

But amongst them he points out that the Tartars, when they mean to speak of a people, as to their tribe or nation, compound their name with some such sounds as ach, ak, aki, etc., and that they employ certain prefixes and suffixes attached to tribe-names to denote relative position; some such syllable as ma, mai, etc., to denote "on this side"; and some such syllable as es, esk, etc., to denote "on the other side, or over beyond." He gives instances; and then observes that the red men do the same: they employ aga, aki, etc., to denote tribes; ma, etc., to denote on this side; es, esk, etc., to denote on the other side, beyond, over, accompanying the expression with a motion of the hand towards them in the former case; and away from them in the latter. Och-negh-ta, he says, is a pine tree; och-negh-tada is a country of pine wood; sk-och-negh-tada is the country beyond, or on the other side of the pine wood, (hence Schenectady in the State of New York). Waschuset, Quaschuset is a mountain so-called in New England; Ma-ouaschuset, the country on this side the mountain, *i. e.*, from the point of view of a person standing near the sea (hence Massachusetts, through certain changes.) He then comes to the case of the Mohawks and Senecas. The name of that tribe of the Five Nation Indians, he says, who are by the English and Dutch in New England and New York called Mohawk and Maquas, is Canyonwe-aga, the people who are at the head of men; but the appellation given to them by the Mohawk River and New England Indians is Ma-aga, Ma-aqua, and Ma-ack, which signifies the hithermost tribe, or that tribe of the Five Nations which was nearest to them; and in like manner the tribe whose actual appellation was Tsonontouan-aga, signifying the tribe which lives on or over the great high mountain, or on the height of the land, (called by the French Tsonontouans and by the English and Dutch vulgarly Senekas,) is so-called by the relative appellative Sen-agaes, or the furthestmost tribe.

We are thus conducted to simple and very probable meanings for Mohawk and Seneca; Mohawk denoting the tribe or nation of the Iroquois nearest the speaker who would be likely to accompany the expression with a motion of the hand towards himself; Seneca, the tribe or nation farthest off, up to the north or northwest, in which direction a wave of the hand would at the word be given. The names were not tribe names at all, Governor Pownall discovered. The tribes which they indicated had names of their own, widely different from these. The resemblance in sound of Ma-aga, Ma-aqua, Maqua to a word signifying bear, or a word signifying cannibal (both derivations had been suggested,) was purely accidental; as also was the likeness of Seneca to a word meaning a kind of snake; but such resemblances would be sure to be laid hold of by unscientific interpreters bound to supply on demand some meaning or other.

To the curious variations of the word Mohawk—Mohack, Mohacq, Mohak, Mohaque, Maqua—Mohock should also be added, the name assumed by certain lawless rowdies, as in these days they would be styled, who in the early part of the last century infested the streets of London. "I have been told by old men in New England," wrote Cadwallader Colden, in 1747, "who

remembered the time when the Mohawks made war on the New England Indians; that as soon as a single Mohawk was discovered in the country, the New England Indians raised a cry from hill to hill, 'A Mohawk! a Mohawk!' upon which they all fled like sheep before wolves, without attempting to make the least resistance, whatever odds were on their side." Strange, that a similar consternation at the same cry should have been occasionally experienced in London in 1712. "Who" asks Gay in his *Trivia*, or *Art of Walking the Streets of London*—

"Who has not heard the Scourer's midnight fame?
Who has not trembled at the Mohock's name?
Was there a watchman took his hourly rounds,
Safe from their blows and new-invented wounds?"

