

THE LEAGUE OF THE FIVE NATIONS

A STORY OF THE ABORIGINAL EMPIRE STATE.

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The address which followed was illustrated by 90 colored lantern slides and the topical character of the text is due to the fact that it is a description of the pictures.

Ladies and Gentlemen:—The beautiful Genesee Valley, as the president of your Society has already intimated, was once the home of my ancestors. I have passed through this valley several times on the railroad and each time with increasing interest. It is not difficult to see that you have taken a great measure of pride in the history of this region since you and your ancestors have occupied it. The same was true of the Seneca Indians whose ancestral home it was. There are many Indians living today who are the children and grandchildren of the people who lived here in the aboriginal period. It is my privilege to know a great many of these descendants of the old villages of Canawaugus, Geneseo, Squakie Hill and Gardeau, and for this reason I have seen fit to incorporate in this address a short description of these descendants and their modern ways of living. Their villages are no longer of logs and bark, but of painted boards or brick, trimmed and ornamented as those of the whites about them.

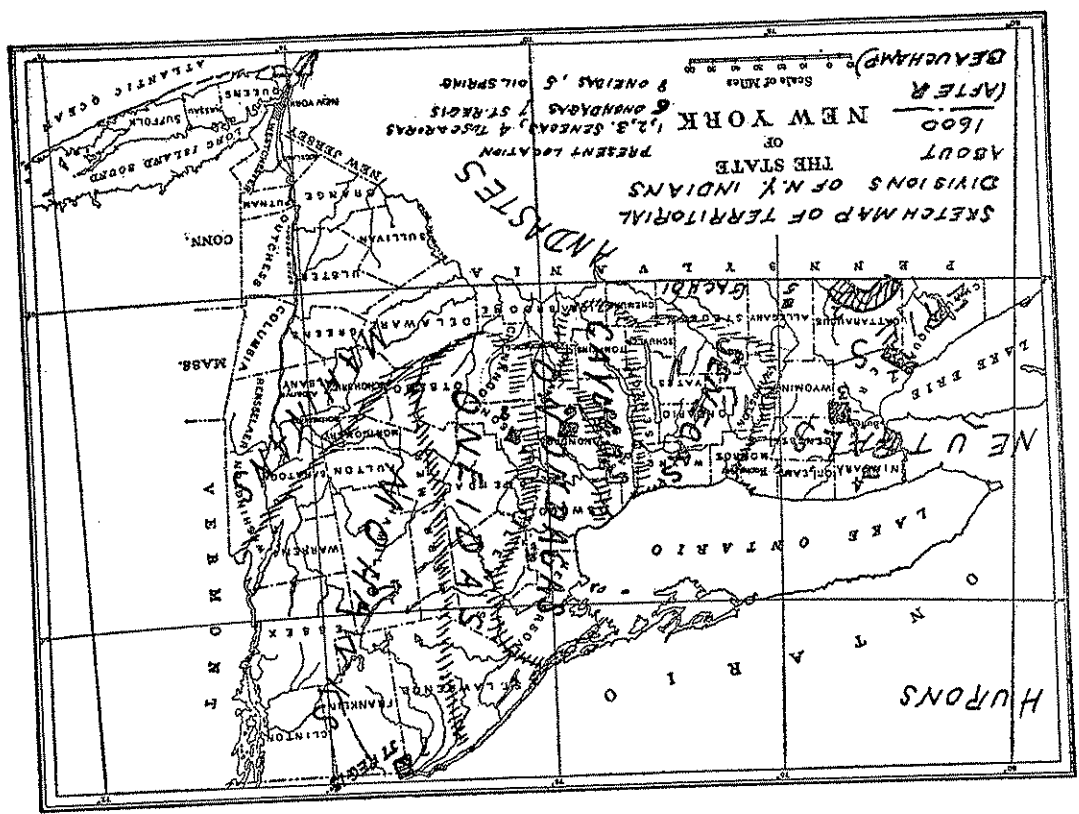
The territory embraced by the State of New York by reason of its geographical position, its natural resources and its physical features, seems always to have been designed as a great natural empire. We recognize this when we proudly boast our State as the Empire State of the Union. In our exulting patriotism most of us think only of the great Empire State of Now, over which waves the flag of the United States. Most of us have forgotten the cramped paragraphs in our school histories which mentioned the Empire State of four hundred years ago, over which waved a billion trees, each a symbol of the mighty Empire of the Iroquois that held as its territory most of the region east of the Mississippi River. This empire of the Iroquois was erected long before Champlain or Hudson traversed the hills and valleys of New York and long before they

dreamed of the proud sachems that held their courts on the blue Onondaga hills or in the beautiful valley of the Senesee.

