# ROOSEVELT THEODORE

# THE WINNING OF THE WEST, VOLUME 1

Theodore Roosevelt

# The Winning of the West, Volume 1

**Roosevelt T.**

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# Содержание

# Theodore Roosevelt
# The Winning of the West, Volume 1 / From the Alleghanies to the Mississippi, 1769-1776

"O strange New World that yit wast never young,
Whose youth from thee by gripin' need was wrung,
Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed
Was prowled roun' by the Injun's cracklin' tread,
And who grew'st strong thru shifts an' wants an' pains,
Nursed by stern men with empires in their brains,
Who saw in vision their young Ishmel strain
With each hard hand a vassal ocean's mane;
Thou skilled by Freedom and by gret events
To pitch new states ez Old World men pitch tents.
Thou taught by fate to know Jehovah's plan,
Thet man's devices can't unmake a man.
* * * * *
Oh, my friends, thank your God, if you have one, that he
'Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf of a sea,
Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as your pines,
By the scale of a hemisphere shape your designs."

*—LOWELL.*

# PREFACE

Much of the material on which this work is based is to be found in the archives of the American Government, which date back to 1774, when the first Continental Congress assembled. The earliest sets have been published complete up to 1777, under the title of "American Archives," and will be hereafter designated by this name. These early volumes contain an immense amount of material, because in them are to be found memoranda of private individuals and many of the public papers of the various colonial and State governments, as well as those of the Confederation. The documents from 1789 on—no longer containing any papers of the separate States—have also been gathered and printed under the heading of "American State Papers"; by which term they will be hereafter referred to.

The mass of public papers coming in between these two series, and covering the period extending from 1776 to 1789, have never been published, and in great part have either never been examined or else have been examined in the most cursory manner. The original documents are all in the Department of State at Washington, and for convenience will be referred to as "State Department MSS." They are bound in two or three hundred large volumes; exactly how many I cannot say, because, though they are numbered, yet several of the numbers themselves contain from two or three to ten or fifteen volumes apiece. The volumes to which reference will most often be made are the following:

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No. 15. Letters of Huntington.
No. 16. Letters of the Presidents of Congress.
No. 18. Letter-Book B.
No. 20. Vol. 1. Reports of Committees on State Papers.
No. 27. Reports of Committees on the War Office. 1776 to 1778.
No. 30. Reports of Committees.
No. 32. Reports of Committees of the States and of the Week.
No. 41. Vol. 3. Memorials E. F. G. 1776-1788.
No. 41. Vol. 5. Memorials K. L. 1777-1789.
No. 50. Letters and Papers of Oliver Pollock. 1777-1792.
No. 51. Vol. 2 Intercepted Letters. 1779-1782.
No. 56. Indian Affairs.
No. 71. Vol. 1. Virginia State Papers.
No. 73. Georgia State Papers.
No. 81. Vol. 2. Reports of Secretary John Jay.
No. 120. Vol. 2. American Letters.
No. 124. Vol. 3. Reports of Jay.
No. 125. Negotiation Book.
No. 136. Vol. 1. Reports of Board of Treasury.
No. 136. Vol. 2. Reports of Board of Treasury.
No. 147. Vol. 2. Reports of Board of War.
No. 147. Vol. 5. Reports of Board of War.
No. 147. Vol. 6. Reports of Board of War.
No. 148. Vol. 1. Letters from Board of War.
No. 149. Vol. 1. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.

No. 149. Vol. 2. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 149. Vol. 3. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 1. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 2. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 3. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 152. Vol. 11. Letters of General Washington.
No. 163. Letters of Generals Clinton, Nixon, Nicola, Morgan, Harmar, Muhlenburg.
No. 169. Vol. 9. Washington's Letters.
No. 180. Reports of Secretary of Congress.

Besides these numbered volumes, the State Department contains others, such as Washington's letter-book, marked War Department 1792, '3, '4, '5. There are also a series of numbered volumes of "Letters to Washington," Nos. 33 and 49 containing reports from Geo. Rogers Clark. The Jefferson papers, which are likewise preserved here, are bound in several series, each containing a number of volumes. The Madison and Monroe papers, also kept here, are not yet bound; I quote them as the Madison MSS. and the Monroe MSS.

My thanks are due to Mr. W. C. Hamilton, Asst. Librarian, for giving me every facility to examine the material.

At Nashville, Tennessee, I had access to a mass of original matter in the shape of files of old newspapers, of unpublished letters, diaries, reports, and other manuscripts. I was given every opportunity to examine these at my leisure, and indeed to take such as were most valuable to my own home. For this my thanks are especially due to Judge John M. Lea, to whom, as well as to my many other friends in Nashville, I shall always feel under a debt on account of the unfailing courtesy with which I was treated. I must express my particular acknowledgments to Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell. The Nashville manuscripts, etc. of which I have made most use are the following:

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The Robertson MSS., comprising two large volumes, entitled the "Correspondence, etc., of Gen'l James Robertson," from 1781 to 1814.

They belong to the library of Nashville University; I had some difficulty in finding the second volume but finally succeeded.

The Campbell MSS., consisting of letters and memoranda to and from different members of the Campbell family who were prominent in the Revolution; dealing for the most part with Lord Dunmore's war, the Cherokee wars, the battle of King's Mountain, land speculations, etc. They are in the possession of Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell, who most kindly had copies of all the important ones sent me, at great personal trouble.

Some of the Sevier and Jackson papers, the original MS. diaries of Donelson on the famous voyage down the Tennessee and up the Cumberland, and of Benj. Hawkins while surveying the Tennessee boundary, memoranda of Thos. Washington, Overton and Dunham, the earliest files of the Knoxville *Gazette*, from 1791 to 1795, etc. These are all in the library of the Tennessee Historical Society.

For original matter connected with Kentucky, I am greatly indebted to Col. Reuben T. Durrett, of Louisville, the founder of the "Filson Club," which has done such admirable historical work of late years. He allowed me to work at my leisure in his library, the most complete in the world on all subjects connected with Kentucky history. Among other matter, he possesses the Shelby MSS., containing a number of letters to and from, and a dictated autobiography of, Isaac Shelby; MS. journals of Rev. James Smith, during two tours in the western country in 1785 and '95; early files of the "Kentucke *Gazette*"; books owned by the early settlers; papers of Boon, and George Rogers Clark; MS. notes on Kentucky by George Bradford, who settled there in 1779; MS. copy of the record book of Col. John

Todd, the first governor of the Illinois country after Clark's conquest; the McAfee MSS., consisting of an Account of the First Settlement of Salt River, the Autobiography of Robert McAfee, and a Brief Memorandum of the Civil and Natural History of Kentucky; MS. autobiography of Rev. William Hickman, who visited Kentucky in 1776, etc., etc.

I am also under great obligations to Col. John Mason Brown of Louisville, another member of the Filson Club, for assistance rendered me; particularly for having sent me six bound volumes of MSS., containing the correspondence of the Spanish Minister Gardoqui, copied from the Spanish archives.

At Lexington I had access to the Breckenridge MSS., through the kindness of Mr. Ethelbert D. Warfield; and to the Clay MSS. through the kindness of Miss Lucretia Hart Clay. I am particularly indebted to Miss Clay for her courtesy in sending me many of the most valuable old Hart and Benton letters, depositions, accounts, and the like.

The Blount MSS. were sent to me from California by the Hon. W. D. Stephens of Los Angeles, although I was not personally known to him; an instance of courtesy and generosity, in return for which I could do nothing save express my sincere appreciation and gratitude, which I take this opportunity of publicly repeating.

The Gates MSS., from which I drew some important facts not hitherto known concerning the King's Mountain campaign, are in the library of the New York Historical Society.

The Virginia State Papers have recently been published, and are now accessible to all.

Among the most valuable of the hitherto untouched manuscripts which I have obtained are the Haldimand papers, preserved in the Canadian archives at Ottawa. They give, for the first time, the British and Indian side of all the northwestern fighting; including Clark's campaigns, the siege of Boonsborough, the battle of the Blue Licks, Crawford's defeat, etc. The Canadian archivist. Mr. Douglass Brymner, furnished me copies of all I needed with a prompt courtesy for which I am more indebted than I can well express.

I have been obliged to rely mainly on these collections of early documents as my authorities, especially for that portion of western history prior to 1783. Excluding the valuable, but very brief, and often very inaccurate, sketch which Filson wrote down as coming from Boon, there are no printed histories of Kentucky earlier than Marshall's, in 1812; while the first Tennessee history was Haywood's, in 1822. Both Marshall and Haywood did excellent work; the former was an able writer, the latter was a student, and (like the Kentucky historian Mann Butler) a sound political thinker, devoted to the Union, and prompt to stand up for the right. But both of them, in dealing with the early history of the country beyond the Alleghanies, wrote about matters that had happened from thirty to fifty years before, and were obliged to base most of their statements on tradition or on what the pioneers remembered in their old age. The later historians, for the most part, merely follow these two. In consequence, the mass of original material, in the shape of official reports and contemporary letters, contained in the Haldimand MSS., the Campbell MSS., the McAfee MSS., the Gardoqui MSS., the State Department MSS., the Virginia State Papers, etc., not only cast a flood of new light upon this early history, but necessitate its being entirely re-written. For instance, they give an absolutely new aspect to, and in many cases completely reverse, the current accounts of all the Indian fighting, both against the Cherokees and the Northwestern tribes; they give for the first time a clear view of frontier diplomacy, of the intrigues with the Spaniards, and even of the mode of life in the backwoods, and of the workings of the civil government. It may be mentioned that the various proper names are spelt in so many different ways that it is difficult to know which to choose. Even Clark is sometimes spelt Clarke, while Boon was apparently indifferent as to whether his name should or should not contain the final silent *e*. As for the original Indian titles, it is often quite impossible to give them even approximately; the early writers often wrote the same Indian words in such different ways that they bear no resemblance whatever to one another.

In conclusion I would say that it has been to me emphatically a labor of love to write of the great deeds of the border people. I am not blind to their manifold shortcomings, nor yet am I ignorant of their many strong and good qualities. For a number of years I spent most of my time on the frontier, and lived and worked like any other frontiersman. The wild country in which we dwelt and across which we wandered was in the far west; and there were of course many features in which the life of a cattleman on the Great Plains and among the Rockies differed from that led by a backwoodsman in the Alleghany forests a century before. Yet the points of resemblance were far more numerous and striking. We guarded our herds of branded cattle and shaggy horses, hunted bear, bison, elk, and deer, established civil government, and put down evil-doers, white and red, on the banks of the Little Missouri and among the wooded, precipitous foot-hills of the Bighorn, exactly as did the pioneers who a hundred years previously built their log-cabins beside the Kentucky or in the valleys of the Great Smokies. The men who have shared in the fast vanishing frontier life of the present feel a peculiar sympathy with the already long-vanished frontier life of the past.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

SAGAMORE HILL, *May*, 1889

# FOREWORD

In the year 1898 the United States finished the work begun over a century before by the backwoodsman, and drove the Spaniard outright from the western world. During the march of our people from the crests of the Alleghanies to the Pacific, the Spaniard was for a long period our chief white opponent; and after an interval his place among our antagonists was taken by his Spanish-American heir. Although during the Revolution the Spaniard at one time became America's friend in the sense that he was England's foe, he almost from the outset hated and dreaded his new ally more than his old enemy. In the peace negotiations at the close of the contest he was jealously eager to restrict our boundaries to the line of the Alleghanies; while even during the concluding years of the war the Spanish soldiers on the upper Mississippi were regarded by the Americans in Illinois as a menace no less serious than the British troops at Detroit.

In the opening years of our national life the Western backwoodsman found the Spanish ownership of the mouth of the Mississippi even more hurtful and irksome than the retention by the British king of the posts on the Great Lakes. After years of tedious public negotiations, under and through which ran a dark woof of private intrigue, the sinewy western hands so loosened the Spanish grip that in despair Spain surrendered to France the mouth of the river and the vast territories stretching thence into the dim Northwest. She hoped thereby to establish a strong barrier between her remaining provinces and her most dreaded foe. But France in her turn grew to understand that America's position as regards Louisiana, thanks to the steady westward movement of the backwoodsman, was such as to render it on the one hand certain that the retention of the province by France would mean an armed clash with the United States, and on the other hand no less certain that in the long run such a conflict would result to France's disadvantage. Louisiana thus passed from the hands of Spain, after a brief interval, into those of the young Republic. There remained to Spain, Mexico and Florida; and forthwith the pressure of the stark forest riflemen began to be felt on the outskirts of these two provinces. Florida was the first to fall. After a portion of it had been forcibly annexed, after Andrew Jackson had marched at will through part of the remainder, and after the increasing difficulty of repressing the American filibustering efforts had shown the imminence of some serious catastrophe, Spain ceded the peninsula to the United States. Texas, New Mexico, and California did not fall into American hands until they had passed from the Spaniard to his half-Indian sons.

Many decades went by after Spain had lost her foothold on the American continent, and she still held her West Indian empire. She misgoverned the islands as she had misgoverned the continent; and in the islands, as once upon the continent, her own children became her deadliest foes. But generation succeeded generation, and the prophecies of those far-seeing statesmen who foretold that she would lose to the northern Republic her West Indian possessions remained unfulfilled. At last, at the close of one of the bloodiest and most brutal wars that even Spain ever waged with her own colonists, the United States intervened, and in a brief summer campaign destroyed the last vestiges of the mediaeval Spanish domain in the tropic seas alike of the West and the remote East.

We of this generation were but carrying to completion the work of our fathers and of our fathers' fathers. It is moreover a matter for just pride that while there was no falling off in the vigor and prowess shown by our fighting men, there was a marked change for the better in the spirit with which the deed was done. The backwoodsmen had pushed the Spaniards from the Mississippi, had set up a slave-holding republic in Texas, and had conquered the Californian gold-fields, in the sheer masterful exercise of might. It is true that they won great triumphs for civilization no less than for their own people; yet they won them unwittingly, for they were merely doing as countless other strong young races had done in the long contest carried on for so many thousands of years between the fit and the unfit. But in 1898 the United States, while having gained in strength, showed that there had

likewise been gain in justice, in mercy, in sense of responsibility. Our conquest of the Southwest has been justified by the result. The Latin peoples in the lands we won and settled have prospered like our own stock. The sons and grandsons of those who had been our foes in Louisiana and New Mexico came eagerly forward to serve in the army that was to invade Cuba. Our people as a whole went into the war, primarily, it is true, to drive out the Spaniard once for all from America; but with the fixed determination to replace his rule by a government of justice and orderly liberty.

To use the political terminology of the present day, the whole western movement of our people was simply the most vital part of that great movement of expansion which has been the central and all-important feature of our history—a feature far more important than any other since we became a nation, save only the preservation of the Union itself. It was expansion which made us a great power; and at every stage it has been bitterly antagonized, not only by the short-sighted and the timid, but even by many who were neither one nor the other. There were many men who opposed the movement west of the Alleghanies and the peopling of the lands which now form Kentucky, Tennessee, and the great States lying between the Ohio and the Lakes. Excellent persons then foretold ruin to the country from bringing into it a disorderly population of backwoodsmen, with the same solemnity that has in our own day marked the prophecies of those who have seen similar ruin in the intaking of Hawaii and Porto Rico. The annexation of Louisiana, including the entire territory between the northern Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean, aroused such frantic opposition in the old-settled regions of the country, and especially in the Northeast, as to call forth threats of disunion, the language used by the opponents of our expansion into the Far West being as violent as that sometimes used in denouncing our acquisition of the Philippines. The taking of Texas and of California was complicated by the slave question, but much of the opposition to both was simply the general opposition to expansion—that is, to national growth and national greatness. In our long-settled communities there have always been people who opposed every war which marked the advance of American civilization at the cost of savagery. The opposition was fundamentally the same, whether these wars were campaigns in the old West against the Shawnees and the Miamis, in the new West against the Sioux and the Apaches, or in Luzon against the Tagals. In each case, in the end, the believers in the historic American policy of expansion have triumphed. Hitherto America has gone steadily forward along the path of greatness, and has remained true to the policy of her early leaders who felt within them the lift towards mighty things. Like every really strong people, ours is stirred by the generous ardor for daring strife and mighty deeds, and now with eyes undimmed looks far into the misty future.

At bottom the question of expansion in 1898 was but a variant of the problem we had to solve at every stage of the great western movement. Whether the prize of the moment was Louisiana or Florida, Oregon or Alaska, mattered little. The same forces, the same types of men, stood for and against the cause of national growth, of national greatness, at the end of the century as at the beginning.

