

A BETTER CHANCE.

Leave me in peace, take back thy troth—thy vow—
Dissolve the trammels of our love—our trust—
Thou hast no need of lover's fondness now.
When thou canst cast its memory in the dust.

Is freedom sweet to thee? It must be so,
Thou hast a boundless world to choose a mate;
A woman's wiles are easy to bestow,
When they can make or mar our lives and fate.

Regret can't dull thy looks nor dim thy joys,
No sad compunction haunts thy cheerful hours;
When life is charged completely with alloys,
'Tis well to grasp but not to hoard love's flowers.

For circumstance, and chance, and fate, and all
That round our puzzling life with weal or woe,
May even shatter love's diviner thrall,
And deaden, like a blight, its sacred glow.

Besides, for man to waste his sighs
Upon a woman's smile, or east his hope
Upon her truth and beauty, is not wise,
And not within ambition's larger scope.

Well—charge me with this weakness—I confess
Thy love was more than all the world to me,
With thee—I lived upon thy loveliness,
Alone—I lived upon thy memory.

I struggled worn and weary in life's race,
Misfortune dogged my footsteps, still I strove,
My only guide thy dear alluring face!
My sole reward thy dear assuring love!

My aspirations stole diviner light
From thee, within my wildering life
There crept a sacred calm that put to flight
The fluttering moths of care and buzzing strife.

'Tis weak to consecrate the present time
With dreams whose music sound unmeaningly,
To cast their sunlight in a feeble rhyme!
And build heroics on a memory!

Thy nature cannot grasp enduring faith,
Nor comprehend a boundless hope divine,
A love that laughs at fate and conquers death,
That dwelt with me, but which was never thine.

Go—leave me—seek a better—happier chance,
Thou needst not search a prosperous world in vain;
The spell has fled; I waken from the trance;
Thy charms can't lap me in sweet dreams again.

There surely dwells a being dowered well
With fortune's favours fit for thee to wed,
'Tis easy to evoke a suitor's spell,
Or crush affection till its flowers are dead.

I see thee in the future, bending down
With charming courtesy to kiss his face.
Thy wisely truth the comment of the town,
Thy constancy the marvel of the place.

I hear the rustle of thy silken dress,
Thy regal tread across the sumptuous room,
Where guests pay homage to thy loveliness,
And wonder at its freshness and its bloom!

I mark the dimples of thy sunny face,
That beams its chastened smiles upon the crowd,
While fascinated fools about the place
May sipper homage never breathed aloud.

Beloved within thy home, admired abroad,
It matters not thy blandishments were sold;
Contentment lingers on the gorgeous road,
Paved with the glitter of enchanting gold.

No tarnished memories can ever rise
Upon thy gilded joys; no troublous thought
To force a burning mist to dim thine eyes,
In passing visions which the past has wrought.

Thou art above the weakness of regret,
Poised on the calms of comfort; and thy life,
With its dear righteous solaces, can't fret,
A tranquil inner self that needs no strife.

Go—leave me, risk thy chance and fare thee well,
I drop the usual wishes on thy way,
And seek my own, enchanted with the spell
That broke to show me wisdom's clearer ray.

ISIDORE G. ASCHER.

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TECUMSEH,

The Shawnee Brave.

BY ALIQUOD.

CHAPTER I.

THE YOUNG WARRIOR ON THE WAR PATH.

THE sun had gone to rest amid a flood of crimson light, the stars had commenced to shed their pale, gentle rays over the land; it was a night in the first of spring's bright months, when the winter being past and the snow over and gone, the flower appears on the face of the earth and the time of the singing of birds is come. A holy calm seemed over all, as if Nature was offering up to her great Creator her evening sacrifice of prayer and praise ere she settled herself down to sleep in the lap of night; when suddenly a human being might be seen crawling stealthily along the ground,—a glance reveals the fact that he is an Indian warrior, and an Indian warrior upon the war-trail; for he is entirely naked, save that his feet are clad in moccasins highly ornamented with the quills of the porcupine richly coloured and wrought into curious shapes, and around his loins is a narrow band of buffalo hide, from which hang his tomahawk and dreaded scalping-knife, and the scalp of his fallen foe, proclaiming that though evidently the snows of twenty winters had not fallen upon his head, still this was not his first journey on the war path; his long raven locks are fastened tightly together, falling down over his neck and shoulders like the mane of some wild beast of prey; his face is hideous with paint, around the eyes circles of black, the nose coloured a dark blue, and the

rest a deep blood red. In his hand he holds, not his bow and arrow, but a rifle, for already the various tribes were beginning to adopt and use against their makers the more deadly weapons of the white man. But why does this Indian brave creep along so carefully, with footfalls as light and silent as those of a tiger stealing on his prey?