As for the name Seneca: after fluctuating about, like most other Indian names and words in various shapes in Dutch, French, English and other documents, as Seneka, Senaque, Sinker and so forth—it settled down among us at least, and indeed pretty generally, in this very presentable form, coinciding with that of the name of a famous Roman philosopher, under some subtle influence perhaps arising from a general acquaintance with that name.—And not without a certain fitness, it may be observed has the name of the philosopher Seneca thus found a lodgment by chance in American nomenclature: for was it not he who prophesied so strangely of the discovery of our continent? Was it not he who, in his tragedy of *Medea* said that late in time an age would come when Ocean would unchain the barriers of Nature and a vast Land would come into view; when Tethys, Ocean's queen, would unveil a new world, and Thule should no longer be the ultimate limit of the earth. (Every one will remember the passage standing as a motto on the title-page of Washington Irving's *Life of Columbus*: "Venient annis seacula seris, quibus Oceanus vincula rerum laxet, et ingens pateat Tellus; Tethysque novos detegat orbis, nec sit terris ultima Thule." *Medea*, Sen. Act 3, l. 375.) Another and less noticeable instance of foresight on the part of Seneca may be added: in it, we have him actually mentioning the Indians by name; meaning, of course the Indians whom Columbus himself thought he had reached, when, on the 12th of October, 1492, he landed at San Salvador; from which mistake has arisen the name now applied to all the red men of this continent. Sitting on the shore of his own native Spain and looking out westward over the expanse of the Atlantic ocean, the identical idea which afterwards took possession of Columbus, seems to have occurred to the mind of Seneca, and he was curiously moved to say: The inquisitive examiner who looks around him despises the narrow limits of the world in which he dwells. For how short after all, the distance that intervenes between the most remote shores of Spain and the Indians; a space passed over in a very few short days, if a favorable wind fills the sails.

(*Curiosus spectator contemnit domicilii angustias. Quantum enim est quod ab ultimis litoribus Hispaniæ usque ad Indos jacet? Paucissimum dierum spatium, si navem sans ventus implevit.*) Quoted in *Ramage's Selections* from Seneca, as from the preface to the first book of his *Naturales Questiones*.)

MANITOU LIN ISLAND.

I feel assured! that the far away friends to whom my last years midwinter communication in your columns was addressed, will not be indifferent to the appearance of another. Our beautiful lake is again like a vast skating rink. With mild weather and good sleighing, there is nothing but the absence of old familiar faces to mar the pleasure of our holiday season. This is how we spent our Christmas. By request, a party of us, including two J. P.'s, took a drive to the Indian village of West Bay, on the 24th, for the purpose of taking a preliminary step for the enfranchisement of such of the Indians as wished it. Were most hospitably received by H. Corbier, Esq., a Franco Metis, who is, by the way, a most successful farmer and merchant on the Indian reserve. Had a conference in the evening with the head chief and a few leading braves, your correspondent acting as scribe, furnishing them with a copy of the proceedings for submission to a full council of the band, as well as for the inspection of the R. C. Priest, Rev. Father Bodi, a social, warm hearted Frenchman who was unavoidably absent. The balance of the evening was spent in Mr. Corbier's luxurious parlor enlivened by the music, single and combined, of melodeon, organette, clarionette, accordion, and violin. At 12 o'clock, midnight, the bell of the R. C. Church announced the commencement of the usual Christmas services which was conducted alone by the Indians with their rich and beautiful voices. A most orderly and devout congregation, were those sons and daughters of the forest reverently bowed in Christian worship. At 2 a. m. we partook of a second supper, or rather breakfast, on rich china ware with our genial host and hostess and though urged to spend, free of charge, the whole of Christmas day with them, we drove away for home in the bright moonlight reluctant to leave the roast turkey, roast partridge, fresh salmon trout, cranberry sauce, fresh apples and other good things so freely set before us. Arriving home as day was dawning, we found our little ones very happy to think Santa Claus could find his way even to their stocking even on Manitoulin Island.—*The Sachem.*

A "POINTER" FOR THE J. P.

John Sequashquash, an Indian of the remnant of a tribe in Connecticut, was some years since brought before a justice of the peace, on some charge or other, which we do not now recollect. John happened to be drunk at the time, and instead of justice, merely muttered out.—

Your Honor is very wise, y-y-your honor is v-very wise—I says.

Being unable to get any other answer from him, the justice ordered him to be locked up till the next day, when John was brought before him perfectly sober.

"Why, John," said the justice, "you were drunk as a beast last night."

"Drunk, ejaculated the Indian.

"Yes, drunk as a beast. When I asked you any question, the only answer you made me was 'your honor's very wise, wise, very wise.'"

"Did I call your honor wise?" asked the Indian with a look of incredulity.

"Yes," answered the magistrate.

"Then," replied John, "I must have been drunk, true enough."