My non-literary work has been so engrossing during the years that have elapsed since my fourth volume was published, that I have been unable to go on with "The Winning of the West"; but my design is to continue the narrative as soon as I can get leisure, carrying it through the stages which marked the taking of Florida and Oregon, the upbuilding of the republic of Texas, and the acquisition of New Mexico and California as the result of the Mexican war.

Theodore Roosevelt

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, ALBANY, N. Y. *January* 1, 1900.

# CHAPTER I.
# THE SPREAD OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLES

During the past three centuries the spread of the English-speaking peoples over the world's waste spaces has been not only the most striking feature in the world's history, but also the event of all others most far-reaching in its effects and its importance.

The tongue which Bacon feared to use in his writings, lest they should remain forever unknown to all but the inhabitants of a relatively unimportant insular kingdom, is now the speech of two continents. The Common Law which Coke jealously upheld in the southern half of a single European island, is now the law of the land throughout the vast regions of Australasia, and of America north of the Rio Grande. The names of the plays that Shakespeare wrote are household words in the mouths of mighty nations, whose wide domains were to him more unreal than the realm of Prester John. Over half the descendants of their fellow countrymen of that day now dwell in lands which, when these three Englishmen were born, held not a single white inhabitant; the race which, when they were in their prime, was hemmed in between the North and the Irish seas, to-day holds sway over worlds, whose endless coasts are washed by the waves of the three great oceans.

There have been many other races that at one time or another had their great periods of race expansion—as distinguished from mere conquest,—but there has never been another whose expansion has been either so broad or so rapid.

At one time, many centuries ago, it seemed as if the Germanic peoples, like their Celtic foes and neighbors, would be absorbed into the all-conquering Roman power, and, merging their identity in that of the victors, would accept their law, their speech, and their habits of thought. But this danger vanished forever on the day of the slaughter by the Teutoburger Wald, when the legions of Varus were broken by the rush of Hermann's wild warriors.

Two or three hundred years later the Germans, no longer on the defensive, themselves went forth from their marshy forests conquering and to conquer. For century after century they swarmed out of the dark woodland east of the Rhine, and north of the Danube; and as their force spent itself, the movement was taken up by their brethren who dwelt along the coasts of the Baltic and the North Atlantic. From the Volga to the Pillars of Hercules, from Sicily to Britain, every land in turn bowed to the warlike prowess of the stalwart sons of Odin. Rome and Novgorod, the imperial city of Italy as well as the squalid capital of Muscovy, acknowledged the sway of kings of Teutonic or Scandinavian blood.

In most cases, however, the victorious invaders merely intruded themselves among the original and far more numerous owners of the land, ruled over them, and were absorbed by them. This happened to both Teuton and Scandinavian; to the descendants of Alaric, as well as to the children of Rurik. The Dane in Ireland became a Celt; the Goth of the Iberian peninsula became a Spaniard; Frank and Norwegian alike were merged into the mass of Romance-speaking Gauls, who themselves finally grew to be called by the names of their masters. Thus it came about that though the German tribes conquered Europe they did not extend the limits of Germany nor the sway of the German race. On the contrary, they strengthened the hands of the rivals of the people from whom they sprang. They gave rulers—kaisers, kings, barons, and knights—to all the lands they overran; here and there they imposed their own names on kingdoms and principalities—as in France, Normandy, Burgundy, and Lombardy; they grafted the feudal system on the Roman jurisprudence, and interpolated a few Teutonic words in the Latin dialects of the peoples they had conquered; but, hopelessly outnumbered, they were soon lost in the mass of their subjects, and adopted from them their laws, their culture, and their language. As a result, the mixed races of the south—the Latin nations as they are sometimes

called—strengthened by the infusion of northern blood, sprang anew into vigorous life, and became for the time being the leaders of the European world.

There was but one land whereof the winning made a lasting addition to Germanic soil; but this land was destined to be of more importance in the future of the Germanic peoples than all their continental possessions, original and acquired, put together. The day when the keels of the low-Dutch sea-thieves first grated on the British coast was big with the doom of many nations. There sprang up in conquered southern Britain, when its name had been significantly changed to England, that branch of the Germanic stock which was in the end to grasp almost literally world-wide power, and by its overshadowing growth to dwarf into comparative insignificance all its kindred folk. At the time, in the general wreck of the civilized world, the making of England attracted but little attention. Men's eyes were riveted on the empires conquered by the hosts of Alaric, Theodoric, and Clovis, not on the swarm of little kingdoms and earldoms founded by the nameless chiefs who led each his band of hard-rowing, hard-fighting henchmen across the stormy waters of the German Ocean. Yet the rule and the race of Goth, Frank, and Burgund have vanished from off the earth; while the sons of the unknown Saxon, Anglian, and Friesic warriors now hold in their hands the fate of the coming years.

After the great Teutonic wanderings were over, there came a long lull, until, with the discovery of America, a new period of even vaster race expansion began. During this lull the nations of Europe took on their present shapes. Indeed, the so-called Latin nations—the French and Spaniards, for instance—may be said to have been born after the first set of migrations ceased. Their national history, as such, does not really begin until about that time, whereas that of the Germanic peoples stretches back unbroken to the days when we first hear of their existence. It would be hard to say which one of half a dozen races that existed in Europe during the early centuries of the present era should be considered as especially the ancestor of the modern Frenchman or Spaniard. When the Romans conquered Gaul and Iberia they did not in any place drive out the ancient owners of the soil; they simply Romanized them, and left them as the base of the population. By the Frankish and Visigothic invasions another strain of blood was added, to be speedily absorbed; while the invaders took the language of the conquered people, and established themselves as the ruling class. Thus the modern nations who sprang from this mixture derive portions of their governmental system and general policy from one race, most of their blood from another, and their language, law, and culture from a third.

The English race, on the contrary, has a perfectly continuous history. When Alfred reigned, the English already had a distinct national being; when Charlemagne reigned, the French, as we use the term to-day, had no national being whatever. The Germans of the mainland merely overran the countries that lay in their path; but the sea-rovers who won England to a great extent actually displaced the native Britons. The former were absorbed by the subject-races; the latter, on the contrary, slew or drove off or assimilated the original inhabitants. Unlike all the other Germanic swarms, the English took neither creed nor custom, neither law nor speech, from their beaten foes. At the time when the dynasty of the Capets had become firmly established at Paris, France was merely part of a country where Latinized Gauls and Basques were ruled by Latinized Franks, Goths, Burgunds, and Normans; but the people across the Channel then showed little trace of Celtic or Romance influence. It would be hard to say whether Vercingetorix or Caesar, Clovis or Syagrius, has the better right to stand as the prototype of a modern French general. There is no such doubt in the other case. The average Englishman, American, or Australian of to-day who wishes to recall the feats of power with which his race should be credited in the shadowy dawn of its history, may go back to the half-mythical glories of Hengist and Horsa, perhaps to the deeds of Civilis the Batavian, or to those of the hero of the Teutoburger fight, but certainly to the wars neither of the Silurian chief Caractacus nor of his conqueror, the after-time Emperor Vespasian.

Nevertheless, when, in the sixteenth century, the European peoples began to extend their dominions beyond Europe, England had grown to differ profoundly from the Germanic countries of the mainland. A very large Celtic element had been introduced into the English blood, and, in

addition, there had been a considerable Scandinavian admixture. More important still were the radical changes brought by the Norman conquest; chief among them the transformation of the old English tongue into the magnificent language which is now the common inheritance of so many widespread peoples. England's insular position, moreover, permitted it to work out its own fate comparatively unhampered by the presence of outside powers; so that it developed a type of nationality totally distinct from the types of the European mainland.

All this is not foreign to American history. The vast movement by which this continent was conquered and peopled cannot be rightly understood if considered solely by itself. It was the crowning and greatest achievement of a series of mighty movements, and it must be taken in connection with them. Its true significance will be lost unless we grasp, however roughly, the past race-history of the nations who took part therein.

When, with the voyages of Columbus and his successors, the great period of extra-European colonization began, various nations strove to share in the work. Most of them had to plant their colonies in lands across the sea; Russia alone was by her geographical position enabled to extend her frontiers by land, and in consequence her comparatively recent colonization of Siberia bears some resemblance to our own work in the western United States. The other countries of Europe were forced to find their outlets for conquest and emigration beyond the ocean, and, until the colonists had taken firm root in their new homes the mastery of the seas thus became a matter of vital consequence.

Among the lands beyond the ocean America was the first reached and the most important. It was conquered by different European races, and shoals of European settlers were thrust forth upon its shores. These sometimes displaced and sometimes merely overcame and lived among the natives. They also, to their own lasting harm, committed a crime whose shortsighted folly was worse than its guilt, for they brought hordes of African slaves, whose descendants now form immense populations in certain portions of the land. Throughout the continent we therefore find the white, red, and black races in every stage of purity and intermixture. One result of this great turmoil of conquest and immigration has been that, in certain parts of America, the lines of cleavage of race are so far from coinciding with the lines of cleavage of speech that they run at right angles to them—as in the four communities of Ontario, Quebec, Havti, and Jamaica.

Each intruding European power, in winning for itself new realms beyond the seas, had to wage a twofold war, overcoming the original inhabitants with one hand, and with the other warding off the assaults of the kindred nations that were bent on the same schemes. Generally the contests of the latter kind were much the most important. The victories by which the struggles between the European conquerors themselves were ended deserve lasting commemoration. Yet, sometimes, even the most important of them, sweeping though they were, were in parts less sweeping than they seemed. It would be impossible to overestimate the far-reaching effects of the overthrow of the French power in America; but Lower Canada, where the fatal blow was given, itself suffered nothing but a political conquest, which did not interfere in the least with the growth of a French state along both sides of the lower St. Lawrence. In a somewhat similar way Dutch communities have held their own, and indeed have sprung up in South Africa.

All the European nations touching on the Atlantic seaboard took part in the new work, with very varying success; Germany alone, then rent by many feuds, having no share therein. Portugal founded a single state, Brazil. The Scandinavian nations did little: their chief colony fell under the control of the Dutch. The English and the Spaniards were the two nations to whom the bulk of the new lands fell: the former getting much the greater portion. The conquests of the Spaniards took place in the sixteenth century. The West Indies and Mexico, Peru and the limitless grass plains of what is now the Argentine Confederation,—all these and the lands lying between them had been conquered and colonized by the Spaniards before there was a single English settlement in the New World, and while the fleets of the Catholic king still held for him the lordship of the ocean. Then the cumbrous Spanish vessels succumbed to the attacks of the swift war-ships of Holland and England,

and the sun of the Spanish world-dominion set as quickly as it had risen. Spain at once came to a standstill; it was only here and there that she even extended her rule over a few neighboring Indian tribes, while she was utterly unable to take the offensive against the French, Dutch, and English. But it is a singular thing that these vigorous and powerful new-comers, who had so quickly put a stop to her further growth, yet wrested from her very little of what was already hers. They plundered a great many Spanish cities and captured a great many Spanish galleons, but they made no great or lasting conquests of Spanish territory. Their mutual jealousies, and the fear each felt of the others, were among the main causes of this state of things; and hence it came about that after the opening of the seventeenth century the wars they waged against one another were of far more ultimate consequence than the wars they waged against the former mistress of the western world. England in the end drove both France and Holland from the field; but it was under the banner of the American Republic, not under that of the British Monarchy, that the English-speaking people first won vast stretches of land from the descendants of the Spanish conquerors.

The three most powerful of Spain's rivals waged many a long war with one another to decide which should grasp the sceptre that had slipped from Spanish hands. The fleets of Holland fought with stubborn obstinacy to wrest from England her naval supremacy; but they failed, and in the end the greater portion of the Dutch domains fell to their foes. The French likewise began a course of conquest and colonization at the same time the English did, and after a couple of centuries of rivalry, ending in prolonged warfare, they also succumbed. The close of the most important colonial contest ever waged left the French without a foot of soil on the North American mainland; while their victorious foes had not only obtained the lead in the race for supremacy on that continent, but had also won the command of the ocean. They thenceforth found themselves free to work their will in all seagirt lands, unchecked by hostile European influence.

Most fortunately, when England began her career as a colonizing power in America, Spain had already taken possession of the populous tropical and subtropical regions, and the northern power was thus forced to form her settlements in the sparsely peopled temperate zone.

It is of vital importance to remember that the English and Spanish conquests in America differed from each other very much as did the original conquests which gave rise to the English and the Spanish nations. The English had exterminated or assimilated the Celts of Britain, and they substantially repeated the process with the Indians of America; although of course in America there was very little, instead of very much, assimilation. The Germanic strain is dominant in the blood of the average Englishman, exactly as the English strain is dominant in the blood of the average American. Twice a portion of the race has shifted its home, in each case undergoing a marked change, due both to outside influence and to internal development; but in the main retaining, especially in the last instance, the general race characteristics.

It was quite otherwise in the countries conquered by Cortes, Pizarro, and their successors. Instead of killing or driving off the natives as the English did, the Spaniards simply sat down in the midst of a much more numerous aboriginal population. The process by which Central and South America became Spanish bore very close resemblance to the process by which the lands of southeastern Europe were turned into Romance-speaking countries. The bulk of the original inhabitants remained unchanged in each case. There was little displacement of population. Roman soldiers and magistrates, Roman merchants and handicraftsmen were thrust in among the Celtic and Iberian peoples, exactly as the Spanish military and civil rulers, priests, traders, land-owners, and mine-owners settled down among the Indians of Peru and Mexico. By degrees, in each case, the many learnt the language and adopted the laws, religion, and governmental system of the few, although keeping certain of their own customs and habits of thought. Though the ordinary Spaniard of to-day speaks a Romance dialect, he is mainly of Celto-Iberian blood; and though most Mexicans and Peruvians speak Spanish, yet the great majority of them trace their descent back to the subjects of Montezuma and the Incas. Moreover, exactly as in Europe little ethnic islands of Breton and Basque

stock have remained unaffected by the Romance flood, so in America there are large communities where the inhabitants keep unchanged the speech and the customs of their Indian forefathers.

The English-speaking peoples now hold more and better land than any other American nationality or set of nationalities. They have in their veins less aboriginal American blood than any of their neighbors. Yet it is noteworthy that the latter have tacitly allowed them to arrogate to themselves the title of "Americans," whereby to designate their distinctive and individual nationality.

So much for the difference between the way in which the English and the way in which other European nations have conquered and colonized. But there have been likewise very great differences in the methods and courses of the English-speaking peoples themselves, at different times and in different places.

The settlement of the United States and Canada, throughout most of their extent, bears much resemblance to the later settlement of Australia and New Zealand. The English conquest of India and even the English conquest of South Africa come in an entirely different category. The first was a mere political conquest, like the Dutch conquest of Java or the extension of the Roman Empire over parts of Asia. South Africa in some respects stands by itself, because there the English are confronted by another white race which it is as yet uncertain whether they can assimilate, and, what is infinitely more important, because they are there confronted by a very large native population with which they cannot mingle, and which neither dies out nor recedes before their advance. It is not likely, but it is at least within the bounds of possibility, that in the course of centuries the whites of South Africa will suffer a fate akin to that which befell the Greek colonists in the Tauric Chersonese, and be swallowed up in the overwhelming mass of black barbarism.

On the other hand, it may fairly be said that in America and Australia the English race has already entered into and begun the enjoyment of its great inheritance. When these continents were settled they contained the largest tracts of fertile, temperate, thinly peopled country on the face of the globe. We cannot rate too highly the importance of their acquisition. Their successful settlement was a feat which by comparison utterly dwarfs all the European wars of the last two centuries; just as the importance of the issues at stake in the wars of Rome and Carthage completely overshadowed the interests for which the various contemporary Greek kingdoms were at the same time striving.

Australia, which was much less important than America, was also won and settled with far less difficulty. The natives were so few in number and of such a low type, that they practically offered no resistance at all, being but little more hindrance than an equal number of ferocious beasts. There was no rivalry whatever by any European power, because the actual settlement—not the mere expatriation of convicts—only began when England, as a result of her struggle with Republican and Imperial France, had won the absolute control of the seas. Unknown to themselves, Nelson and his fellow admirals settled the fate of Australia, upon which they probably never wasted a thought. Trafalgar decided much more than the mere question whether Great Britain should temporarily share the fate that so soon befell Prussia; for in all probability it decided the destiny of the island-continent that lay in the South Seas.

