

INTRODUCTION.

THIS Chapter, written eighteen years subsequent to the original publication of *WACOUSTA* in London, will be found unavoidably replete with egotism. By none will it be more readily pronounced such than by those who are most open to the charge themselves. Without its exercise, however, the object of this introduction would not be gained.

As the reader may be curious to know on what basis, and in what manner this story (of which I have certainly robbed that first of vigorous American Novelists—the “*Last of the Mohicans*” Cooper—which tale, albeit I have never read a novel by another author twice, I have absolutely devoured *three* times,) was suggested to me, and on what particular portions of History the story is founded, I am not aware that this introductory Chapter, which I have promised my Publishers, can be better devoted than to the explanation.

It is well known to every man conversant with the earlier History of this country that, shortly subsequent to the cession of the Canadas to England by France, Pontecac the great Head of the Indian race of that period, had formed a federation of the various tribes, threatening extermination to the British posts established along the Western Frontier. These were nine in number, and the following stratagem was resorted to by the artful chief to effect their reduction. Investing one fort with his warriors, so as to cut off all communication with the others, and to leave no hope of succor, his practice was to offer terms of surrender which never were kept in the honorable spirit in which the far more noble and generous Tecumseh always acted with his enemies, and thus in turn, seven of these outposts fell victims to their confidence in his truth. Detroit and Michillimackinac, or Mackinaw as it is now called, remained, and all the ingenuity of the Chieftain was directed to the possession of these strongholds. The following plan, well worthy of his invention, was at length