

The Indian has a keen appreciation of humor, and is like a child in his mirthfulness. No orator can see the weak points of his adversary's armor or silence a foolish speaker more quickly.

Old Shah-ban-skong, the head chief of Mille Lac, brought all his warriors to defend Fort Ripley in 1862. The Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor and Legislature of Minnesota, promised these Indians that for this act of bravery they should have the special care of the government and never be removed. A few years later, a special agent was sent from Washington to ask the Ojibways to cede their lands and remove to a country north of Leech Lake. The agent asked my help. I said: "I know that country. I have camped on it. It is the most worthless strip of land in Minnesota. The Indians are not fools. Don't attempt this folly. You will surely come to grief." He called the Indians to Council, and said: "My red brothers, your great father has heard how you have been wronged. He said 'I will send them an honest man.' He looked in the North, the South, the East and the West. When he saw me, he said, 'This is the honest man whom I will send to my red children.' Brothers, look at me! The winds of fifty-five years have blown over my head and silvered it over with gray, and in all that time I have never done wrong to any man. As your friend, I ask you to sign this treaty."

Old Shah-bah-skong sprang to his feet and said: "My friend, look at me! The winds of more than fifty winters have blown over my head and silvered it over with gray; but they have not blown my brains away."

That council was ended.

An agent who had won the distinction of a militia general desired to impress the Indians. Dressed in uniform, with chapeau and sword, he said: "Your great father thinks that one reason why he has had so much trouble among the Indians is that he has always sent to them civilians. This time he said, 'These red men are warriors; I will send to them a warrior,' and he sent me." An old chief arose, drew a long breath and said: "I have heard ever since I was a boy, that white men had their great warriors. I have always wanted to see one. I have looked at him, and I am now ready to die."

Since that first visit, after I had made a visitation in the white field, I went in the Indian country and travelled each year from 500 to 1,500 miles on foot or in a birch bark canoe, going from village to village, to hear their tale of sorrow, and with a brother's heart and hand to try to help them.

At first we saw very little fruit. The work seemed hopeless. The Indian medicine men, who made gain of their people, were our bitter foes. Old Shah-da-yence, the leading medicine-man of the nation, was my Alexander Copper-smith. A Christian Indian died in the triumphs of faith. His last words were to ask friends to follow him to the other home. The next day all

the medicine-men disappeared. They were gone a month. One day they came back with blackened faces (Indian mourning) and in rags. The people asked what it meant. The medicine men said: "It is too awful to tell." After much persuasion they revealed the awful secret. They said: "We travelled far in the forest and held a fast. The Great Spirit showed us the other world. We saw this Christian Indian wandering alone. He told us that when he died he went to white man's heaven and asked admission. The angel at the gate said: 'Who are you?' He said: 'A Christian Ojibway.' The angel shook his head and said: 'This is a white man's heaven. No Ojibway has ever come here. There are happy hunting grounds for the Ojibways. You must go there.' He travelled until he came to the red man's heaven, and asked admission. The angel at the gate asked him: 'Who are you?' He answered: 'A Christian Ojibway.' The angel shook his head and said: 'The Ojibways are medicine-men. If you are a Christian you must go to the other heaven.' The poor man would have to wander alone forever."

Old Shah-da-yence had a great desire to have his son educated, and we brought him, with other Indian children, to Faribault. At wayside inns the border people would gather about the wagon and say: "Wonder what he is going to do with these Injun children." "Perhaps he thinks he can make Christians out of them." "It can't be did." "You might as well tame a weasel." Four of these boys became ministers of the church. The old medicine-man learned from his son to believe in Jesus Christ, and I have never known any man whose whole life was more thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christ. In his old age I have known him to walk to Red Lake, seventy miles, to tell his people of the love which filled his heart.

In those early days my visits to Washington were oft repeated stories of blighted hopes. I found President Lincoln a willing listener. I told him the story of the massacre of 1862, when 300 miles of our border was one track of blood. As I repeated the story of specific acts of dishonesty, the President said: "Did you ever hear of the Southern man who brought monkeys to pick cotton? They were quick; their long, slim fingers would pull out the cotton faster than negroes; but he found it took two overseers to watch one monkey. This Indian business needs ten honest men to watch one Indian agent."

From the martyred President I received the highest compliment ever paid to me. He said to a friend: "As I listened to Bishop Whipple's story of robbery and shame, I felt it to my boots," and rising to full height, he said: "If I live, this accursed system shall be reformed." He would have done it.

Secretary Stanton said to General Halleck: "What does Bishop Whipple want? If he came here to tell us that our Indian system is a sink of iniquity, tell him we all know it. Tell him the