The Iroquois who ruled here and ruled well belonged to the Huron-Iroquois linguistic stock, said to have migrated from some western source, passed through the Mississippi valley and gathered about the region of the Detroit river. Offshoots were constantly splitting from the main branch as they found suitable places for settlement. Among these may be mentioned the Cherokee. The marching hoard at its rendezvous on the Detroit seems to have divided again. One large division passed over the river while the remainder stayed on the south bank. Both branches, however, continued their journeys eastward along the shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario. The Iroquois on the south shore later became known as the Eries, the Andastes and the Senecas, although there were other small bands also. The northern migrants courting along the shores of the lakes eventually reached the St. Lawrence Valley, where they were surrounded by the Algonquins, and made a captive people, but the fierce love of liberty, the recollection of former glory and the blood of brave ancestry would not long allow the Iroquois to remain a subject people. By a well directed blow at a well chosen time, they obtained their freedom and fled to the territory which we now know as northern and central New York. Pushing their way westward to the Genesee and beyond they met their brother tribes from whom they had separated years before. The Laurentian Iroquois as they have come to be called, were divided into three bands, originally perhaps two. The Mohawks constituted one band, the Onondagas another, while the Oneidas, the third band, were perhaps an early offshoot of the Mohawks. The Cayugas were members of the tribes that had clung to the southern shores and were a succeeding division of the Senecas into which had been injected the blood of some other Iroquoian division. The Senecas were a large division and in close alliance with the Eries and influenced more or less by the Andastes and Neutrals.

At an early date, reckoned by the white historians from 1450 to 1570, the urgent necessity of a stronger political union was forced upon the Iroquois. The demands of common interests, common foes and common blood necessitated a closer bond and the wiping away of petty differences that kept a constant debilitating warfare in progress. Thus at a general council a league was formed largely through the influence of Dekanawida who based his laws upon the teachings of Hiawatha. At this time and later the various nations of the league were situated as shown on the map (fig. 1).

Tradition relates that Hiawatha had long implored the Onondaga chief, Ottatarho, to listen to his plan for a national and sort-governing Hiawatha went alone into the forest to commune with himself and with nature. He had thought of certain laws that if enforced would bring about harmony and strength, but as yet he had not the means of recording them. At length as he swept his paddle through Oneida lake, he noticed the myriads of periwinkle shells that swirled in the water, especially in the shallows near the shore. He conceived the idea of stringing the shells in mnemonic strands,



ships or high chieftanships, divided unequally among the nations. A sachem was a civil ruler, or as we would say now, a senator, and the council of 50 when met together at Onondaga constituted the ruling body of the league. No measure could be acted upon or passed without a unanimous vote. Thus an unequal division of the sachemships in no wise affected the rights of an individual nation. The eight Seneca sachems had as much weight in the council as did the fourteen of the Onondagas.

It seems a curious problem now how such a people could be called together but their runners were almost as fleet of foot as the deer of the forest and their trails were not only the connecting links between villages, clans and nations but stretched far beyond their borders in every direction. If the Senecas wished to call a general council the sachems of that nation convened to determine whether or not the matter was of sufficient importance to present to the whole body. If they concluded that it was they set a runner with a wampum belt or wampum strand to the Cayugas to notify them, and if the matter was urgent the Cayugas would send a runner to the Onondagas, who in turn, taking the wampum, would send a runner to the Oneidas and they would send one to the Mohawks. If the emergency was of great importance, not only sachems and chiefs, but men, women and children hastened to the grand council fire. The chiefs, it is well to observe in passing, were military officers and not a part of the ruling body.

No message was of any weight unless accompanied by a wampum belt or its earlier prototype, the strands of shells. After the coming of the white race wampum was manufactured in large quantities by machinery. Wampum belts consisted of several strings woven together by a warp into a belt. They contained various symbolic designs and patterns representing some specific law or historical event that the belt maker desired to preserve. Wampum beads are of two colors, white and purple. The white beads are made from the mollusks of the mussel shell and the purple from the purple spot in the Venus or clam shell. The white people of this country adopted wampum beads as currency and used it as late as 1712, when a stuyver of wampum was ferry fare between New York and Brooklyn. And here, with all due respect to the great commoner of Nebraska, originated the first 16 to 1 monetary scheme, for in the Wall Street exchange of the day 16 stuyvers of wampum equalled one beaver skin. From certain experiences I should say that skins have not altogether been driven from the economy of Wall Street, although I should remark that the skins are probably of the shark order, rather than beavers.

The Iroquois when first discovered were living in bark and perpendicular log houses. The bark house consisted of a framework of poles covered with slabs of bark, rough side out. Around the sides of the interior were stationary benches of poles that served as seats by day and as beds at night. On a long pole strung to the ridge pole and parallel with it were hung dried vegetables and meat and other things not immediately needed. Other provisions were stored in the earthen pits dug in the earth floors.

