



[FOR THE LAND WE LIVE IN.]

## Lo! the Poor Indian!

HAVING noticed in the columns of THE LAND WE LIVE IN occasional articles referring to the late Noel Annance and his son Archie, both college educated Indians, I thought I would give another illustration to show that it is hard to get the mind of the Indian much above his bark canoe.

Peter Otsaquette was the son of an Oneida Indian, of the State of New York, at the close of the American Revolution. He was noticed by the Marquis de Lafayette, who in addition to his noble zeal for liberty, was possessed of very philanthropic feelings. Viewing this young savage with peculiar interest, and anticipating the happy results to be derived from his moral regeneration, he took him—though scarcely twelve years old—to France. Peter arrived there at the time when Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were in the zenith of their glory. There he was taught the accomplishments of a gentleman. Music, drawing and fencing were made familiar to him, and he danced with a grace that a Vestris couldn't but admire.

At about eighteen his separation from a country in which he had spent his time so agreeably and profitably became necessary. Laden with favors from the marquis and the miniatures of those friends he had left behind, Peter departed for America inflated, perhaps, with the idea that the deep ignorance of his nation with that of the Indians of the whole continent, might be dispelled by his efforts, and he become the proud instrument of the civilization of thousands.

Prosecuting his route to the land of his parents, he came to the city of Albany, not the uncivilized savage, not with any of those marks which bespoke a birth of the forest or spent in toil in the wilds of a desert, but possessing a fine, commanding figure, an expressive countenance and intelligent eye, with a face scarcely indicative of the race from which he was descended. He presented at this period an interesting spectacle; a child of the wilderness was about to proceed to the home of

his forefathers having received the brilliant advantages of a cultivated mind, and on his way to impart to the nation that owned him the benefits which civilization had given him. It was an opportunity for the philosopher to contemplate and to reflect on the future good this young Indian might be the means of producing.

Shortly after his arrival at Albany, where he visited the first families, he took advantage of Governor Clinton's journey to Fort Stanwis, where a treaty was to be held with the Indians, to return to his tribe. On the route Otsaquette amused the company—among whom were the French Minister, Count de Monstiers, and several gentlemen of respectability—by his powers on various instruments of music. At Fort Stanwis he found himself again with the companions of his early days, who saw and recognized him. His friends and relations had not forgotten him, and he was welcomed to his home and to his blanket.

But that which occurred soon after his reception led him to a too fearful anticipation of an unsuccessful project, for the Oneidas, as if they could not acknowledge Otsaquette attired in the dress with which he appeared before them, a mark which did not disclose his nation, and thinking that he had assumed it as if ashamed of his own native costume, the garb of his ancestors, they tore it from him with a savage avidity and a fiend-like ferociousness, daubed on the paint to which he had been so long unused, and clothed him with the uncouth habiliments held sacred by his tribe. Their fiery ferocity in the performance of the act, showed but too well the bold stand they were about to take against the innovations they supposed Otsaquette was to be the agent for effecting against their time immemorial manners and customs, and which from the venerable antiquity of their structure it would be nothing short of sacrilege to destroy.

Thus the reformed savage was taken back again to his native barbarity, and as if to cap the climax of degradation to a mind just susceptible of its own powers, was married to a squaw.

From that day Otsaquette was no longer the accomplished Indian, from whom every wish of philanthropy was expected to be

realized. He was no longer the instrument, by whose power the emancipation of his countrymen from the thraldom of ignorance and superstition was to be effected.

From that day he was an inmate of the forest, was once more buried in his original obscurity, and his nation only viewed him as an equal. Even a liberal grant from the state failed of securing to him that superior consideration among them which his civilization had procured for him with the rest of mankind. The commanding prominence acquired from instruction, from which it was expected ambition would have sprung up, acting as a double stimulant, from either the natural inferiority of the savage mind or the predominance of his countrymen, became of no effect, and in a little time was wholly annihilated.

Otsaquette was lost. His moral perdition began from the hour he left Fort Stanwis. Three short months had hardly transpired when intemperance had marked him as her own, and soon hurried him to the grave. And as if the very transition had deadened the finer feelings of his nature, the picture given him by the marquis, the very portrait of his affectionate friend and benefactor, he parted with.

Extraordinary and unnatural as the conduct of this uneducated savage may appear, the anecdote is not of a kind altogether unique, which proves that little or nothing is to be expected from conferring a literary education upon the rude children of the forest.

An Indian named George Whiteeyes, was taken while a boy, to the College of Princeton, N. Y., where he received a classical education. On returning to his nation he made some little stay in Philadelphia, where he was introduced to some genteel families. He was amiable in his manners and of modest demeanor, without exhibiting any trait of the savage whatever, but no sooner had he rejoined his friends and former companions in the land of his nativity, than he dropped the garb and manner of civilization and resumed those of the savage, and drinking deep of the intoxicating cup, soon put an end to his existence.

Many other instances might show how ineffectual have been the attempts to plant civilization on savage habits by means of literary education. Can the leopard change his spots?

HIRAM FRENCH.

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