The history of the English-speaking race in America has been widely different. In Australia there was no fighting whatever, whether with natives or with other foreigners. In America for the past two centuries and a half there has been a constant succession of contests with powerful and warlike native tribes, with rival European nations, and with American nations of European origin. But even in America there have been wide differences in the way the work has had to be done in different parts of the country, since the close of the great colonial contests between England, France, and Spain.

The extension of the English westward through Canada since the war of the Revolution has been in its essential features merely a less important repetition of what has gone on in the northern United States. The gold miner, the transcontinental railway, and the soldier have been the pioneers of civilization. The chief point of difference, which was but small, arose from the fact that the whole of western Canada was for a long time under the control of the most powerful of all the fur companies,

in whose employ were very many French voyageurs and coureurs des bois. From these there sprang up in the valleys of the Red River and the Saskatchewan a singular race of half-breeds, with a unique semi-civilization of their own. It was with these half-breeds, and not, as in the United States, with the Indians, that the settlers of northwestern Canada had their main difficulties.

In what now forms the United States, taking the country as a whole, the foes who had to be met and overcome were very much more formidable. The ground had to be not only settled but conquered, sometimes at the expense of the natives, often at the expense of rival European races. As already pointed out the Indians themselves formed one of the main factors in deciding the fate of the continent. They were never able in the end to avert the white conquest, but they could often delay its advance for a long spell of years. The Iroquois, for instance, held their own against all comers for two centuries. Many other tribes stayed for a time the oncoming white flood, or even drove it back; in Maine the settlers were for a hundred years confined to a narrow strip of sea-coast. Against the Spaniards, there were even here and there Indian nations who definitely recovered the ground they had lost.

When the whites first landed, the superiority and, above all, the novelty of their arms gave them a very great advantage. But the Indians soon became accustomed to the new-comers' weapons and style of warfare. By the time the English had consolidated the Atlantic colonies under their rule, the Indians had become what they have remained ever since, the most formidable savage foes ever encountered by colonists of European stock. Relatively to their numbers, they have shown themselves far more to be dreaded than the Zulus or even the Maoris.

Their presence has caused the process of settlement to go on at unequal rates of speed in different places; the flood has been hemmed in at one point, or has been forced to flow round an island of native population at another. Had the Indians been as helpless as the native Australians were, the continent of North America would have had an altogether different history. It would not only have been settled far more rapidly, but also on very different lines. Not only have the red men themselves kept back the settlements, but they have also had a very great effect upon the outcome of the struggles between the different intrusive European peoples. Had the original inhabitants of the Mississippi valley been as numerous and unwarlike as the Aztecs, de Soto would have repeated the work of Cortes, and we would very possibly have been barred out of the greater portion of our present domain. Had it not been for their Indian allies, it would have been impossible for the French to prolong, as they did, their struggle with their much more numerous English neighbors.

The Indians have shrunk back before our advance only after fierce and dogged resistance. They were never numerous in the land, but exactly what their numbers were when the whites first appeared is impossible to tell. Probably an estimate of half a million for those within the limits of the present United States is not far wrong; but in any such calculation there is of necessity a large element of mere rough guess-work. Formerly writers greatly over-estimated their original numbers, counting them by millions. Now it is the fashion to go to the other extreme, and even to maintain that they have not decreased at all. This last is a theory that can only be upheld on the supposition that the whole does not consist of the sum of the parts; for whereas we can check off on our fingers the tribes that have slightly increased, we can enumerate scores that have died out almost before our eyes. Speaking broadly, they have mixed but little with the English (as distinguished from the French and Spanish) invaders. They are driven back, or die out, or retire to their own reservations; but they are not often assimilated. Still, on every frontier, there is always a certain amount of assimilation going on, much more than is commonly admitted;[1] and whenever a French or Spanish community has been absorbed

[1] To this I can testify of my own knowledge as regards Montana, Dakota, and Minnesota. The mixture usually takes place in the ranks of the population where individuals lose all trace of their ancestry after two or three generations; so it is often honestly ignored, and sometimes mention of it is suppressed, the man regarding it as a taint. But I also know many very wealthy old frontiersmen whose half-breed children are now being educated, generally at convent schools, while in the Northwestern cities I could point out some very charming men and women, in the best society, with a strain of Indian blood in their veins.

by the energetic Americans, a certain amount of Indian blood has been absorbed also. There seems to be a chance that in one part of our country, the Indian territory, the Indians, who are continually advancing in civilization, will remain as the ground element of the population, like the Creoles in Louisiana, or the Mexicans in New Mexico.

The Americans when they became a nation continued even more successfully the work which they had begun as citizens of the several English colonies. At the outbreak of the Revolution they still all dwelt on the seaboard, either on the coast itself or along the banks of the streams flowing into the Atlantic. When the fight at Lexington took place they had no settlements beyond the mountain chain on our western border. It had taken them over a century and a half to spread from the Atlantic to the Alleghanies. In the next three quarters of a century they spread from the Alleghanies to the Pacific. In doing this they not only dispossessed the Indian tribes, but they also won the land from its European owners. Britain had to yield the territory between the Ohio and the Great Lakes. By a purchase, of which we frankly announced that the alternative would be war, we acquired from France the vast, ill-defined region known as Louisiana. From the Spaniards, or from their descendants, we won the lands of Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and California.

All these lands were conquered after we had become a power, independent of every other, and one within our own borders; when we were no longer a loose assemblage of petty seaboard communities, each with only such relationship to its neighbor as was implied in their common subjection to a foreign king and a foreign people. Moreover, it is well always to remember that at the day when we began our career as a nation we already differed from our kinsmen of Britain in blood as well as in name; the word American already had more than a merely geographical signification. Americans belong to the English race only in the sense in which Englishmen belong to the German. The fact that no change of language has accompanied the second wandering of our people, from Britain to America, as it accompanied their first, from Germany to Britain, is due to the further fact that when the second wandering took place the race possessed a fixed literary language, and, thanks to the ease of communication, was kept in touch with the parent stock. The change of blood was probably as great in one case as in the other. The modern Englishman is descended from a Low-Dutch stock, which, when it went to Britain, received into itself an enormous infusion of Celtic, a much smaller infusion of Norse and Danish, and also a certain infusion of Norman-French blood. When this new English stock came to America it mingled with and absorbed into itself immigrants from many European lands, and the process has gone on ever since. It is to be noted that, of the new blood thus acquired, the greatest proportion has come from Dutch and German sources, and the next greatest from Irish, while the Scandinavian element comes third, and the only other of much consequence is French Huguenot. Thus it appears that no new element of importance has been added to the blood. Additions have been made to the elemental race-strains in much the same proportion as these were originally combined.

Some latter-day writers deplore the enormous immigration to our shores as making us a heterogeneous instead of a homogeneous people; but as a matter of fact we are less heterogeneous at the present day than we were at the outbreak of the Revolution. Our blood was as much mixed a century ago as it is now. No State now has a smaller proportion of English blood than New York or Pennsylvania had in 1775. Even in New England, where the English stock was purest, there was a certain French and Irish mixture; in Virginia there were Germans in addition. In the other colonies, taken as a whole, it is not probable that much over half of the blood was English; Dutch, French, German, and Gaelic communities abounded.

But all were being rapidly fused into one people. As the Celt of Cornwall and the Saxon of Wessex are now alike Englishmen, so in 1775 Hollander and Huguenot, whether in New York or South Carolina, had become Americans, undistinguishable from the New Englanders and Virginians, the descendants of the men who followed Cromwell or charged behind Rupert. When the great western movement began we were already a people by ourselves. Moreover, the immense immigration

from Europe that has taken place since, had little or no effect on the way in which we extended our boundaries; it only began to be important about the time that we acquired our present limits. These limits would in all probability be what they now are even if we had not received a single European colonist since the Revolution.

Thus the Americans began their work of western conquest as a separate and individual people, at the moment when they sprang into national life. It has been their great work ever since. All other questions save those of the preservation of the Union itself and of the emancipation of the blacks have been of subordinate importance when compared with the great question of how rapidly and how completely they were to subjugate that part of their continent lying between the eastern mountains and the Pacific. Yet the statesmen of the Atlantic seaboard were often unable to perceive this, and indeed frequently showed the same narrow jealousy of the communities beyond the Alleghanies that England felt for all America. Even if they were too broad-minded and far-seeing to feel thus, they yet were unable to fully appreciate the magnitude of the interests at stake in the west. They thought more of our right to the North Atlantic fisheries than of our ownership of the Mississippi valley; they were more interested in the fate of a bank or a tariff than in the settlement of the Oregon boundary. Most contemporary writers showed similar shortcomings in their sense of historic perspective. The names of Ethan Allen and Marion are probably better known than is that of George Rogers Clark; yet their deeds, as regards their effects, could no more be compared to his, than his could be compared to Washington's. So it was with Houston. During his lifetime there were probably fifty men who, east of the Mississippi, were deemed far greater than he was. Yet in most cases their names have already almost faded from remembrance, while his fame will grow steadily brighter as the importance of his deeds is more thoroughly realized. Fortunately, in the long run, the mass of easterners always backed up their western brethren.

The kind of colonizing conquest, whereby the people of the United States have extended their borders, has much in common with the similar movements in Canada and Australia, all of them, standing in sharp contrast to what has gone on in Spanish-American lands. But of course each is marked out in addition by certain peculiarities of its own. Moreover, even in the United States, the movement falls naturally into two divisions, which on several points differ widely from each other.

The way in which the southern part of our western country—that is, all the land south of the Ohio, and from thence on to the Rio Grande and the Pacific—was won and settled, stands quite alone. The region north of it was filled up in a very different manner. The Southwest, including therein what was once called simply the West, and afterwards the Middle West, was won by the people themselves, acting as individuals, or as groups of individuals, who hewed out their own fortunes in advance of any governmental action. On the other hand, the Northwest, speaking broadly, was acquired by the government, the settlers merely taking possession of what the whole country guaranteed them. The Northwest is essentially a national domain; it is fitting that it should be, as it is, not only by position but by feeling, the heart of the nation.

North of the Ohio the regular army went first. The settlements grew up behind the shelter of the federal troops of Harmar, St. Claire, and Wayne, and of their successors even to our own day. The wars in which the borderers themselves bore any part were few and trifling compared to the contests waged by the adventurers who won Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas.

In the Southwest the early settlers acted as their own army, and supplied both leaders and men. Sevier, Robertson, Clark, and Boon led their fellow pioneers to battle, as Jackson did afterwards, and as Houston did later still. Indeed the Southwesterners not only won their own soil for themselves, but they were the chief instruments in the original acquisition of the Northwest also. Had it not been for the conquest of the Illinois towns in 1779 we would probably never have had any Northwest to settle; and the huge tract between the upper Mississippi and the Columbia, then called Upper Louisiana, fell into our hands, only because the Kentuckians and Tennesseeans were resolutely bent on taking possession of New Orleans, either by bargain or battle. All of our territory lying beyond the

Alleghanies, north and south, was first won for us by the Southwesterners, fighting for their own hand. The northern part was afterwards filled up by the thrifty, vigorous men of the Northeast, whose sons became the real rulers as well as the preservers of the Union; but these settlements of Northerners were rendered possible only by the deeds of the nation as a whole. They entered on land that the Southerners had won, and they were kept there by the strong arm of the Federal Government; whereas the Southerners owed most of their victories only to themselves.

The first-comers around Marietta did, it is true, share to a certain extent in the dangers of the existing Indian wars; but their trials are not to be mentioned beside those endured by the early settlers of Tennessee and Kentucky, and whereas these latter themselves subdued and drove out their foes, the former took but an insignificant part in the contest by which the possession of their land was secured. Besides, the strongest and most numerous Indian tribes were in the Southwest.

The Southwest developed its civilization on its own lines, for good and for ill; the Northwest was settled under the national ordinance of 1787, which absolutely determined its destiny, and thereby in the end also determined the destiny of the whole nation. Moreover, the gulf coast, as well as the interior, from the Mississippi to the Pacific, was held by foreign powers; while in the north this was only true of the country between the Ohio and the Great Lakes during the first years of the Revolution, until the Kentucky backwoodsmen conquered it. Our rivals of European race had dwelt for generations along the lower Mississippi and the Rio Grande, in Florida, and in California, when we made them ours. Detroit, Vincennes, St. Louis, and New Orleans, St. Augustine, San Antonio, Santa Fe, and San Francisco are cities that were built by Frenchmen or Spaniards; we did not found them, but conquered them. All but the first two are in the Southwest, and of these two one was first taken and governed by Southwesterners. On the other hand, the Northwestern cities, from Cincinnati and Chicago to Helena and Portland, were founded by our own people, by the people who now have possession of them.

The Southwest was conquered only after years of hard fighting with the original owners. The way in which this was done bears much less resemblance to the sudden filling up of Australia and California by the practically unopposed overflow from a teeming and civilized mother country, than it does to the original English conquest of Britain itself. The warlike borderers who thronged across the Alleghanies, the restless and reckless hunters, the hard, dogged, frontier farmers, by dint of grim tenacity overcame and displaced Indians, French, and Spaniards alike, exactly as, fourteen hundred years before, Saxon and Angle had overcome and displaced the Cymric and Gaelic Celts. They were led by no one commander; they acted under orders from neither king nor congress; they were not carrying out the plans of any far-sighted leader. In obedience to the instincts working half blindly within their breasts, spurred ever onwards by the fierce desires of their eager hearts, they made in the wilderness homes for their children, and by so doing wrought out the destinies of a continental nation. They warred and settled from the high hill-valleys of the French Broad and the Upper Cumberland to the half-tropical basin of the Rio Grande, and to where the Golden Gate lets through the long-heaving waters of the Pacific. The story of how this was done forms a compact and continuous whole. The fathers followed Boon or fought at King's Mountain; the sons marched south with Jackson to overcome the Creeks and beat back the British; the grandsons died at the Alamo or charged to victory at San Jacinto. They were doing their share of a work that began with the conquest of Britain, that entered on its second and wider period after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, that culminated in the marvellous growth of the United States. The winning of the West and Southwest is a stage in the conquest of a continent.

# CHAPTER II.
# THE FRENCH OF THE OHIO VALLEY, 1763-1775

The result of England's last great colonial struggle with France was to sever from the latter all her American dependencies, her colonists becoming the subjects of alien and rival powers. England won Canada and the Ohio valley; while France ceded to her Spanish allies Louisiana, including therein all the territory vaguely bounded by the Mississippi and the Pacific. As an offset to this gain Spain had herself lost to England both Floridas, as the coast regions between Georgia and Louisiana were then called.

Thus the thirteen colonies, at the outset of their struggle for independence, saw themselves surrounded north, south, and west, by lands where the rulers and the ruled were of different races, but where rulers and ruled alike were hostile to the new people that was destined in the end to master them all.

The present province of Quebec, then called Canada, was already, what she has to this day remained, a French state acknowledging the English king as her over-lord. Her interests did not conflict with those of our people, nor touch them in any way, and she has had little to do with our national history, and nothing whatever to do with the history of the west.

In the peninsula of East Florida, in the land of the cypress, palmetto, and live oak, of open savannas, of sandy pine forests, and impenetrable, interminable morasses, a European civilization more ancient than any in the English colonies was mouldering in slow decay. Its capital city was quaint St. Augustine, the old walled town that was founded by the Spaniards long years before the keel of the *Half-Moon* furrowed the broad Hudson, or the ships of the Puritans sighted the New England coast. In times past St. Augustine had once and again seen her harbor filled with the huge, cumbrous hulls, and whitened by the bellying sails, of the Spanish war vessels, when the fleets of the Catholic king gathered there, before setting out against the seaboard towns of Georgia and the Carolinas; and she had to suffer from and repulse the retaliatory inroads of the English colonists. Once her priests and soldiers had brought the Indian tribes, far and near, under subjection, and had dotted the wilderness with fort and church and plantation, the outposts of her dominion; but that was long ago, and the tide of Spanish success had turned and begun to ebb many years before the English took possession of Florida[2]. The Seminoles, fierce and warlike, whose warriors fought on foot and on horseback, had avenged in countless bloody forays their fellow-Indian tribes, whose very names had perished under Spanish rule. The churches and forts had crumbled into nothing; only the cannon and the brazen bells, half buried in the rotting mould, remained to mark the place where once stood spire and citadel. The deserted plantations, the untravelled causeways, no longer marred the face of the tree-clad land, for even their sites had ceased to be distinguishable; the great high-road that led to Pensacola had faded away, overgrown by the rank luxuriance of the semi-tropical forest. Throughout the interior the painted savages roved at will, uncontrolled by Spaniard or Englishman, owing allegiance only to the White Chief of Tallasotchee. St. Augustine, with its British garrison and its Spanish and Minorcan townsfolk,[3] was still a gathering place for a few Indian traders, and for the scattered fishermen of the coast; elsewhere there were in all not more than a hundred families.[4]

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[2] "Travels by William Bartram," Philadelphia, 1791, pp. 184, 231, 232, etc. The various Indian names are spelt in a dozen different ways.