A short distance off is a man sitting quietly on the fallen trunk of a tree which has just yielded to the sturdy blows of his woodman's axe, resting himself after the toils and fatigues of the day before he starts for his home, a mile or so away. John Waggoner sits calmly, fearing no ill, thinking of his fond wife and loving children who with him have left their home in far distant Britain and journeyed over a wide expanse of sea and land to this western world. Little did he imagine that never again would his

Children run to kiss their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

A squirrel in a neighbouring tree chatters to its mate; Waggoner turns to look; that movement saved his life; for as he turned the sharp crack of a musket was heard and a bullet whizzed through his clothes, slightly grazing his body. Up he sprang as the dread war-whoop of the Shawnee resounded through the forest; fear lent wings to his feet, and he fled towards his home, closely followed by the Indian chief, who every now and then uttered his fierce battle cry. Onwards sped pursued and pursuer, but as he burst from the forest a lurid light told the white man that his home was wrapt in flames, and around the blazing house he could see the dusky bodies of the Indians dancing in mad delight, while high above the yells of the savages rose the shrieks and screams of his family. In horror and dismay Waggoner turned from the sickening sight into the dense thicket, and straining every nerve ran until he felt sure that the friendly darkness had shrouded him from the eagle eye of his enemy. The Shawnee warrior, whose name was Tecumseh, after vainly searching for his intended victim, returned to his comrades and the blazing homestead.

Here Tecumseh found that Soocoowa, one of his braves, had been killed; that part of the family had been slain, and the rest taken prisoners.

At once, on the return of their chief, the band having torn the reeking scalps from the dead and seized all the booty they could find, set off on their homeward journey. All night long they traversed the pathless labyrinth of the wilderness, noiselessly and speedily, guided by the stars that looked so peacefully down on this blood-stained earth; and at early dawn emerged from the dark forest on to the shore of a silvery lake, which lay calm and still amid the surrounding trees like some fair sleeping Naiad, the soft breeze raising ripples on its placid bosom gentle as the heavings of the breast of a slumbering beauty. The Indian village, built on a point jutting into this little lake, was silent as a city of the dead, but the whoops of the returning braves soon aroused the sleepers, and quickly hurried forth men, women, and children to greet the victors with shouts of welcome and songs of triumph, to see the captives, and share the plunder.

The poor shrinking, cowering Europeans were at once led to the place of torture. He, whose strong right arm had slain Soocoowa, was attacked by the widowed squaw of that fallen brave, who bit him and gnawed at his fingers and hands like some savage dog. The other friends and relatives of the dead warrior gathered round his slayer and madly cut at him with their knives. The very children plucked out the hairs of his head and his beard, and holding pieces of burning wood to his body laughed in savage glee as the bare flesh blistered and burnt. In vain the poor wretch, tightly lashed to a stake, writhed and shrieked, praying and beseeching in piteous tones that an end might be put to his sufferings; his tormentors only smiled at the agonies he endured, and, accustomed to see the victims of their own race suffer with unflinching stoicism, mocked at his cries. At last a club fell with a heavy hand upon the victim's head, sending his spirit to that blessed place where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Immediately his still beating heart was plucked from his poor wounded body, roasted, cut into small portions and distributed by the medicine man among the young braves, who quickly devoured it in the hope that the courage of the captive might at all times animate their breasts.

The fell demon of revenge was now appeased, and Areshoni, the god of war, was satisfied with the sacrifice; so the disconsolate widow demanded and obtained the eldest son of Waggoner to replace the lost Soocoowa in her wigwam and on her couch, while the rest of the captives were at once adopted into the tribe, (according to the custom of the western nations,) to supply the places of those who had lately fallen in battle.

CHAPTER II.

OWNWANASAYAON AND THE MEDICINE MAN.