The earliest records of those who visited the Iroquois, especially

the Senecas, represent that a large portion of the land was an open prairie produced by periodic burnings. These prairie openings in the great forests served several purposes. They were carpeted with a rich, succulent grass that enticed the ruminants from the timber land. In the open it was of course easy to kill them. It seems the deer preferred the grass of the open and the chance of a fatal arrow shot to the meager store of moss and browse of the woods and the attacks of carnivorous enemies. In the openings the Iroquois built their villages and had their extensive corn fields.

Those who have held the idea that the Indians, especially the Iroquois, were merely savage hunters and warriors may smile when I mention the home and family life, and yet those who know best say that no people more religiously respected family ties or had their relationship more distinctly defined.

Among the Iroquois hospitality was an established usage. If a man entered a home in any village, whether tribesman or stranger, the women immediately set food before him. An omission to do this would have been a discourtesy. If hungry the visitor ate and if not he tasted the food in token of his acceptance of the hospitality offered.

The children of the Iroquois were among the happiest mortals in all the wide borders of America. By the Iroquois religion all children who died in infancy went to the pleasant lands of the Creator to develop into men and women of the sky-world. Handsome Lake, the prophet, said, "The tracks on the sky-rod are mostly those of small feet and the Creator revealed unto Handsome Lake that the children were his for they had done no evil." Handsome Lake went on further to say, "The Creator says, 'Whoso loves children has favor in my sight.'" Children were trained by the mother, who endeavored to teach them all the ways of virtue. She gave them of the fullness of her knowledge and experience and guided them by her advice, and they were generally reverent and obedient. If they disobeyed she told them that it would ruin their usefulness as men and women of the League. If they persisted in wrong doing she could only, as a last resort, dash water upon her child to drive away its contumacity.

From infancy the boys were dipped in cold water each day to make them hardy. As they grew older not a day in the year passed but found them plunging in the rivers, even though they had to break the ice to find the life-giving waters that made the blood pulse warm and the heart beat fast, that gave the indomitable endurance and energy that made an Iroquois ever successful in the chase and invincible in war.

The hardness of the Indian has often been a matter of comment, and early travelers frequently expressed their surprise. It is related that one of the provincial officers in Canada with a party of friends was skating on one of the many Canadian lakes when they noticed an aged Indian shuffling his way over the ice, clad only in a tattered blanket. The wind was of icy keenness, but the Indian seemed not to mind it. The puzzled and interested party skated up to the Indian and addressed him somewhat as follows: "We are interested to know, good chief, how it is that you can endure this biting cold with so little clothing. In fact, you have almost nothing about you, yet

strangely you do not even shiver." "Ugh!" was he reply. "Why you no dress up your faces?" "Why," laughed the officer, "our faces are enured to the cold." The Indian started to stalk on, remarking as he did so, "Ugh, me all face."

In ancient times the youths were compelled to go through a strange initiatory ceremony known as dream fast. The young man went alone into the forest and built himself a shelter. Here he fasted for ten days, taking nothing but water. It was his duty to dream of his totem animal that should be his personal "good luck giver" through life. To be unsuccessful in dreaming was a disastrous thing.

As we wander over a plowed field and suddenly pause, thrilled by the appearance of a stone axe, which peeps up from the soil of antiquity, we marvel how a crude people could fell a tree with so poor an instrument. If we but look deeper we would find that the ancestors of the modern American, whether Gaul, Saxon, Briton or Kelt, used exactly the same kind of an axe. The Indians, and other primitive nations, would build a fire at the base of a tree and as the flames ate their way into the wood, would chop out the charred wood from the stone axe. The fire would be replenished, pressed against the tree and the flames would work again, and again the charred wood was hacked out by the stone hatchet. The process was repeated until the tree fell to the earth, which was in a comparatively short time.

The Iroquois warrior did not dress like the Sioux of the plains or like the Indians of the south. In fact, they are not the Indians of picture books or of wild west shows. In times of peace they wore their leggings with the seam in front and without fringe. Their moc-casins were made of a single piece of skin with flaps falling over the ankles. They usually wore nothing above the waist but sashes or belts that symbolized their rank among nations, for these Indians called themselves "Onkwehoweh," which means "The Real People." America seems always to have had a national game. In aboriginal times it was lacrosse. Sometimes a whole tribe would pit itself against another. Broken heads or broken legs were the usual things, and nothing was thought of such accidents. Lacrosse in those raw days was almost as savage a game, you see, as modern football.

The pride of the present day Senecas is that their celebrated tribesman, Deerfoot, made many records in running that have been equalled only in recent times. In one of his celebrated races he ran against the English champions in the Crystal Palace in London. This race took place before the British royal family on April 2, 1864. Here he ran 12 miles in one hour, two minutes, two and a half seconds. He won a massive gold watch and chain which had been offered to the winner by the Prince of Wales. In later years, and especially as he became an old man, it was his custom upon certain occasions to draw out the watch and after inspecting it with affectionate care to say, "Prince o'Wales, Prince o'Wales, O, him pretty good feller!"