[3] Reise, etc. (in 1783 and 84), by Johann David Schopf, 1788, II. 362. The Minorcans were the most numerous and prosperous; then came the Spaniards, with a few creoles, English, and Germans.

[4] J. D. F. Smyth, "Tour in the United States" (1775), London, 1784, II., 35.

Beyond the Chattahooche and the Appalachicola, stretching thence to the Mississippi and its delta, lay the more prosperous region of West Florida.[5] Although taken by the English from Spain, there were few Spaniards among the people, who were controlled by the scanty British garrisons at Pensacola, Mobile, and Natchez. On the Gulf coast the inhabitants were mainly French creoles. They were an indolent, pleasure-loving race, fond of dancing and merriment, living at ease in their low, square, roomy houses on the straggling, rudely farmed plantations that lay along the river banks. Their black slaves worked for them; they, themselves spent much of their time in fishing and fowling. Their favorite arm was the light fowling-piece, for they were expert wing shots;[6] unlike the American backwoodsmen, who knew nothing of shooting on the wing, and looked down on smooth-bores, caring only for the rifle, the true weapon of the freeman. In winter the creoles took their negroes to the hills, where they made tar from the pitch pine, and this they exported, as well as indigo, rice, tobacco, bear's oil, peltry, oranges, and squared timber. Cotton was grown, but only for home use. The British soldiers dwelt in stockaded forts, mounting light cannon; the governor lived in the high stone castle built of old by the Spaniards at Pensacola.[7]

In the part of west Florida lying along the east bank of the Mississippi, there were also some French creoles and a few Spaniards, with of course negroes and Indians to boot. But the population consisted mainly of Americans from the old colonies, who had come thither by sea in small sailing-vessels, or had descended the Ohio and the Tennessee in flat-boats, or, perchance, had crossed the Creek country with pack ponies, following the narrow trails of the Indian traders. With them were some English and Scotch, and the Americans themselves had little sympathy with the colonies, feeling instead a certain dread and dislike of the rough Carolinian mountaineers, who were their nearest white neighbors on the east.[8] They therefore, for the most part, remained loyal to the crown in the Revolutionary struggle, and suffered accordingly.

When Louisiana was ceded to Spain, most of the French creoles who formed her population were clustered together in the delta of the Mississippi; the rest were scattered out here and there, in a thin, dotted line, up the left bank of the river to the Missouri, near the mouth of which there were several small villages,—St. Louis, St. Genevieve, St. Charles.[9] A strong Spanish garrison held New Orleans, where the creoles, discontented with their new masters, had once risen in a revolt that was speedily quelled and severely punished. Small garrisons were also placed in the different villages.

Our people had little to do with either Florida or Louisiana until after the close of the Revolutionary war; but very early in that struggle, and soon after the movement west of the mountains began, we were thrown into contact with the French of the Northwestern Territory, and the result was of the utmost importance to the future welfare of the whole nation.

This northwestern land lay between the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Great Lakes. It now constitutes five of our large States and part of a sixth. But when independence was declared it was quite as much a foreign territory, considered from the standpoint of the old thirteen colonies, as Florida or Canada; the difference was that, whereas during the war we failed in our attempts to conquer Florida and Canada, we succeeded in conquering the Northwest. The Northwest formed no part of our country as it originally stood; it had no portion in the declaration of independence. It did not revolt; it was conquered. Its inhabitants, at the outset of the Revolution, no more sympathized with us, and felt no greater inclination to share our fate, than did their kinsmen in Quebec or the

[5] *Do.*

[6] "Mémoire ou Coup-d'Oeil Rapide sur mes différentes voyages et mon séjour dans la nation Creck, par Le Gal. Milfort, Tastanegy ou grand chef de guerre de la nation Creck et General de Brigade au service de la République Française." Paris, 1802. Writing in 1781, he said Mobile contained about forty proprietary families, and was "un petit paradis terrestre."

[7] Bartram, 407.

[8] *Magazine of American History*, IV., 388. Letter of a New England settler in 1773.

[9] "Annals of St. Louis." Frederic L. Billon. St. Louis, 1886. A valuable book.

Spaniards in St. Augustine. We made our first important conquest during the Revolution itself,—beginning thus early what was to be our distinguishing work for the next seventy years.

These French settlements, which had been founded about the beginning of the century, when the English still clung to the estuaries of the seaboard, were grouped in three clusters, separated by hundreds of miles of wilderness. One of these clusters, containing something like a third of the total population, was at the straits, around Detroit.[10] It was the seat of the British power in that section, and remained in British hands for twenty years after we had become a nation.

The other two were linked together by their subsequent history, and it is only with them that we have to deal. The village of Vincennes lay on the eastern bank of the Wabash, with two or three smaller villages tributary to it in the country round about; and to the west, beside the Mississippi, far above where it is joined by the Ohio, lay the so-called Illinois towns, the villages of Kaskaskia and Cahokia, with between them the little settlements of Prairie du Rocher and St. Philip.[11]

Both these groups of old French hamlets were in the fertile prairie region of what is now southern Indiana and Illinois. We have taken into our language the word prairie, because when our backwoodsmen first reached the land and saw the great natural meadows of long grass—sights unknown to the gloomy forests wherein they had always dwelt—they knew not what to call them, and borrowed the term already in use among the French inhabitants.

The great prairies, level or rolling, stretched from north to south, separated by broad belts of high timber. Here and there copses of woodland lay like islands in the sunny seas of tall, waving grass. Where the rivers ran, their alluvial bottoms were densely covered with trees and underbrush, and were often overflowed in the spring freshets. Sometimes the prairies were long, narrow strips of meadow land; again they were so broad as to be a day's journey across, and to the American, bred in a wooded country where the largest openings were the beaver meadows and the clearings of the frontier settlers, the stretches of grass land seemed limitless. They abounded in game. The buffalo crossed and recrossed them, wandering to and fro in long files, beating narrow trails that they followed year in and year out; while bear, elk, and deer dwelt in the groves around the borders.[12]

There were perhaps some four thousand inhabitants in these French villages, divided almost equally between those in the Illinois and those along the Wabash.[13]

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[10] In the Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. 122, p. 2, is a census of Detroit itself, taken in 1773 by Philip Dejean, justice of the peace. According to this there were 1,367 souls, of whom 85 were slaves; they dwelt in 280 houses, with 157 barns, and owned 1,494 horned cattle, 628 sheep, and 1,067 hogs. Acre is used as a measure of length; their united farms had a frontage of 512, and went back from 40 to 80. Some of the people, it is specified, were not enumerated because they were out hunting or trading at the Indian villages. Besides the slaves, there were 93 servants.This only refers to the settlers of Detroit proper, and the farms adjoining. Of the numerous other farms, and the small villages on both sides of the straits, and of the many families and individuals living as traders or trappers with the Indians, I can get no good record. Perhaps the total population, tributary to Detroit was 2,000. It may have been over this. Any attempt to estimate this creole population perforce contains much guess-work.

[11] State Department MSS., No. 150, Vol. III., p. 89.

[12] *Do* Harmar's letter.

[13] State Department MSS, No 30, p 453. Memorial of François Carbonneaux, agent for the inhabitants of the Illinois country. Dec 8, 1784. "Four hundred families [in the Illinois] exclusive of a like number at Post Vincent" [Vincennes]. Americans had then just begun to come in, but this enumeration did not refer to them. The population had decreased during the Revolutionary war, so that at its outbreak there were probably altogether a thousand families. They were very prolific, and four to a family is probably not too great an allowance, even when we consider that in such a community on the frontier there are always plenty of solitary adventurers. Moreover, there were a number of negro slaves. Harmar's letter of Nov. 24, 1787, states the adult males of Kaskaskia and Cahokia at four hundred and forty, not counting those at St. Philip or Prairie du Rocher. This tallies very well with the preceding. But of course the number given can only be considered approximately accurate, and a passage in a letter of Lt-Gov Hamilton would indicate that it was considerably smaller.This letter is to be found in the Haldimand MSS, Series B, Vol. 123, p. 53, it is the 'brief account' of his ill-starred expedition against Vincennes. He says "On taking an account of the Inhabitants at this place [Vincennes], of all ages and sexes we found their number to amount to 621, of this 217 fit to bear arms on the spot, several being absent hunting Buffaloe for their winter provision." But elsewhere in the same letter he alludes to the adult arms-bearing men as being three hundred in number, and of course the outlying farms and small tributary villages are not counted in. This was in December, 1778. Possibly some families had left for the Spanish possessions after the war broke out, and returned after it was ended. But as all observers seem to unite in stating that the settlements either stood still or went backwards during the Revolutionary struggle, it is somewhat difficult to reconcile the figures of Hamilton and Carbonneaux.

The country came into the possession of the British—not of the colonial English or Americans—at the close of Pontiac's war, the aftermath of the struggle which decided against the French the ownership of America. It was held as a new British province, not as an extension of any of the old colonies; and finally in 1774, by the famous Quebec Act, it was rendered an appanage of Canada, governed from the latter. It is a curious fact that England immediately adopted towards her own colonists the policy of the very nationality she had ousted. From the date of the triumphant peace won by Wolfe's victory, the British government became the most active foe of the spread of the English race in America. This position Britain maintained for many years after the failure of her attempt to bar her colonists out of the Ohio valley. It was the position she occupied when at Ghent in 1814 her commissioners tried to hem in the natural progress of her colonists' children by the erection of a great "neutral belt" of Indian territory, guaranteed by the British king. It was the role which her statesmen endeavored to make her play when at a later date they strove to keep Oregon a waste rather than see it peopled by Americans.

In the northwest she succeeded to the French policy as well as the French position. She wished the land to remain a wilderness, the home of the trapper and the fur trader, of the Indian hunter and the French voyageur. She desired it to be kept as a barrier against the growth of the seaboard colonies towards the interior. She regarded the new lands across the Atlantic as being won and settled, not for the benefit of the men who won and settled them, but for the benefit of the merchants and traders who stayed at home. It was this that rendered the Revolution inevitable; the struggle was a revolt against the whole mental attitude of Britain in regard to America, rather than against any one special act or set of acts. The sins and shortcomings of the colonists had been many, and it would be easy to make out a formidable catalogue of grievances against them, on behalf of the mother country; but on the great underlying question they were wholly in the right, and their success was of vital consequence to the well-being of the race on this continent.

Several of the old colonies urged vague claims to parts of the Northwestern Territory, basing them on ancient charters and Indian treaties; but the British heeded them no more than the French had, and they were very little nearer fulfilment after the defeat of Montcalm and Pontiac than before. The French had held adverse possession in spite of them for sixty years; the British held similar possession for fifteen more. The mere statement of the facts is enough to show the intrinsic worthlessness of the titles. The Northwest was acquired from France by Great Britain through conquest and treaty; in a precisely similar way—Clark taking the place of Wolfe—it was afterwards won from Britain by the United States. We gained it exactly as we afterwards gained Louisiana, Florida, Oregon, California, New Mexico, and Texas: partly by arms, partly by diplomacy, partly by the sheer growth and pressure of our spreading population. The fact that the conquest took place just after we had declared ourselves a free nation, and while we were still battling to maintain our independence, does not alter its character in the least; but it has sufficed to render the whole transaction very hazy in the minds of most subsequent historians, who generally speak as if the Northwest Territory had been part of our original possessions.

The French who dwelt in the land were at the time little affected by the change which transferred their allegiance from one European king to another. They were accustomed to obey, without question, the orders of their superiors. They accepted the results of the war submissively, and yielded a passive obedience to their new rulers.[14] Some became rather attached to the officers who came among them; others grew rather to dislike them: most felt merely a vague sentiment of distrust and repulsion, alike for the haughty British officer in his scarlet uniform, and for the reckless backwoodsman clad in tattered homespun or buckskin. They remained the owners of the villages, the tillers of the soil. At

[14] In the Haldimand MSS., Series B, Vol. 122, p. 3, the letter of M. Ste. Marie from Vincennes, May 3, 1774, gives utterance to the general feeling of the creoles, when he announces, in promising in their behalf to carry out the orders of the British commandant, that he is "remplie de respect pour tout ce qui porte l'emprinte de l'otorité." [sic.]

first few English or American immigrants, save an occasional fur trader, came to live among them. But their doom was assured; their rule was at an end forever. For a while they were still to compose the bulk of the scanty population; but nowhere were they again to sway their own destinies. In after years they fought for and against both whites and Indians; they faced each other, ranged beneath the rival banners of Spain, England, and the insurgent colonists; but they never again fought for their old flag or for their own sovereignty.

From the overthrow of Pontiac to the outbreak of the Revolution the settlers in the Illinois and round Vincennes lived in peace under their old laws and customs, which were continued by the British commandants.[15] They had been originally governed, in the same way that Canada was, by the laws of France, adapted, however, to the circumstances of the new country. Moreover, they had local customs which were as binding as the laws. After the conquest the British commandants who came in acted as civil judges also. All public transactions were recorded in French by notaries public. Orders issued in English were translated into French so that they might be understood. Criminal cases were referred to England. Before the conquest the procureur du roi gave sentence by his own personal decision in civil cases; if the matters were important it was the custom for each party to name two arbitrators, and the procureur du roi a fifth; while an appeal might be made to the council superieur at New Orleans. The British commandant assumed the place of the procureur du roi, although there were one or two half-hearted efforts made to introduce the Common Law.

The original French commandants had exercised the power of granting to every person who petitioned as much land as the petitioner chose to ask for, subject to the condition that part of it should be cultivated within a year, under penalty of its reversion to "the king's demesnes."[16] The English followed the same custom. A large quantity of land was reserved in the neighborhood of each village for the common use, and a very small quantity for religious purposes. The common was generally a large patch of enclosed prairie, part of it being cultivated, and the remainder serving as a pasture for the cattle of the inhabitants.[17] The portion of the common set aside for agriculture was divided into strips of one arpent in front by forty in depth, and one or more allotted to each inhabitant according to his skill and industry as a cultivator.[18] The arpent, as used by the western French, was a rather rough measure of surface, less in size than an acre.[19] The farms held by private ownership likewise ran back in long strips from a narrow front that usually lay along some stream.[20] Several of them generally lay parallel to one another, each including something like a hundred acres, but occasionally much exceeding this amount.

The French inhabitants were in very many cases not of pure blood. The early settlements had been made by men only, by soldiers, traders, and trappers, who took Indian wives. They were not trammelled by the queer pride which makes a man of English stock unwilling to make a red-skinned woman his wife, though anxious enough to make her his concubine. Their children were baptized in the little parish churches by the black-robed priests, and grew up holding the same position in the community as was held by their fellows both of whose parents were white. But, in addition to these free citizens, the richer inhabitants owned both red and black slaves; negroes imported from Africa, or Indians overcome and taken in battle.[21] There were many freedmen and freedwomen of both colors, and in consequence much mixture of blood.

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[15] State Department MSS., No. 48, p. 51. Statement of M. Cerre (or Carre), July, 1786, translated by John Pintard.

[16] *Do.*

[17] State Department MSS., No. 48, p. 41. Petition of J. B. La Croix, A. Girardin, etc., dated "at Cohoe in the Illinois 15th July, 1786."

[18] Billon, 91.

[19] An arpent of land was 180 French feet square. MS. copy of Journal of Matthew Clarkson in 1766. In Durrett collection.

[20] American State Papers, Public Lands, I., II.

[21] Fergus Historical Series, No. 12, "Illinois in the 18th Century." Edward G. Mason, Chicago, 1881. A most excellent number of an excellent series. The old parish registers of Kaskaskia, going back to 1695, contain some remarkable names of the Indian mothers

They were tillers of the soil, and some followed, in addition, the trades of blacksmith and carpenter. Very many of them were trappers or fur traders. Their money was composed of furs and peltries, rated at a fixed price per pound;[22] none other was used unless expressly so stated in the contract. Like the French of Europe, their unit of value was the livre, nearly equivalent to the modern franc. They were not very industrious, nor very thrifty husbandmen. Their farming implements were rude, their methods of cultivation simple and primitive, and they themselves were often lazy and improvident. Near their town they had great orchards of gnarled apple-trees, planted by their forefathers when they came from France, and old pear-trees, of a kind unknown to the Americans; but their fields often lay untilled, while the owners lolled in the sunshine smoking their pipes. In consequence they were sometimes brought to sore distress for food, being obliged to pluck their corn while it was still green.[23]

The pursuits of the fur trader and fur trapper were far more congenial to them, and it was upon these that they chiefly depended. The half-savage life of toil, hardship, excitement, and long intervals of idleness attracted them strongly. This was perhaps one among the reasons why they got on so much better with the Indians than did the Americans, who, wherever they went, made clearings and settlements, cut down the trees, and drove off the game.