As Tecumseh stood beside the expiring white man, gazing with silent indifference

upon his tortures and listening with contempt to his cries, a young damsel—clad in the simple attire of the denizens of the forest—approached him, whispered a few words in his ear, and then retired into one of the neighbouring wigwams, whither Tecumseh at once followed.

The hut was of the usual construction, a long low building made of a double row of young trees bent over until touching each other and firmly tied together, the whole covered with large sheets of bark; at either end was a door, while a narrow slit along the roof permitted the egress of the smoke and the admission of light and air; within on both sides was a raised platform running the entire length of the building, but divided off into several compartments, each of which served as the sleeping place of a family; on the ground between the platforms were built the fires needful for the purposes of cooking and warmth, and from above hung in confusion, thrice confounded, the weapons of war and of peace, the products of the chase, the ground and the battle-field.

In one of these compartments, upon a heap of furs and mats, lay a sick warrior, around him stood his family, while scattered on every side in great profusion lay pipes of fantastic shapes, fish-hooks cunningly fashioned out of bone, bows, arrows, tomahawks, pieces of wampum and objects of every kind dear to the savage heart. The previous day the great medicine man of the tribe, being unable to discover the cause, or stay the progress, of the disease which was rapidly carrying the soul of the Indian towards the happy hunting grounds, had solemnly declared that the sickness arose from the warrior having been unable to obtain some earthly possession on which he had set his heart; hence the villagers, unwilling to lose one of the bravest of their braves, and anxious to retain among them one who had words of wisdom for the council fire and deeds of daring for the battle-field, brought gifts and presents, hoping that among them would be found the coveted object, and so the plague would be stayed.

But alas! for Ownwanasayaon the life-restoring gift was not among the offerings of affection, and he sank lower and lower; and Tecumseh, as he came silently up to the bed, saw at a glance that life was ebbing fast, that ere the sun which shone down so brightly had departed for a season, his old friend and comrade would be hunting the shades of the deer and of the bear, with the shades of his bow and arrows, in the far distant land of shadowy trees and rocks. The friends spoke not a word; the Indian never murmurs or complains at the approach of death, for to him the unseen world is not a place of dread.

Suddenly in rushed the Doctor, and violently seizing his patient, pinched him, shook him, beat him, at the same time he howled, he whooped, he shrieked like a very fiend incarnate and rattled a tortoise-shell in the sick man's ear to drive away the female demon, the author of death. Then this skilful leech bit his patient until the blood flowed, and exhibiting a piece of bone which he asserted had come out of the body of the sick man and was the cause of the disease, proclaimed—with all the assurance of a more civilized quack—that before two suns had risen, Ownwanasayaon would go forth in health and vigour from his tent ready to follow the war trail, and would yet win many scalps from his foes.

But alas! for Ownwanasayaon, he grew no better, but rather worse, and sank lower and lower like the flickering flame of a dying fire.

Next, the Medicine man—who by no means had yet exhausted his stock of remedies—despatched messengers to all the other huts, and speedily in came all the old squaws in the village, hideous and ugly; some disguised with the skins of wild beasts, others with horns and feathers on their heads—but naked as was their mother Eve when first she gazed upon her lovely form in the sparkling waters of the crystal fountain: all whooping and shouting.

But alas! for Ownwanasayaon, even this prescription did not cure him, and still he sank lower and lower.

Suddenly high above the din, loud and clear rose the voice of the brave old warrior as he chanted his own death song, as he told of his travels among the far distant tribes of his own wild land—the wonders that he had seen—his deeds of might and daring—the scalps that he had taken—the hearts of braves that he had eaten—his fierce battles with the pale-faces—how he, with Tecumseh and the great Mishikinakwa, had led on the Indians against the army of the Long-knives (the Americans) at the banks of the Miami, and obtained more scalps than there are days in twenty moons,—how he with his own right hand had driven a hatchet into the brain of Butler, the leader of the pale-faces, who were cowards and women, not men and warriors like the braves of the Shawnees—how he had torn off Butler's reeking scalp and hewn out his bleeding heart: and then he laughed a laugh which chilled the hearts of even his savage hearers, as he told how they had given the Americans the land they had so greedily sought for, by filling the mouths of the slain with earth scraped from the bloody battle field. Then with a fierce whoop, his spirit fled away, and he fell back on his couch a lifeless corpse.

