

Will you listen to the voice of your ancient seer?"

At these words of their seer, all the warriors bent their heads, in quick sign of assent, and the counsellor continued—"Red warriors!" said he, "the neglect of the worship of the evil spirit is the true cause of our disasters. Let us hasten to propitiate his wrath. Let us offer at his altar such a sacrifice as may avert his more terrible anger, and then march against the enemies of our race. The pardon, and the aid of the evil angel being obtained, the course which I have before recommended, will be alone that which ye may follow with honour, and that alone which will conduct you to the accomplishment of your pious hopes, in the slaughter of your enemies.

The short, but artful appeal of this seer, to the prevailing passion of the red men, was followed by yet stronger manifestations of its effects, than had attended his previous address. His object now, was to arouse the religious zeal of the people in favour of the opinions of which he was the advocate, concerning the principles of good and evil, which, in a future page of this story, will be found exercising so great influence over the minds and the destinies of the red race, as to require such explanation as would be premature with this first allusion to the passions of this people, and the means by which they were swayed.

But while matters remained in this state of uncertainty, an unexpected occurrence at once established unanimity of purpose among the excited warriors.

Among the Red Indians, it was considered not becoming, in a young warrior, to stand forward and express his opinions, in their councils, while his parent was present. But when, upon any sudden impulse, a youthful warrior, especially if allied to their chief, stood up to speak, he was not only attentively heard, but his counsel even excited some degree of superstitious reverence.

Ahtomah, the elder son of the red chief, was a youth of great promise to his tribe. He had scarce been engaged in war, and his principal achievements had hitherto arisen out of the incidents of the chase; though his skill and courage had also discovered themselves while engaged in the dangerous roving of a scout. His only trophies, indeed, were the skins of beasts. Yet, in addition to the ordinary qualifications for war which he possessed, he had an ear, that not only enabled him to discover the footsteps of man or beast, far beyond the

distance at which the warriors generally were able to perceive by the use of the same organ of sense, but also in a more remarkable manner to distinguish the tread of the human foot from that of the brute, and even to discover the course of the object of alarm. He had also an eye that excelled all his tribe in the quick discovery of distant objects in motion; and he was not surpassed by any, in that apt sense of observation which enables a savage to follow the footsteps or trail of an enemy through the leaf-strewn forest, or even over the barren rock.

While the warriors were yet in the state of disorder in which the contrary opinions entertained concerning the questionable vision seemed to have thrown them, the youthful son of the chief, standing upon the raised ground, thus addressed them—"Companions of the chase," said he, "for, to my shame, I am not known to you in war, give your ears now to the voice of one too weak to address you, without the aid of the Great Spirit. Your councils are still divided; your debate has been disgraced by the confusion that would be worthy of a Micmacor an Eskimoh assembly, rather than restrained or governed by that dignity in council for which our fathers were famed. Listen now to the sole means which remains of exerting your full force against the enemies of our race, of exterminating their generation and possessing their territory. Before the dawn of tomorrow, let messengers be dispatched to every village of the red tribe, and let the father of his people gather his warriors around him, and appear beneath the frowning and dark heights of Mount Chasedorah, where the angel of our tribe conceals his form from human eyes. There let us sacrifice, that we may receive the sanction of his will, and the assistance of his power; and there shall our revered seers discover the truth or the falsehood of the vision we have this night stood and witnessed. Warriors! I have spoken."

At these words there was but one universal cry of "Chasedorah! Chasedorah! To the Mount! to the Mount! To the mountain which rears its head above the clouds!" which was resounded within and without the hall, till the echo reverberated from the opposite hills, exciting and strengthening the resolution of the red men, who now thought only of assembling their warriors of the whole nation, and by this means of attaining the desired unity in their plans of attack upon the Micmacs.