But even these pursuits were followed under the ancient customs and usages of the country, leave to travel and trade being first obtained from the commandant[24] for the rule of the commandant was almost patriarchal. The inhabitants were utterly unacquainted with what the Americans called liberty. When they passed under our rule, it was soon found that it was impossible to make them understand such an institution as trial by jury; they throve best under the form of government to which they had been immemorially accustomed—a commandant to give them orders, with a few troops to back him up.[25] They often sought to escape from these orders, but rarely to defy them; their lawlessness was like the lawlessness of children and savages; any disobedience was always to a particular ordinance, not to the system.

The trader having obtained his permit, built his boats,—whether light, roomy bateaux made of boards, or birch-bark canoes, or pirogues, which were simply hollowed out logs. He loaded them with paint, powder, bullets, blankets, beads, and rum, manned them with hardy voyageurs, trained all their lives in the use of pole and paddle, and started off up or down the Mississippi,[26] the Ohio, or the Wabash, perhaps making a long carry or portage over into the Great Lakes. It took him weeks, often months, to get to the first trading-point, usually some large winter encampment of Indians. He might visit several of these, or stay the whole winter through at one, buying the furs.[27] Many of the French coureurs des bois, whose duty it was to traverse the wilderness, and who were expert trappers, took up their abode with the Indians, taught them how to catch the sable, fisher, otter, and beaver, and lived among them as members of the tribe, marrying copper-colored squaws, and rearing dusky children. When the trader had exchanged his goods for the peltries of these red and white skin-hunters, he returned to his home, having been absent perhaps a year or eighteen months. It was a hard life; many a trader perished in the wilderness by cold or starvation, by an upset where the icy current ran down the rapids like a mill-race, by the attack of a hostile tribe, or even in a drunken brawl with the friendly Indians, when voyageur, half-breed, and Indian alike had been frenzied by draughts of fiery liquor.[28]

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—such as Maria Aramipinchicoue and Domitilla Tehuigouanakigaboucoue. Sometimes the man is only distinguished by some such title as "The Parisian," or "The Bohemian."

[22] Billon, 90.

[23] Letter of P. A. Lafarge, Dec. 31, 1786. Billon, 268.

[24] State Department MSS., No. 150, Vol. III., p. 519. Letter of Joseph St. Mann, Aug 23, 1788.

[25] *Do*., p 89, Harmar's letter.

[26] *Do*., p 519, Letter of Joseph St. Marin.

[27] *Do*., p. 89.

[28] Journal of Jean Baptiste Perrault, in 1783; in "Indian Tribes," by Henry R. Schoolcraft, Part III., Philadelphia, 1855. See also

Next to the commandant in power came the priest. He bore unquestioned rule over his congregation, but only within certain limits; for the French of the backwoods, leavened by the presence among them of so many wild and bold spirits, could not be treated quite in the same way as the more peaceful *habitants* of Lower Canada. The duty of the priest was to look after the souls of his sovereign's subjects, to baptize, marry, and bury them, to confess and absolve them, and keep them from backsliding, to say mass, and to receive the salary due him for celebrating divine service; but, though his personal influence was of course very great, he had no temporal authority, and could not order his people either to fight or to work. Still less could he dispose of their laud, a privilege inhering only in the commandant and in the commissaries of the villages, where they were expressly authorized so to do by the sovereign.[29]

The average inhabitant, though often loose in his morals, was very religious. He was superstitious also, for he firmly believed in omens, charms, and witchcraft, and when worked upon by his dread of the unseen and the unknown he sometimes did terrible deeds, as will be related farther on.

Under ordinary circumstances he was a good-humored, kindly man, always polite—his manners offering an agreeable contrast to those of some of our own frontiersmen,—with a ready smile and laugh, and ever eager to join in any merrymaking. On Sundays and fast-days he was summoned to the little parish church by the tolling of the old bell in the small wooden belfry. The church was a rude oblong building, the walls made out of peeled logs, thrust upright in the ground, chinked with moss and coated with clay or cement. Thither every man went, clad in a capote or blanket coat, a bright silk handkerchief knotted round his head, and his feet shod with moccasins or strong rawhide sandals. If young, he walked or rode a shaggy pony; if older, he drove his creaking, springless wooden cart, untired and unironed, in which his family sat on stools.[30]

The grades of society were much more clearly marked than in similar communities of our own people. The gentry, although not numerous, possessed unquestioned social and political headship and were the military leaders; although of course they did not have any thing like such marked preeminence of position as in Quebec or New Orleans, where the conditions were more like those obtaining in the old world. There was very little education. The common people were rarely versed in the mysteries of reading and writing, and even the wives of the gentry were often only able to make their marks instead of signing their names.[31]

The little villages in which they dwelt were pretty places,[32] with wide, shaded streets. The houses lay far apart, often a couple of hundred feet from one another. They were built of heavy hewn timbers; those of the better sort were furnished with broad verandas, and contained large, low-ceilinged rooms, the high mantle-pieces and the mouldings of the doors and windows being made of curiously carved wood. Each village was defended by a palisaded fort and block-houses, and was occasionally itself surrounded by a high wooden stockade. The inhabitants were extravagantly fond of

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Billon, 484, for an interesting account of the adventures of Gratiot, who afterwards, under American rule, built up a great fur business, and drove a flourishing trade with Europe, as well as the towns of the American seaboard.

[29] State Department MSS., No. 48, p. 25. A petition concerning a case in point, affecting the Priest Gibault.

[30] "History of Vincennes," by Judge John Law, Vincennes, 1858. pp. 18 and 140. They are just such carts as I have seen myself in the valley of the Red River, and in the big bend of the Missouri, carrying all the worldly goods of their owners, the French Metis. These Metis,—ex-trappers, ex-buffalo runners, and small farmers,—are the best representatives of the old French of the west; they are a little less civilized, they have somewhat more Indian blood in their veins, but they are substantially the same people. It may be noted that the herds of buffaloes that during the last century thronged the plains of what are now the States of Illinois and Indiana furnished to the French of Kaskaskia and Vincennes their winter meat; exactly as during the present century the Saskatchewan Metis lived on the wild herds until they were exterminated.

[31] See the lists of signatures in the State Department MSS., also Mason's Kaskaskia Parish Records and Law's Vincennes. As an example; the wife of the Chevalier Vinsenne (who gave his name to Vincennes, and afterwards fell in the battle where the Chickasaws routed the Northern French and their Indian allies), was only able to make her mark.Clark in his letters several times mentions the "gentry," in terms that imply their standing above the rest of the people.

[32] State Department MSS., No. 150, Vol. III., p. 89.

music and dancing;[33] marriages and christenings were seasons of merriment, when the fiddles were scraped all night long, while the moccasined feet danced deftly in time to the music.

Three generations of isolated life in the wilderness had greatly changed the characters of these groups of traders, trappers, bateau-men, and adventurous warriors. It was inevitable that they should borrow many traits from their savage friends and neighbors. Hospitable, but bigoted to their old customs, ignorant, indolent, and given to drunkenness, they spoke a corrupt jargon of the French tongue; the common people were even beginning to give up reckoning time by months and years, and dated events, as the Indians did, with reference to the phenomena of nature, such as the time of the floods, the maturing of the green corn, or the ripening of the strawberries.[34] All their attributes seemed alien to the polished army-officers of old France;[35] they had but little more in common with the latter than with the American backwoodsmen. But they had kept many valuable qualities, and, in especial, they were brave and hardy, and, after their own fashion, good soldiers. They had fought valiantly beside King Louis' musketeers, and in alliance with the painted warriors of the forest; later on they served, though perhaps with less heart, under the gloomy ensign of Spain, shared the fate of the red-coated grenadiers of King George, or followed the lead of the tall Kentucky riflemen.

[33] "Journal of Jean Baptiste Perrault," 1783.

[34] "Voyage en Amérique" (1796), General Victor Collot, Paris, 1804, p. 318.

[35] *Do*. Collot calls them "un composé de traiteurs, d'aventuriers, de coureurs de bois, rameurs, et de guerriers; ignorans, superstitieux et entêtés, qu'aucunes fatigues, aucunes privations, aucunes dangers ne peuvent arreter dans leurs enterprises, qu'ils mettent toujours fin; ils n'ont conservé des vertus françaises que le courage."

# CHAPTER III.
# THE APPALACHIAN CONFEDERACIES, 1765-1775

When we declared ourselves an independent nation there were on our borders three groups of Indian peoples. The northernmost were the Iroquois or Six Nations, who dwelt in New York, and stretched down into Pennsylvania. They had been for two centuries the terror of every other Indian tribe east of the Mississippi, as well as of the whites; but their strength had already departed. They numbered only some ten or twelve thousand all told, and though they played a bloody part in the Revolutionary struggle, it was merely as subordinate allies of the British. It did not lie in their power to strike a really decisive blow. Their chastisement did not result in our gaining new territory; nor would a failure to chastise them have affected the outcome of the war nor the terms of peace. Their fate was bound up with that of the king's cause in America and was decided wholly by events unconnected with their own success or defeat.

The very reverse was the case with the Indians, tenfold more numerous, who lived along our western frontier. There they were themselves our main opponents, the British simply acting as their supporters; and instead of their fate being settled by the treaty of peace with Britain, they continued an active warfare for twelve years after it had been signed. Had they defeated us in the early years of the contest, it is more than probable that the Alleghanies would have been made our western boundary at the peace. We won from them vast stretches of territory because we had beaten their warriors, and we could not have won it otherwise; whereas the territory of the Iroquois was lost, not because of their defeat, but because of the defeat of the British.

There were two great groups of these Indians, the ethnic corresponding roughly with the geographic division. In the northwest, between the Ohio and the Lakes, were the Algonquin tribes, generally banded loosely together; in the southwest, between the Tennessee—then called the Cherokee—and the Gulf, the so-called Appalachians lived. Between them lay a vast and beautiful region where no tribe dared dwell, but into which all ventured now and then for war and hunting.

The southwestern Indians were called Appalachians by the olden writers, because this was the name then given to the southern Alleghanies. It is doubtful if the term has any exact racial significance; but it serves very well to indicate a number of Indian nations whose system of government, ways of life, customs, and general culture were much alike, and whose civilization was much higher than was that of most other American tribes.

The Appalachians were in the barbarous, rather than in the merely savage state. They were divided into five lax confederacies: the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles. The latter were merely a southern offshoot of the Creeks or Muscogees. They were far more numerous than the northwestern Indians, were less nomadic, and in consequence had more definite possession of particular localities; so that their lands were more densely peopled.

In all they amounted to perhaps seventy thousand souls.[36] It is more difficult to tell the numbers of the different tribes; for the division lines between them were very ill defined, and were subject to wide fluctuations. Thus the Creeks, the most formidable of all, were made up of many bands, differing from each other both in race and speech. The languages of the Chickasaws and Choctaws did not

[36] Letter of Commissioners Hawkins, Pickens, Martin, and McIntosh, to the President of the Continental Congress, Dec. 2, 1785. (Given in Senate documents, 33d Congress, 2d session, Boundary between Ga. and Fla.) They give 14,200 "gun-men," and say that "at a moderate calculation" there are four times as many old men, women, and children, as there are gun-men. The estimates of the numbers are very numerous and very conflicting. After carefully consulting all accessible authorities, I have come to the conclusion that the above is probably pretty near the truth. It is the deliberate, official opinion of four trained experts, who had ample opportunities for investigation, and who examined the matter with care. But it is very possible that in allotting the several tribes their numbers they err now and then, as the boundaries between the tribes shifted continually, and there were always large communities of renegades, such as the Chickamaugas, who were drawn from the ranks of all.

differ more from the tongue of the Cherokees, than the two divisions of the latter did from each other. The Cherokees of the hills, the Otari, spoke a dialect that could not be understood by the Cherokees of the lowlands, or Erati. Towns or bands continually broke up and split off from their former associations, while ambitious and warlike chiefs kept forming new settlements, and if successful drew large numbers of young warriors from the older communities. Thus the boundary lines between the confederacies were ever shifting.[37] Judging from a careful comparison of the different authorities, the following estimate of the numbers of the southern tribes at the outbreak of the Revolution may be considered as probably approximately correct.

The Cherokees, some twelve thousand strong,[38] were the mountaineers of their race. They dwelt among the blue-topped ridges and lofty peaks of the southern Alleghanies,[39] in the wild and picturesque region where the present States of Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas join one another.

To the west of the Cherokees, on the banks of the Mississippi, were the Chickasaws, the smallest of the southern nations, numbering at the outside but four thousand souls;[40] but they were also the bravest and most warlike, and of all these tribal confederacies theirs was the only one which was at all closely knit together. The whole tribe acted in unison. In consequence, though engaged in incessant warfare with the far more numerous Choctaws, Creeks, and Cherokees, they more than held their own against them all; besides having inflicted on the French two of the bloodiest defeats they ever suffered from Indians. Most of the remnants of the Natchez, the strange sun-worshippers, had taken refuge with the Chickasaws and become completely identified with them, when their own nationality was destroyed by the arms of New Orleans.

The Choctaws, the rudest and historically the least important of these Indians, lived south of the Chickasaws. They were probably rather less numerous than the Creeks.[41] Though accounted brave they were treacherous and thievish, and were not as well armed as the others. They rarely made war or peace as a unit, parties frequently acting in conjunction with some of the rival European powers, or else joining in the plundering inroads made by the other Indians upon the white settlements. Beyond thus furnishing auxiliaries to our other Indian foes, they had little to do with our history.

The Muscogees or Creeks were the strongest of all. Their southern bands, living in Florida, were generally considered as a separate confederacy, under the name of Seminoles. They numbered

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[37] This is one of the main reasons why the estimates of their numbers vary so hopelessly. As a specimen case, among many others, compare the estimate of Professor Benj. Smith Barton ("Origin of the Tribes and Nations of America," Phila., 1798) with the report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1827. Barton estimated that in 1793 the Appalachian nations numbered in all 13,000 warriors; considering these as one fifth of the total population, makes it 65,000. In 1837 the Commissioner reports their numbers at 65,304—almost exactly the same. Probably both statements are nearly correct, the natural rate of increase having just about offset the loss in consequence of a partial change of home, and of Jackson's slaughtering wars against the Creeks and Seminoles. But where they agree in the total, they vary hopelessly in the details. By Barton's estimate, the Cherokees numbered but 7,500, the Chocktaws 30,000; by the Commissioner's census the Cherokees numbered 21,911, the Choctaws 15,000. It is of course out of the question to believe that while in 44 years the Cherokees had increased threefold, the Choctaws had diminished one half. The terms themselves must have altered their significance or else there was extensive inter-tribal migration. Similarly, according to the reports, the Creeks had increased by 4,000—the Seminoles and Choctaws had diminished by 3,000.

[38] "Am. Archives," 4th Series, III., 790. Drayton's account, Sept. 23, '75. This was a carefully taken census, made by the Indian traders. Apart from the outside communities, such as the Chickamaugas at a later date, there were:737 gun-men in the 10 overhill towns 908 " " 23 middle " 356 " " 9 lower " a total of 2,021 warriors. The outlying towns, who had cast off their allegiance for the time being, would increase the amount by three or four hundred more.

[39] "History of the American Indians, Particularly Those Nations Adjoining to the Mississippi, East and West Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia." By James Adair (an Indian trader and resident in the country for forty years), London, 1775. A very valuable book, but a good deal marred by the author's irrepressible desire to twist every Indian utterance, habit, and ceremony into a proof that they are descended from the Ten Lost Tribes. He gives the number of Cherokee warriors at 2,300.

[40] Hawkins, Pickens, Martin, and McIntosh, in their letter, give them 800 warriors: most other estimates make the number smaller.

[41] Almost all the early writers make them more numerous. Adair gives them 4,500 warriors, Hawkins 6,000. But much less seems to have been known about them than about the Creeks, Cherokees, and Chickasaws; and most early estimates of Indians were largest when made of the least-known tribes. Adair's statement is probably the most trustworthy. The first accurate census showed the Creeks to be more numerous.

between twenty-five and thirty thousand souls,[42] three fourths of them being the Muscogees proper, and the remainder Seminoles. They dwelt south of the Cherokees and east of the Choctaws, adjoining the Georgians.

