

TO

FRANKLIN PIERCE, ESQ.,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Sir :

In dedicating this volume to you, by the patriarchal title of *KOSINAX*, the highest term known to the lexicography of the Indian tribes for political sovereignty, and yet a word which is intimately associated, in their minds, with all the obligations and endearments of the father of a family, I advert to the double tie by which the aborigines regard you as the *FATHER OF THE UNION*.

It is but little over three-fourths of a century since these tribes have been the peculiar charge of American Executive and Legislative care. Too feeble in themselves to exert a prudent or wise use of their power without legal tutorage, yet having had, at all periods, large superfluous territories to cede and alienate, thereby rising to the rank of independent communities, they occupy an anomalous position in our relations. On the one hand, being deemed as wards of the government; and, on the other, as *quasi* foreign nations.

They have occupied this peculiar position from the days of Washington. Nor have the most timely and persevering efforts been wanting to fulfil these diverse duties faithfully. Not only has the government directed its best efforts to this end, but it has, from its inception experienced the full concurrent moral and benevolent influences of the community. Yet it must be acknowledged, on a review of the whole period of our propinquity to this race, that the means employed to elevate them in the scale of nations have often measurably, and often totally, failed.

This is not attributable, I apprehend, to the want of zeal, constancy, or faithfulness in enforcing on the Indian mind the superiority of our laws, arts, industry, or religion. There is reason to fear, that with every effort to render them wiser, happier, and better — to snatch them, as it were, from their fate, and to exalt them to the golden sunlight