An involuntary half-repressed groan escaped from the lips of Tecumseh as the fierce spirit of his friend departed; for to him Ownwanasayaon had been almost as a father; had taught him to use the tiny bow of his childhood—had told him the legends of the prowess of their tribe—had guided and watched over his steps on his first war-path—had saved his life at the imminent risk of his own—had ever been ready to assist, advise and counsel.

Tecumseh was born about the year 1770, upon the banks of the Scioto River; at the same time his mother, Meetheetashe, gave to the world Ellskwatawa and Kumsakka. The father of this trio was killed a few years afterwards at the battle of Kanhawa, and from that time Ownwanasayaon took Tecumseh to his wigwam and trained him up to be brave in battle, wise in council and eloquent in debate.

But now the brave warrior was gone, and, stoic though he was, Tecumseh could not but feel sad as they wrapped the stiffening corpse in his finest garments, painted his face and laid him at the door of his hut. Soon the hour came for burying the dead out of sight, when with his tobacco pipe in his mouth, his tomahawk by his side, his medicine bag and his bow upon his chest, the body was slowly and tenderly lowered into a deep grave with the softest furs,—the earth was replaced, a huge stone rolled upon it, and all was over.

As he stood beside the grave Tecumseh vowed bitter and undying hatred to the pale-faced Long-Knives, and that he would give no rest to the soles of his feet until he had induced all the tribes of the Red men, both far and nigh, to dig up the hatchet, cut down the trees of peace which some of the nations had planted, and hurl the white man from the bounteous land given to them by the Good Spirit; and he called upon the spirits of the grave, the river and the air to hear him and assist him.

CHAPTER III.

YAGOOWEAH AND HER HUSBAND.

TECUMSEH and his friends belonged to the tribe of Shawnees, who, with many of the Delawares, disgusted with the encroachments of the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, had left their ancient hunting grounds on the River Delaware and had sought an asylum from the greedy white man in the regions where now are thickly scattered the cities, towns and villages of Ohio. The Shawnees (or Shewanees) belonged to the widely-extended Algonquin family, and together with all their kindred had suffered greatly at the hands of the Iroquois—the monarchs of the American forests,—but now they dwelt in peace and amity with those fierce spirits, having been in a certain measure adopted into their confederacy.

In the village, after the events related in the previous chapters, all went on in the even tenor of their ways. The warriors issued forth continually in small bands searching for the scalps of white men, and seldom did they return without them. The young men loitered about, lounging and smoking and gambling, occasionally bestirring themselves sufficiently to launch their canoes on the clear, sparkling waters of the silvery lake, or wander off with their bows and arrows into the shadowy forest. As for the squaws, the young and pretty dressed in their finest, bedecked with wampum beads, radiant with bear's grease and ruddy with vermilion, flirted and danced,—the wives and mothers toiled like slaves, collecting firewood, making canoes, preparing furs and tending babies,—while the ugly old shrivelled hags, with limbs of wire and voices like those of screech-owls, huddled together chattering and crooning.

The captive whites dwelt in safety amid their captors: as before stated, the widow of Soocoowa, after a brief period of mourning, had adopted one of them to replace her lost spouse. George Waggoner, a sturdy young Englishman of eighteen, little relished the idea of being the consort of a squaw, but as it was folly to think of escape he wisely determined to make the best of his situation and bide his time.

Much as Yagooweah loved the youth still little happiness did she enjoy with him; for frequently in the dead of night would she hear the voice of her former lord at her side enquiring in angry tones why she had allied herself to a pale-faced boy; then springing up she would look all around for him, but nothing would meet her eye save the slumbering bodies of her neighbours. At other times the war-whoop of the dead Soocoowa would arouse the sleepers, and when all had sprung to their feet the shrill laugh of a mocking bird would be heard. When again quietness reigned around the fierce growl of a bear at her head would make her scream with terror, or the gentle cooing of a babe at her breast fill her soul with wonder. The poor squaw knew not what to make of all this, and fearing witchcraft was at work she went with her white husband to consult the medicine man. This worthy dwelt in a hut made of the skins of the buffalo, painted with the figures of beasts, birds and fishes, and curious hieroglyphic characters. No one dare enter this tent, but there alone dwelt Ellskwatawa, the Sorcerer, who had power over spirits, could tell the doings of the morrow, make