The Creeks and Cherokees were thus by their position the barrier tribes of the South, who had to stand the brunt of our advance, and who acted as a buffer between us and the French and Spaniards of the Gulf and the lower Mississippi. Their fate once decided, that of the Chickasaws and Chocktaws inevitably followed.

The customs and the political and social systems of these two tribes were very similar; and those of their two western neighbors were merely ruder copies thereof. They were very much further advanced than were the Algonquin nations of the north.

Unlike most mountaineers the Cherokees were not held to be very formidable fighters, when compared with their fellows of the lowlands.[43] In 1760 and 1761 they had waged a fierce war with the whites, had ravaged the Carolina borders, had captured British forts, and successfully withstood British armies; but though they had held their own in the field, it had been at the cost of ruinous losses. Since that period they had been engaged in long wars with the Chickasaws and Creeks, and had been worsted by both. Moreover, they had been much harassed by the northern Indians. So they were steadily declining in power and numbers.[44]

Though divided linguistically into two races, speaking different dialects, the Otari and Erati, the political divisions did not follow the lines of language. There were three groups of towns, the Upper, Lower, and Middle; and these groups often acted independently of one another. The Upper towns lay for the most part on the Western Waters, as they were called by the Americans,—the streams running into the Tennessee. Their inhabitants were known as Overhill Cherokees and were chiefly Otari; but the towns were none of them permanent, and sometimes shifted their positions, even changing from one group to another. The Lower towns, inhabited by the Erati, lay in the flat lands of upper Georgia and South Carolina, and were the least important. The third group, larger than either of the others and lying among the hills and mountains between them, consisted of the Middle towns. Its borders were ill-marked and were ever shifting.

Thus the towns of the Cherokees stretched from the high upland region, where rise the loftiest mountains of eastern America, to the warm, level, low country, the land of the cypress and the long-leaved pine. Each village stood by itself, in some fertile river-bottom, with around it apple orchards and fields of maize. Like the other southern Indians, the Cherokees were more industrious than their northern neighbors, lived by tillage and agriculture as much as by hunting, and kept horses, hogs, and poultry. The oblong, story-high houses were made of peeled logs, morticed into each other and plastered with clay; while the roof was of chestnut bark or of big shingles. Near to each stood a small cabin, partly dug out of the ground, and in consequence very warm; to this the inmates retired in winter, for they were sensitive to cold. In the centre of each village stood the great council-house or rotunda, capable of containing the whole population; it was often thirty feet high, and sometimes stood on a raised mound of earth.[45]

The Cherokees were a bright, intelligent race, better fitted to "follow the white man's road" than any other Indians. Like their neighbors, they were exceedingly fond of games of chance and skill, as well as of athletic sports. One of the most striking of their national amusements was the kind of ball-play from which we derive the game of lacrosse. The implements consisted of ball sticks or rackets, two feet long, strung with raw-hide webbing, and of a deer-skin ball, stuffed with hair,

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[42] Hawkins, Pickens, etc., make them "at least" 27,000 in 1789, the Indian report for 1837 make them 26,844. During the half century they had suffered from devastating wars and forced removals, and had probably slightly decreased in number. In Adair's time their population was increasing.

[43] "Am. Archives," 5th Series, I., 95. Letter of Charles Lee.

[44] Adair, 227. Bartram, 390.

[45] Bartram, 365.

so as to be very solid, and about the size of a base ball. Sometimes the game was played by fixed numbers, sometimes by all the young men of a village; and there were often tournaments between different towns and even different tribes. The contests excited the most intense interest, were waged with desperate resolution, and were preceded by solemn dances and religious ceremonies; they were tests of tremendous physical endurance, and were often very rough, legs and arms being occasionally broken. The Choctaws were considered to be the best ball players.[46]

The Cherokees were likewise fond of dances. Sometimes these were comic or lascivious, sometimes they were religious in their nature, or were undertaken prior to starting on the war-trail. Often the dances of the young men and maidens were very picturesque. The girls, dressed in white, with silver bracelets and gorgets, and a profusion of gay ribbons, danced in a circle in two ranks; the young warriors, clad in their battle finery, danced in a ring around them; all moving in rhythmic step, as they kept time to the antiphonal chanting[47] and singing, the young men and girls responding alternately to each other.

The great confederacy of the Muscogees or Creeks, consisting of numerous tribes, speaking at least five distinct languages, lay in a well-watered land of small timber.[48] The rapid streams were bordered by narrow flats of rich soil, and were margined by canebrakes and reed beds. There were fine open pastures, varied by sandy pine barrens, by groves of palmetto and magnolia, and by great swamps and cypress ponds. The game had been largely killed out, the elk and buffalo having been exterminated and even the deer much thinned, and in consequence the hunting parties were obliged to travel far into the uninhabited region to the northward in order to kill their winter supply of meat. But panthers, wolves, and bears still lurked in the gloomy fastnesses of the swamps and canebrakes, whence they emerged at night to prey on the hogs and cattle. The bears had been exceedingly abundant at one time, so much so as to become one of the main props of the Creek larder, furnishing flesh, fat, and especially oil for cooking and other purposes; and so valued were they that the Indians hit upon the novel plan of preserving them, exactly as Europeans preserve deer and pheasants. Each town put aside a great tract of land which was known as "the beloved bear ground,"[49] where the persimmons, haws, chestnuts, muscadines, and fox grapes abounded, and let the bears dwell there unmolested, except at certain seasons, when they were killed in large numbers. However, cattle were found to be more profitable than bears, and the "beloved bear grounds" were by degrees changed into stock ranges.[50]

The Creeks had developed a very curious semi-civilization of their own. They lived in many towns, of which the larger, or old towns, bore rule over the smaller,[51] and alone sent representatives to the general councils. Many of these were as large as any in the back counties of the colonies;[52] but they were shifted from time to time, as the game was totally killed off and the land exhausted by the crops.[53] The soil then became covered by a growth of pines, and a so-called "old field" was formed. This method of cultivation was, after all, much like that of the southern whites, and the "old fields," or abandoned plantations grown up with pines, were common in the colonies.

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[46] Adair, Bartram.

[47] Bartram.

[48] "A Sketch of the Creek Country," Benjamin Hawkins. In Coll. Ga. Hist. Soc. Written in 1798, but not published till fifty years afterwards.

[49] *Do*, p. 33.

[50] The use of the word "beloved" by the Creeks was quite peculiar. It is evidently correctly translated, for Milfort likewise gives it as "bien aimé." It was the title used for any thing held in especial regard, whether for economic or supernatural reasons; and sometimes it was used as western tribes use the word "medicine" at the present day. The old chiefs and conjurers were called the "beloved old men"; what in the west we would now call the "medicine squaws," were named "the beloved old women." It was often conferred upon the chief dignitaries of the whites in writing to them.

[51] Hawkins, 37.

[52] Bartram, 386. The Uchee town contained at least 1,500 people.

[53] *Do*.

Many of the chiefs owned droves of horses and horned cattle, sometimes as many as five hundred head,[54] besides hogs and poultry; and some of them, in addition, had negro slaves. But the tillage of the land was accomplished by communal labor; and, indeed, the government, as well as the system of life, was in many respects a singular compound of communism and extreme individualism. The fields of rice, corn, tobacco, beans, and potatoes were sometimes rudely fenced in with split hickory poles, and were sometimes left unfenced, with huts or high scaffolds, where watchers kept guard. They were planted when the wild fruit was so ripe as to draw off the birds, and while ripening the swine were kept penned up and the horses were tethered with tough bark ropes. Pumpkins, melons, marsh-mallows, and sunflowers were often grown between the rows of corn. The planting was done on a given day, the whole town being summoned; no man was excepted or was allowed to go out hunting. The under-headman supervised the work.[55]

For food they used all these vegetables, as well as beef and pork, and venison stewed in bear's oil; they had hominy and corn-cakes, and a cool drink made from honey and water,[56] besides another made from fermented corn, which tasted much like cider.[57] They sifted their flour in wicker-work sieves, and baked the bread in kettles or on broad, thin stones. Moreover, they gathered the wild fruits, strawberries, grapes, and plums, in their season, and out of the hickory-nuts they made a thick, oily paste, called the hickory milk.

Each town was built round a square, in which the old men lounged all day long, gossiping and wrangling. Fronting the square, and surrounding it, were the four long, low communal houses, eight feet high, sixteen feet deep, and forty to sixty in length. They were wooden frames, supported on pine posts, with roof-tree and rafters of hickory. Their fronts were open piazzas, their sides were lathed and plastered, sometimes with white marl, sometimes with reddish clay, and they had plank doors and were roofed neatly with cypress bark or clapboards. The eave boards were of soft poplar. The barrier towns, near white or Indian enemies, had log houses, with portholes cut in the walls.

The communal houses were each divided into three rooms. The House of the Micos, or Chiefs and Headmen, was painted red and fronted the rising sun; it was highest in rank. The Houses of the Warriors and the Beloved Men—this last being painted white—fronted south and north respectively, while the House of the Young People stood opposite that of the Micos. Each room was divided into two terraces; the one in front being covered with red mats, while that in the rear, a kind of raised dais or great couch, was strewn with skins. They contained stools hewed out of poplar logs, and chests made of clapboards sewed together with buffalo thongs.[58]

The rotunda or council-house stood near the square on the highest spot in the village. It was round, and fifty or sixty feet across, with a high peaked roof; the rafters were fastened with splints and covered with bark. A raised dais ran around the wall, strewed with mats and skins. Sometimes in the larger council-houses there were painted eagles, carved out of poplar wood, placed close to the red and white seats where the chiefs and warriors sat; or in front of the broad dais were great images of the full and the half moon, colored white or black; or rudely carved and painted figures of the panther, and of men with buffalo horns. The tribes held in reverence both the panther and the rattlesnake.

The corn-cribs, fowl-houses, and hot-houses or dugouts for winter use were clustered near the other cabins.

Although in tillage they used only the hoe, they had made much progress in some useful arts. They spun the coarse wool of the buffalo into blankets, which they trimmed with beads. They wove the wild hemp in frames and shuttles. They made their own saddles. They made beautiful baskets

[54] Hawkins, 30.

[55] Hawkins 39; Adair, 408.

[56] Bartram, 184.

[57] Milfort, 212.

[58] Hawkins, 67. Milfort, 203. Bartram, 386. Adair, 418.

of fine cane splints, and very handsome blankets of turkey feathers; while out of glazed clay they manufactured bowls, pitchers, platters, and other pottery.

In summer they wore buckskin shirts and breech-clouts; in winter they were clad in the fur of the bear and wolf or of the shaggy buffalo. They had moccasins of elk or buffalo hide, and high thigh-boots of thin deer-skin, ornamented with fawns' trotters, or turkey spurs that tinkled as they walked. In their hair they braided eagle plumes, hawk wings, or the brilliant plumage of the tanager and redbird. Trousers or breeches of any sort they despised as marks of effeminacy.

Vermilion was their war emblem; white was only worn at the time of the Green-Corn Dance. In each town stood the war pole or painted post, a small peeled tree-trunk colored red. Some of their villages were called white or peace towns; others red or bloody towns. The white towns were sacred to peace; no blood could be spilt within their borders. They were towns of refuge, where not even an enemy taken in war could be slain; and a murderer who fled thither was safe from vengeance. The captives were tortured to death in the red towns, and it was in these that the chiefs and warriors gathered when they were planning or preparing for war.

They held great marriage-feasts; the dead were buried with the goods they had owned in their lifetime.

Every night all the people of a town gathered in the council-house to dance and sing and talk. Besides this, they held there on stated occasions the ceremonial dances; such were the dances of war and of triumph, when the warriors, painted red and black, returned, carrying the scalps of their slain foes on branches of evergreen pine, while they chanted the sonorous song of victory; and such was the Dance of the Serpent, the dance of lawless love, where the women and young girls were allowed to do whatsoever they listed.

Once a year, when the fruits ripened, they held the Green-Corn Dance, a religious festival that lasted eight days in the larger towns and four in the smaller. Then they fasted and feasted alternately. They drank out of conch-shells the Black Drink, a bitter beverage brewed from the crushed leaves of a small shrub. On the third day the high-priest or fire-maker, the man who sat in the white seat, clad in snowy tunic and moccasins, kindled the holy fire, fanning it into flames with the unsullied wing of a swan, and burning therein offerings of the first-fruits of the year. Dance followed dance. The beloved men and beloved women, the priest and priestesses, danced in three rings, singing the solemn song of which the words were never uttered at any other time; and at the end the warriors, in their wild war-gear, with white-plume headdresses, took part, and also the women and girls, decked in their best, with ear-rings and armlets, and terrapin shells filled with pebbles fastened to the outside of their legs. They kept time with foot and voice; the men in deep tones, with short accents, the women in a shrill falsetto; while the clay drums, with heads of taut deer-hide, were beaten, the whistles blown, and the gourds and calabashes rattled, until the air resounded with the deafening noise.[59]

Though they sometimes burnt their prisoners or violated captive women, they generally were more merciful than the northern tribes.[60]

But their political and military systems could not compare with those of the Algonquins, still less with those of the Iroquois. Their confederacy was of the loosest kind. There was no central authority. Every town acted just as it pleased, making war or peace with the other towns, or with whites, Choctaws, or Cherokees. In each there was a nominal head for peace and war, the high chief and the head warrior; the former was supposed to be supreme, and was elected for life from some one powerful family—as, for instance, the families having for their totems the wind or the eagle. But these chiefs had little control, and could not do much more than influence or advise their subjects; they were dependent on the will of the majority. Each town was a little hotbed of party spirit; the inhabitants divided on almost every question. If the head-chief was for peace, but the war-chief

[59] *Hawkins and Adair, passim*.

[60] *Do*. Also *vide* Bartram.

nevertheless went on the war-path, there was no way of restraining him. It was said that never, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, had half the nation "taken the war talk" at the same time.[61] As a consequence, war parties of Creeks were generally merely small bands of marauders, in search of scalps and plunder. In proportion to its numbers, the nation never, until 1813, undertook such formidable military enterprises as were undertaken by the Wyandots, Shawnees, and Delawares; and, though very formidable individual fighters, even in this respect it may be questioned if the Creeks equalled the prowess of their northern kinsmen.

Yet when the Revolutionary war broke out the Creeks were under a chieftain whose consummate craft and utterly selfish but cool and masterly diplomacy enabled them for a generation to hold their own better than any other native race against the restless Americans. This was the half-breed Alexander McGillivray, perhaps the most gifted man who was ever born on the soil of Alabama.[62]

His father was a Scotch trader, Lachlan McGillivray by name, who came when a boy to Charleston, then the head-quarters of the commerce carried on by the British with the southern Indians. On visiting the traders' quarter of the town, the young Scot was strongly attracted by the sight of the weather-beaten packers, with their gaudy, half-Indian finery, their hundreds of pack-horses, their curious pack-saddles, and their bales of merchandise. Taking service with them, he was soon helping to drive a pack-train along one of the narrow trails that crossed the lonely pine wilderness. To strong, coarse spirits, that were both shrewd and daring, and willing to balance the great risks incident to their mode of life against its great gains, the business was most alluring. Young Lachlan rose rapidly, and soon became one of the richest and most influential traders in the Creek country.

Like most traders, he married into the tribe, wooing and wedding, at the Hickory Ground, beside the Coosa River, a beautiful half-breed girl, Sehoy Marchand, whose father had been a French officer, and whose mother belonged to the powerful Creek family of the Wind. There were born to them two daughters and one son, Alexander. All the traders, though facing danger at every moment, from the fickle and jealous temper of the savages, wielded immense influence over them, and none more than the elder McGillivray, a far-sighted, unscrupulous Scotchman, who sided alternately with the French and English interests, as best suited his own policy and fortunes.

His son was felt by the Creeks to be one of themselves. He was born about 1746, at Little Tallasee, on the banks of the clear-flowing Coosa, where he lived till he was fourteen years old, playing, fishing, hunting, and bathing with the other Indian boys, and listening to the tales of the old chiefs and warriors. He was then taken to Charleston, where he was well educated, being taught Greek and Latin, as well as English history and literature. Tall, dark, slender, with commanding figure and immovable face, of cool, crafty temper, with great ambition and a keen intellect, he felt himself called to play no common part. He disliked trade, and at the first opportunity returned to his Indian home. He had neither the moral nor the physical gifts requisite for a warrior; but he was a consummate diplomat, a born leader, and perhaps the only man who could have used aright such a rope of sand as was the Creek confederacy.

