode of attack, when, having sufficiently prepared himself for the combat, he made a sudden spring at the horse, which defended itself by striking its adversary a most violent blow on the chest. The lion instantly retreated, groaned, and seemed for several minutes inclined to give up the contest; when, recovering from the painful effects of the blow, he returned to the charge with