The Creeks claimed him as of their own blood, and instinctively felt that he was their only possible ruler. He was forthwith chosen to be their head chief. From that time on he remained among them, at one or the other of his plantations, his largest and his real home being at Little Tallasee, where he lived in barbaric comfort, in a great roomy log-house with a stone chimney, surrounded by the cabins of his sixty negro slaves. He was supported by many able warriors, both of the half and the full blood. One of them is worthy of passing mention. This was a young French adventurer, Milfort, who in 1776 journeyed through the insurgent colonies and became an adopted son of the Creek nation. He first met McGillivray, then in his early manhood, at the town of Coweta, the great war-town on the Chattahoochee, where the half-breed chief, seated on a bear-skin in the council-

[61] Hawkins, 29, 70. Adair, 428.

[62] "History of Alabama," by Albert James Pickett, Charleston, 1851, II., 30. A valuable work.

house, surrounded by his wise men and warriors, was planning to give aid to the British. Afterwards he married one of McGillivray's sisters, whom he met at a great dance—a pretty girl, clad in a short silk petticoat, her chemise of fine linen clasped with silver, her ear-rings and bracelets of the same metal, and with bright-colored ribbons in her hair.[63]

The task set to the son of Sehoy was one of incredible difficulty, for he was head of a loose array of towns and tribes from whom no man could get perfect, and none but himself even imperfect, obedience. The nation could not stop a town from going to war, nor, in turn, could a town stop its own young men from committing ravages. Thus the whites were always being provoked, and the frontiersmen were molested as often when they were quiet and peaceful as when they were encroaching on Indian land. The Creeks owed the land which they possessed to murder and rapine; they mercilessly destroyed all weaker communities, red or white; they had no idea of showing justice or generosity towards their fellows who lacked their strength, and now the measure they had meted so often to others was at last to be meted to them. If the whites treated them well, it was set down to weakness. It was utterly impossible to restrain the young men from murdering and plundering, either the neighboring Indians or the white settlements. Their one ideal of glory was to get scalps, and these the young braves were sure to seek, no matter how much the older and cooler men might try to prevent them. Whether war was declared or not, made no difference. At one time the English exerted themselves successfully to bring about a peace between the Creeks and Cherokees. At its conclusion a Creek chief taunted the mediators as follows: "You have sweated yourselves poor in our smoky houses to make peace between us and the Cherokees, and thereby enable our young people to give you in a short time a far worse sweat than you have yet had."[64] The result justified his predictions; the young men, having no other foe, at once took to ravaging the settlements. It soon became evident that it was hopeless to expect the Creeks to behave well to the whites merely because they were themselves well treated, and from that time on the English fomented, instead of striving to put a stop to, their quarrels with the Choctaws and Chickasaws.

The record of our dealings with them must in many places be unpleasant reading to us, for it shows grave wrong-doing on our part; yet the Creeks themselves lacked only the power, but not the will, to treat us worse than we treated them, and the darkest pages of their history recite the wrongs that we ourselves suffered at their hands.

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[63] Milfort, 23, 326. Milfort's book is very interesting, but as the man himself was evidently a hopeless liar and braggart, it can only be trusted where it was not for his interest to tell a falsehood. His book was written after McGillivray's death, the object being to claim for himself the glory belonging to the half-breed chief. He insisted that he was the war-chief, the arm, and McGillivray merely the head, and boasts of his numerous successful war enterprises. But the fact is, that during this whole time the Creeks performed no important stroke in war; the successful resistance to American encroachments was due to the diplomacy of the son of Sehoy. Moreover, Milfort's accounts of his own war deeds are mainly sheer romancing. He appears simply to have been one of a score of war chiefs, and there were certainly a dozen other Creek chiefs, both half-breeds and natives, who were far more formidable to the frontier than he was; all their names were dreaded by the settlers, but his was hardly known.

[64] Adair, 279.

# CHAPTER IV.
# THE ALGONQUINS OF THE NORTHWEST, 1769-1774

Between the Ohio and the Great Lakes, directly north of the Appalachian confederacies, and separated from them by the unpeopled wilderness now forming the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, dwelt another set of Indian tribes. They were ruder in life and manners than their southern kinsmen, less advanced towards civilization, but also far more warlike; they depended more on the chase and fishing, and much less on agriculture; they were savages, not merely barbarians; and they were fewer in numbers and scattered over a wider expanse of territory. But they were farther advanced than the almost purely nomadic tribes of horse Indians whom we afterwards encountered west of the Mississippi. Some of their villages were permanent, at any rate for a term of years, and near them they cultivated small crops of corn and melons. Their usual dwelling was the conical wigwam covered with bark, skins, or mats of plaited reeds but in some of the villages of the tribes nearest the border there were regular blockhouses, copied from their white neighbors. They went clad in skins or blankets; the men were hunters and warriors, who painted their bodies and shaved from their crowns all the hair except the long scalp-lock, while the squaws were the drudges who did all the work.

Their relations with the Iroquois, who lay east of them, were rarely very close, and in fact were generally hostile. They were also usually at odds with the southern Indians, but among themselves they were frequently united in time of war into a sort of lax league, and were collectively designated by the Americans as the northwestern Indians. All the tribes belonged to the great Algonquin family, with two exceptions, the Winnebagos and the Wyandots. The former, a branch of the Dakotahs, dwelt west of Lake Michigan; they came but little in contact with us, although many of their young men and warriors joined their neighbors in all the wars against us. The Wyandots or Hurons lived near Detroit and along the south shore of Lake Erie, and were in battle our most redoubtable foes. They were close kin to the Iroquois though bitter enemies to them, and they shared the desperate valor of these, their hostile kinsfolk, holding themselves above the surrounding Algonquins, with whom, nevertheless, they lived in peace and friendship.

The Algonquins were divided into many tribes, of ever shifting size. It would be impossible to place them all, or indeed to enumerate them, with any degree of accuracy; for the tribes were continually splitting up, absorbing others, being absorbed in turn, or changing their abode, and, in addition, there were numerous small sub-tribes or bands of renegades, which sometimes were and sometimes were not considered as portions of their larger neighbors. Often, also, separate bands, which would vaguely regard themselves as all one nation in one generation, would in the next have lost even this sense of loose tribal unity.

The chief tribes, however, were well known and occupied tolerably definite locations. The Delawares or Leni-Lenappe, dwelt farthest east, lying northwest of the upper Ohio, their lands adjoining those of the Senecas, the largest and most westernmost of the Six Nations. The Iroquois had been their most relentless foes and oppressors in time gone by; but on the eve of the Revolution all the border tribes were forgetting their past differences and were drawing together to make a stand against the common foe. Thus it came about that parties of young Seneca braves fought with the Delawares in all their wars against us.

Westward of the Delawares lay the Shawnee villages, along the Scioto and on the Pickaway plains; but it must be remembered that the Shawnees, Delawares, and Wyandots were closely united and their villages were often mixed in together. Still farther to the west, the Miamis or Twigtees lived between the Miami and the Wabash, together with other associated tribes, the Piankeshaws and the Weas or Ouatinous. Farther still, around the French villages, dwelt those scattered survivors of the Illinois who had escaped the dire fate which befell their fellow-tribesmen because they murdered

Pontiac. Northward of this scanty people lived the Sacs and Foxes, and around the upper Great Lakes the numerous and powerful Pottawattamies, Ottawas, and Chippewas; fierce and treacherous warriors, who did not till the soil, and were hunters and fishers only, more savage even than the tribes that lay southeast of them.[65] In the works of the early travellers we read the names of many other Indian nations; but whether these were indeed separate peoples, or branches of some of those already mentioned, or whether the different travellers spelled the Indian names in widely different ways, we cannot say. All that is certain is that there were many tribes and sub-tribes, who roamed and warred and hunted over the fair lands now forming the heart of our mighty nation, that to some of these tribes the whites gave names and to some they did not, and that the named and the nameless alike were swept down to the same inevitable doom.

Moreover, there were bands of renegades or discontented Indians, who for some cause had severed their tribal connections. Two of the most prominent of these bands were the Cherokees and Mingos, both being noted for their predatory and murderous nature and their incessant raids on the frontier settlers. The Cherokees were fugitives from the rest of their nation, who had fled north, beyond the Ohio, and dwelt in the land shared by the Delawares and Shawnees, drawing to themselves many of the lawless young warriors, not only of these tribes, but of the others still farther off. The Mingos were likewise a mongrel banditti, made up of outlaws and wild spirits from among the Wyandots and Miamis, as well as from the Iroquois and the Munceys (a sub-tribe of the Delawares).

All these northwestern nations had at one time been conquered by the Iroquois, or at least they had been defeated, their lands overrun, and they themselves forced to acknowledge a vague overlordship on the part of their foes. But the power of the Iroquois was now passing away: when our national history began, with the assembling of the first continental congress, they had ceased to be a menace to the western tribes, and the latter no longer feared or obeyed them, regarding them merely as allies or neutrals. Yet not only the Iroquois, but their kindred folk, notably the Wyandots, still claimed, and received, for the sake of their ancient superiority, marks of formal respect from the surrounding Algonquins. Thus, among the latter, the Leni-Lenappe possessed the titular headship, and were called "grandfathers" at all the solemn councils as well as in the ceremonious communications that passed among the tribes; yet in turn they had to use similar titles of respect in addressing not only their former oppressors, but also their Huron allies, who had suffered under the same galling yoke.[66]

The northwestern nations had gradually come to equal the Iroquois as warriors; but among themselves the palm was still held by the Wyandots, who, although no more formidable than the others as regards skill, hardihood, and endurance, nevertheless stood alone in being willing to suffer heavy punishment in order to win a victory.[67]

The Wyandots had been under the influence of the French Jesuits, and were nominally Christians;[68] and though the attempt to civilize them had not been very successful, and they remained in most respects precisely like the Indians around them, there had been at least one point gained, for they were not, as a rule, nearly so cruel to their prisoners. Thus they surpassed their neighbors in mercifulness as well as valor. All the Algonquin tribes stood, in this respect, much on the same plane. The Delawares, whose fate it had been to be ever buffeted about by both the whites and the reds, had long cowered under the Iroquois terror, but they had at last shaken it off, had reasserted the superiority which tradition says they once before held, and had become a formidable and warlike race. Indeed it is curious to study how the Delawares have changed in respect to their martial prowess since the days when the whites first came in contact with them. They were then not accounted a formidable

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[65] See papers by Stephen D. Peet, on the northwestern tribes, read before the state Archaeological Society of Ohio, 1878.

[66] Barton, xxv.

[67] General W. H. Harrison, "Aborigines of the Ohio Valley." Old "Tippecanoe" was the best possible authority for their courage.

[68] "Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Col. James Smith," etc., written by himself, Lexington, Ky., 1799. Smith is our best contemporary authority on Indian warfare; he lived with them for several years, and fought them in many campaigns. Besides several editions of the above, he also published in 1812, at Paris, Ky., a "Treatise" on Indian warfare, which holds much the same matter.

people, and were not feared by any of their neighbors. By the time the Revolution broke out they had become better warriors, and during the twenty years' Indian warfare that ensued were as formidable as most of the other redskins. But when moved west of the Mississippi, instead of their spirit being broken, they became more warlike than ever, and throughout the present century they have been the most renowned fighters of all the Indian peoples, and, moreover, they have been celebrated for their roving, adventurous nature. Their numbers have steadily dwindled, owing to their incessant wars and to the dangerous nature of their long roamings.[69]

It is impossible to make any but the roughest guess at the numbers of these northwestern Indians. It seems probable that there were considerably over fifty thousand of them in all; but no definite assertion can be made even as to the different tribes. As with the southern Indians, old-time writers certainly greatly exaggerated their numbers, and their modern followers show a tendency to fall into the opposite fault, the truth being that any number of isolated observations to support either position can be culled from the works of the contemporary travellers and statisticians.[70] No two independent observers give the same figures. One main reason for this is doubtless the exceedingly loose way in which the word "tribe" was used. If a man speaks of the Miamis and the Delawares, for instance, before we can understand him we must know whether he includes therein the Weas and the Munceys, for he may or may not. By quoting the numbers attributed by the old writers to the various sub-tribes, and then comparing them with the numbers given later on by writers using the same names, but speaking of entire confederacies, it is easy to work out an apparent increase, while a reversal of the process shows an appalling decrease. Moreover, as the bands broke up, wandered apart, and then rejoined each other or not as events fell out, two successive observers might make widely different estimates. Many tribes that have disappeared were undoubtedly actually destroyed; many more have simply changed their names or have been absorbed by other tribes. Similarly, those that have apparently held their own have done so at the expense of their neighbors. This was made all the easier by the fact that the Algonquins were so closely related in customs and language; indeed, there was constant intermarriage between the different tribes. On the whole, however, there is no question that, in striking contrast to the southern or Appalachian Indians, these northwestern tribes have suffered a terrible diminution in numbers.

With many of them we did not come into direct contact for long years after our birth as a nation. Perhaps those tribes with all or part of whose warriors we were brought into collision at some time during or immediately succeeding the Revolutionary war may have amounted to thirty thousand souls.[71] But though they acknowledged kinship with one another, and though they all alike hated the Americans, and though, moreover, all at times met in the great councils, to smoke the calumet of peace and brighten the chain of friendship[72] among themselves, and to take up the tomahawk[73] against the white foes, yet the tie that bound them together was so loose, and they were so fickle and so split up by jarring interests and small jealousies, that never more than half of them went to war at the same time. Very frequently even the members of a tribe would fail to act together.

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[69] See Parkman's "Oregon Trail." In 1884 I myself met two Delawares hunting alone, just north of the Black Hills. They were returning from a trip to the Rocky Mountains. I could not but admire their strong, manly forms, and the disdainful resolution with which they had hunted and travelled for so many hundred miles, in defiance of the white frontiersmen and of the wild native tribes as well. I think they were in more danger from the latter than the former, but they seemed perfectly confident of their ability to hold their own against both.

[70] See Barton, the Madison MSS., Schoolcraft, Thos. Hutchins (who accompanied Bouquet), Smythe, Pike, various reports of the U. S. Indian Commissioners, etc, etc.

[71] I base this number on a careful examination of the tribes named above, discarding such of the northern bands of the Chippewas, for instance, as were unlikely at that time to have been drawn into war with us.

[72] The expressions generally used by them in sending their war talks and peace talks to one another or the whites. Hundreds of copies of these "talks" are preserved at Washington.

[73] *Do.*

Thus it came about that during the forty years intervening between Braddock's defeat and Wayne's victory, though these northwestern tribes waged incessant, unending, relentless warfare against our borders, yet they never at any one time had more than three thousand warriors in the field, and frequently not half that number,[74] and in all the battles they fought with British and American troops there was not one in which they were eleven hundred strong.[75]

But they were superb individual fighters, beautifully drilled in their own discipline;[76] and they were favored beyond measure by the nature of their ground, of which their whole system of warfare enabled them to take the utmost possible benefit. Much has been written and sung of the advantages possessed by the mountaineer when striving in his own home against invaders from the plains; but these advantages are as nothing when weighed with those which make the warlike dweller in forests unconquerable by men who have not his training. A hardy soldier, accustomed only to war in the open, will become a good cragsman in fewer weeks than it will take him years to learn to be so much as a fair woodsman; for it is beyond all comparison more difficult to attain proficiency in woodcraft than in mountaineering.[77]

The Wyandots, and the Algonquins who surrounded them, dwelt in a region of sunless, tangled forests; and all the wars we waged for the possession of the country between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi were carried on in the never-ending stretches of gloomy woodland. It was not an open forest. The underbrush grew, dense and rank, between the boles of the tall trees, making a cover so thick that it was in many places impenetrable, so thick that it nowhere gave a chance for human eye to see even as far as a bow could carry. No horse could penetrate it save by following the game trails or paths chopped with the axe; and a stranger venturing a hundred yards from a beaten road would be so helplessly lost that he could not, except by the merest chance, even find his way back to the spot he had just left. Here and there it was broken by a rare hillside glade or by a meadow in a stream valley; but elsewhere a man might travel for weeks as if in a perpetual twilight, never once able to see the sun, through the interlacing twigs that formed a dark canopy above his head.

This dense forest was to the Indians a home in which they had lived from childhood, and where they were as much at ease as a farmer on his own acres. To their keen eyes, trained for generations to more than a wild beast's watchfulness, the wilderness was an open book; nothing at rest or in motion escaped them. They had begun to track game as soon as they could walk; a scrape on a tree trunk, a bruised leaf, a faint indentation of the soil, which the eye of no white man could see, all told them a tale as plainly as if it had been shouted in their ears.[78] With moccasined feet they trod among brittle twigs, dried leaves, and dead branches as silently as the cougar, and they equalled the great wood-cat

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[74] Smith, "Remarkable Occurrences," etc., p. 154. Smith gives a very impartial account of the Indian discipline and of their effectiveness, and is one of the few men who warred against them who did not greatly overestimate their numbers and losses. He was a successful Indian fighter himself. For the British regulars he had the true backwoods contempt, although having more than the average backwoods sense in acknowledging their effectiveness in the open. He had lived so long among the Indians, and estimated so highly their personal prowess, that his opinion must be accepted with caution where dealing with matters of discipline and command.

[75] The accounts of the Indian numbers in any battle given by British or Americans, soldiers or civilians, are ludicrously exaggerated as a rule; even now it seems a common belief of historians that the whites were generally outnumbered in battles, while in reality they were generally much more numerous than their foes.

[76] *Harrison (loc. cit.)* calls them "the finest light troops in the world"; and he had had full experience in serving with American and against British infantry.

[77] Any one who is fond of the chase can test the truth of this proposition for himself, by trying how long it will take him to learn to kill a bighorn on the mountains, and how long it will take him to learn to kill white-tail deer in a dense forest, by fair still-hunting, the game being equally plenty. I have known many novices learn to equal the best old hunters, red or white, in killing mountain game; I have never met one who could begin to do as well as an Indian in the dense forest, unless brought up to it—and rarely even then. Yet, though woodcraft is harder to learn, it does not imply the possession of such valuable qualities as mountaineering; and when cragsman and woodman meet on neutral ground, the former is apt to be the better man.

[78] To this day the wild—not the half-tame—Indians remain unequalled as trackers. Even among the old hunters not one white in a hundred can come near them. In my experience I have known a very few whites who had spent all their lives in the wilderness who equalled the Indian average; but I never met any white who came up to the very best Indian. But, because of their better shooting and their better nerve, the whites often make the better hunters.

in stealth and far surpassed it in cunning and ferocity. They could no more get lost in the trackless wilderness than a civilized man could get lost on a highway. Moreover, no knight of the middle ages was so surely protected by his armor as they were by their skill in hiding; the whole forest was to the whites one vast ambush, and to them a sure and ever-present shield. Every tree trunk was a breastwork ready prepared for battle; every bush, every moss-covered boulder, was a defence against assault, from behind which, themselves unseen, they watched with fierce derision the movements of their clumsy white enemy. Lurking, skulking, travelling with noiseless rapidity, they left a trail that only a master in woodcraft could follow, while, on the other hand, they could dog a white man's footsteps as a hound runs a fox. Their silence, their cunning and stealth, their terrible prowess and merciless cruelty, makes it no figure of speech to call them the tigers of the human race.

Unlike the southern Indians, the villages of the northwestern tribes were usually far from the frontier. Tireless, and careless of all hardship, they came silently out of unknown forests, robbed and murdered, and then disappeared again into the fathomless depths of the woods. Half of the terror they caused was due to the extreme difficulty of following them, and the absolute impossibility of forecasting their attacks. Without warning, and unseen until the moment they dealt the death stroke, they emerged from their forest fastnesses, the horror they caused being heightened no less by the mystery that shrouded them than by the dreadful nature of their ravages. Wrapped in the mantle of the unknown, appalling by their craft, their ferocity, their fiendish cruelty, they seemed to the white settlers devils and not men; no one could say with certainty whence they came nor of what tribe they were; and when they had finished their dreadful work they retired into a wilderness that closed over their trail as the waves of the ocean close in the wake of a ship.

They were trained to the use of arms from their youth up, and war and hunting were their two chief occupations, the business as well as the pleasure of their lives. They were not as skilful as the white hunters with the rifle[79]—though more so than the average regular soldier,—nor could they equal the frontiersman in feats of physical prowess, such as boxing and wrestling; but their superior endurance and the ease with which they stood fatigue and exposure made amends for this. A white might outrun them for eight or ten miles; but on a long journey they could tire out any man, and any beast except a wolf. Like most barbarians they were fickle and inconstant, not to be relied on for pushing through a long campaign, and after a great victory apt to go off to their homes, because each man desired to secure his own plunder and tell his own tale of glory. They are often spoken of as undisciplined; but in reality their discipline in the battle itself was very high. They attacked, retreated, rallied or repelled a charge at the signal of command; and they were able to fight in open order in thick covers without losing touch of each other—a feat that no European regiment was then able to perform.

On their own ground they were far more formidable than the best European troops. The British grenadiers throughout the eighteenth century showed themselves superior, in the actual shock of battle, to any infantry of continental Europe; if they ever met an over-match, it was when pitted against the Scotch highlanders. Yet both grenadier and highlander, the heroes of Minden, the heirs to the glory of Marlborough's campaigns, as well as the sinewy soldiers who shared in the charges of Prestonpans and Culloden, proved helpless when led against the dark tribesmen of the forest. On the march they could not be trusted thirty yards from the column without getting lost in the woods[80]—the mountain training of the highlanders apparently standing them in no stead whatever,—and were only able to get around at all when convoyed by backwoodsmen. In fight they fared even worse. The British regulars at Braddock's battle, and the highlanders at Grant's defeat a few years later, suffered the same fate. Both battles were fair fights; neither was a surprise; yet the stubborn valor of the red-

[79] It is curious how to this day the wild Indians retain the same traits. I have seen and taken part in many matches between frontiersmen and the Sioux, Cheyennes, Grosventres, and Mandans, and the Indians were beaten in almost every one. On the other hand the Indians will stand fatigue, hunger, and privation better, but they seem more susceptible to cold.

[80] See Parkman's "Conspiracy of Pontiac"; also "Montcalm and Wolfe."

coated grenadier and the headlong courage of the kilted Scot proved of less than no avail. Not only were they utterly routed and destroyed in each case by an inferior force of Indians (the French taking little part in the conflict), but they were able to make no effective resistance whatever; it is to this day doubtful whether these superb regulars were able, in the battles where they were destroyed, to so much as kill one Indian for every hundred of their own men who fell. The provincials who were with the regulars were the only troops who caused any loss to the foe; and this was true in but a less degree of Bouquet's fight at Bushy Run. Here Bouquet, by a clever stratagem, gained the victory over an enemy inferior in numbers to himself; but only after a two days' struggle in which he suffered a fourfold greater loss than he inflicted.[81]

When hemmed in so that they had no hope of escape, the Indians fought to the death; but when a way of retreat was open they would not stand cutting like British, French, or American regulars, and so, though with a nearly equal force, would retire if they were suffering heavily, even if they were causing their foes to suffer still more. This was not due to lack of courage; it was their system, for they were few in numbers, and they did not believe in losing their men.[82] The Wyandots were exceptions to this rule, for with them it was a point of honor not to yield, and so they were of all the tribes the most dangerous in an actual pitched battle.[83]

But making the attack, as they usually did, with the expectation of success, all were equally dangerous. If their foes were clustered together in a huddle they attacked them without hesitation, no matter what the difference in numbers, and shot them down as if they had been elk or buffalo, they themselves being almost absolutely safe from harm, as they flitted from cover to cover. It was this capacity for hiding, or taking advantage of cover, that gave them their great superiority; and it is because of this that the wood tribes were so much more formidable foes in actual battle than the horse Indians of the plains afterwards proved themselves. In dense woodland a body of regular soldiers are almost as useless against Indians as they would be if at night they had to fight foes who could see in the dark; it needs special and long-continued training to fit them in any degree for wood-fighting against such foes. Out on the plains the white hunter's skill with the rifle and his cool resolution give him an immense advantage; a few determined men can withstand a host of Indians in the open, although helpless if they meet them in thick cover; and our defeats by the Sioux and other plains tribes have generally taken the form of a small force being overwhelmed by a large one.

Not only were the Indians very terrible in battle, but they were cruel beyond all belief in victory; and the gloomy annals of border warfare are stained with their darkest hues because it was a war in which helpless women and children suffered the same hideous fate that so often befell their husbands and fathers. It was a war waged by savages against armed settlers, whose families followed them into the wilderness. Such a war is inevitably bloody and cruel; but the inhuman love of cruelty for cruelty's sake,[84] which marks the red Indian above all other savages, rendered these wars more terrible than any others. For the hideous, unnamable, unthinkable tortures practised by the red men on their captured foes, and on their foes' tender women and helpless children, were such as we read of in no other

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[81] Bouquet, like so many of his predecessors and successors, greatly exaggerated the numbers and loss of the Indians in this fight. Smith, who derived his information both from the Indians and from the American rangers, states that but eighteen Indians were killed at Bushy Run.

[82] Most of the plains Indians feel in the same way at present. I was once hunting with a Sioux half-breed who illustrated the Indian view of the matter in a rather striking way, saying: "If there were a dozen of you white hunters and you found six or eight bears in the brush, and you knew you could go in and kill them all, but that in the fight you would certainly lose three or four men yourselves, you wouldn't go in, would you? You'd wait until you got a better chance, and could kill them without so much risk. Well, Indians feel the same way about attacking whites that you would feel about attacking those bears."

[83] All the authorities from Smith to Harrison are unanimous on this point.

[84] Any one who has ever been in an encampment of wild Indians, and has had the misfortune to witness the delight the children take in torturing little animals, will admit that the Indian's love of cruelty for cruelty's sake cannot possibly be exaggerated. The young are so trained that when old they shall find their keenest pleasure in inflicting pain in its most appalling form. Among the most brutal white borderers a man would be instantly lynched if he practised on any creature the fiendish torture which in an Indian camp either attracts no notice at all, or else excites merely laughter.

struggle, hardly even in the revolting pages that tell the deeds of the Holy Inquisition. It was inevitable —indeed it was in many instances proper—that such deeds should awake in the breasts of the whites the grimmest, wildest spirit of revenge and hatred.

The history of the border wars, both in the ways they were begun and in the ways they were waged, make a long tale of injuries inflicted, suffered, and mercilessly revenged. It could not be otherwise when brutal, reckless, lawless borderers, despising all men not of their own color, were thrown in contact with savages who esteemed cruelty and treachery as the highest of virtues, and rapine and murder as the worthiest of pursuits. Moreover, it was sadly inevitable that the law-abiding borderer as well as the white ruffian, the peaceful Indian as well as the painted marauder, should be plunged into the struggle to suffer the punishment that should only have fallen on their evil-minded fellows.

Looking back, it is easy to say that much of the wrong-doing could have been prevented; but if we examine the facts to find out the truth, not to establish a theory, we are bound to admit that the struggle was really one that could not possibly have been avoided. The sentimental historians speak as if the blame had been all ours, and the wrong all done to our foes, and as if it would have been possible by any exercise of wisdom to reconcile claims that were in their very essence conflicting; but their utterances are as shallow as they are untruthful.[85] Unless we were willing that the whole continent west of the Alleghanies should remain an unpeopled waste, the hunting-ground of savages, war was inevitable; and even had we been willing, and had we refrained from encroaching on the Indians' lands, the war would have come nevertheless, for then the Indians themselves would have encroached on ours. Undoubtedly we have wronged many tribes; but equally undoubtedly our first definite knowledge of many others has been derived from their unprovoked outrages upon our people. The Chippewas, Ottawas, and Pottawatamies furnished hundreds of young warriors to the parties that devastated our frontiers generations before we in any way encroached upon or wronged them.

Mere outrages could be atoned for or settled; the question which lay at the root of our difficulties was that of the occupation of the land itself, and to this there could be no solution save war. The Indians had no ownership of the land in the way in which we understand the term. The tribes lived far apart; each had for its hunting-grounds all the territory from which it was not barred by rivals. Each looked with jealousy upon all interlopers, but each was prompt to act as an interloper when occasion offered. Every good hunting-ground was claimed by many nations. It was rare, indeed, that any tribe had an uncontested title to a large tract of land; where such title existed, it rested, not on actual occupancy and cultivation, but on the recent butchery of weaker rivals. For instance, there were a dozen tribes, all of whom hunted in Kentucky, and fought each other there, all of whom had equally good titles to the soil, and not one of whom acknowledged the right of any other; as a matter of fact they had therein no right, save the right of the strongest. The land no more belonged to them than it belonged to Boon and the white hunters who first visited it.

On the borders there are perpetual complaints of the encroachments of whites upon Indian lands; and naturally the central government at Washington, and before it was at Washington, has usually been inclined to sympathize with the feeling that considers the whites the aggressors, for the government does not wish a war, does not itself feel any land hunger, hears of not a tenth of the Indian outrages, and knows by experience that the white borderers are not easy to rule. As a consequence, the official reports of the people who are not on the ground are apt to paint the Indian side in its most favorable light, and are often completely untrustworthy, this being particularly the case if the author of the report is an eastern man, utterly unacquainted with the actual condition of affairs on the frontier.

Such a man, though both honest and intelligent, when he hears that the whites have settled on Indian lands, cannot realize that the act has no resemblance whatever to the forcible occupation of land already cultivated. The white settler has merely moved into an uninhabited waste; he does not

[85] See Appendix A.

feel that he is committing a wrong, for he knows perfectly well that the land is really owned by no one. It is never even visited, except perhaps for a week or two every year, and then the visitors are likely at any moment to be driven off by a rival hunting-party of greater strength. The settler ousts no one from the land; if he did not chop down the trees, hew out the logs for a building, and clear the ground for tillage, no one else would do so. He drives out the game, however, and of course the Indians who live thereon sink their mutual animosities and turn against the intruder. The truth is, the Indians never had any real title to the soil; they had not half as good a claim to it, for instance, as the cattlemen now have to all eastern Montana, yet no one would assert that the cattlemen have a right to keep immigrants off their vast unfenced ranges. The settler and pioneer have at bottom had justice on their side; this great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game preserve for squalid savages. Moreover, to the most oppressed Indian nations the whites often acted as a protection, or, at least, they deferred instead of hastening their fate. But for the interposition of the whites it is probable that the Iroquois would have exterminated every Algonquin tribe before the end of the eighteenth century; exactly as in recent time the Crows and Pawnees would have been destroyed by the Sioux, had it not been for the wars we have waged against the latter.

Again, the loose governmental system of the Indians made it as difficult to secure a permanent peace with them as it was to negotiate the purchase of the lands. The sachem, or hereditary peace chief, and the elective war chief, who wielded only the influence that he could secure by his personal prowess and his tact, were equally unable to control all of their tribesmen, and were powerless with their confederated nations. If peace was made with the Shawnees, the war was continued by the Miamis; if peace was made with the latter, nevertheless perhaps one small band was dissatisfied, and continued the contest on its own account; and even if all the recognized bands were dealt with, the parties of renegades or outlaws had to be considered; and in the last resort the full recognition accorded by the Indians to the right of private warfare, made it possible for any individual warrior who possessed any influence to go on raiding and murdering unchecked. Every tribe, every sub-tribe, every band of a dozen souls ruled over by a petty chief, almost every individual warrior of the least importance, had to be met and pacified. Even if peace were declared, the Indians could not exist long without breaking it. There was to them no temptation to trespass on the white man's ground for the purpose of settling; but every young brave was brought up to regard scalps taken and horses stolen, in war or peace, as the highest proofs and tokens of skill and courage, the sure means of attaining glory and honor, the admiration of men and the love of women. Where the young men thought thus, and the chiefs had so little real control, it was inevitable that there should be many unprovoked forays for scalps, slaves, and horses made upon the white borderers.[86]

As for the whites themselves, they too have many and grievous sins against their red neighbors for which to answer. They cannot be severely blamed for trespassing upon what was called the Indian's land; for let sentimentalists say what they will, the man who puts the soil to use must of right dispossess the man who does not, or the world will come to a standstill; but for many of their other deeds there can be no pardon. On the border each man was a law unto himself, and good and bad alike were left in perfect freedom to follow out to the uttermost limits their own desires; for the spirit of individualism so characteristic of American life reached its extreme of development in the backwoods. The whites who wished peace, the magistrates and leaders, had little more power over their evil and unruly fellows than the Indian sachems had over the turbulent young braves. Each man did what seemed best in his own eyes, almost without let or hindrance; unless, indeed, he trespassed upon the rights of his neighbors, who were ready enough to band together in their own defence, though slow to interfere in the affairs of others.

[86] Similarly the Crows, who have always been treated well by us, have murdered and robbed any number of peaceful, unprotected travellers during the past three decades, as I know personally.

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.