The Iroquois of days gone by have lost none of their prowess as athletes and sprinters. One has only to think of the phenomenal

Pierce brothers and of Tom Longboat to remember that they have still speed and skill.

The fame of the Iroquois as warriors is traditional. The very name of "A Mohawk" was sufficient to spread terror all through New England. Toward the west the name of the Senecas was dreaded. In their efforts to preserve the principles of the League of the Iroquois the Iroquois were forced to engage in combat nearly every important tribe east of the Mississippi. The war policy of the Iroquois was extermination or absorption. A conquered tribe was split into small bands and settled in groups throughout the nation, thus losing its identity and at the same time contributing to the strength of the conquerors. In their wars during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the Iroquois conquered more territory than that embraced by the Roman Empire. The Iroquois were determined to have no enemies and would allow no tribe to interfere with their assumed rights.

While tribute is due their honors of war, their political sagacity and their civil organization, perhaps a gentler tribute is to praise their consideration of woman. The Iroquois woman was the prime factor of the council. It was she who nominated all the civil officers or sachems, and the men,—the poor men,—could do nothing but elect the women's choice. So important was an Iroquois woman in the economy of the nation that when captured by the enemy it required twice the ransom to redeem her as it did a man. The Iroquois woman worked in the fields, it is true, and did many other pieces of manual labor, but it is not recorded that she was ever made ill by this exercise. On the contrary, her duties were less fatiguing than those which the modern housewife is compelled to assume.

The Iroquois man had work that kept him active the greater part of the time. He has been represented, however, merely as a hunter and warrior. It was no sport to hunt in those days when it was necessary to stalk deer with a bow and arrow and bring home game through tangled underbrush for a distance of twenty to forty miles. In the days when invasion was imminent, the men were compelled, by the very conditions of the culture in which they lived, to rest upon their arms. To be caught by the enemy with burdens and fatigued by a long day's work in the field meant death, not only to the man, but to his entire family.

Sometime ago, in Southeastern New York, I happened to enter the home of a prosperous Yankee farmer, who was spending his afternoon at his fireside. It was Sunday and he was arrayed in his best clothing. In course of conversation he said, "You Indians are all right in a few ways, but I never did like the way you treated your women. The men were all lazy and merely loafed around, while the poor females had to do all the lifting and lugging."

Outside I heard the creak of a heavy pump, the sound of an axe and the shifting of some heavy object. A few moments later someone kicked at the door, which presently flew open, revealing the farmer's wife in a coarse gown carrying an armful of wood in one arm and a pail of water in the other. I remarked in a sort of passing way that it is sometimes difficult to see our own inconsistencies.

This was a remark, however, which my host did not seem to appreciate.

There existed in ancient times, and still exist today, among the Senecas, twelve secret societies, which, with two or three exceptions, have entirely escaped the notice of ethnologists. These societies met in lodge houses such as this and at stated times some of them had public ceremonies. These open exhibitions have been noted by ethnologists, but the fact that back of the ceremony was a society never seems to have occurred to anyone. The exceptions to this statement are the Husk Face Company, the False Face Company and the Guards of the Little Waters, the latter being the Great Medicine Society of the Iroquois. The other organizations are the Hagia Society, the Society of the Otters, the Bear Medicine Society, the Buffalo Dancers, the Oh-gi-we People, the Friends of the Elves, or Dark Dancers, the Women's Society and the Ihdose, or Society of Mystic Animals. To this day these aboriginal orders perform their secret rites in the hidden places that may remain secure from the eyes of white men.

Among the Iroquois, medicine men never attained the power which they did among other Indians for the reason that Iroquois society was too well organized to permit the sudden usurpation of power by any one person or institution. The medicine men among the Iroquois were generally the executive officers of the secret societies.

Some students are unable to discover any such thing as Indian mysteries and loudly declaim that there are none, basing their arguments upon the fact that white men have never seen them. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the Iroquois are not a people given to spreading their mysteries broadcast. They have their hidden rites and have conserved them for many years. It was not necessary for an Iroquois to make his wife sit up anxiously at home waiting for her husband to return from the lodge, for she went along with him, and came home as full of johnnycake or corn soup as he and perhaps smoked as much tobacco.

Last winter I attended a meeting of the Order of the Mystic Animals and requested the Holder of the Ritual to permit me to make a photograph of the lodge in session. A flash light photograph was made, and your eyes are among the first of white men's to see such a representation. During the ceremony the shaman or wizard juggles with a hot stone, plunges his hands in coals of fire and does other uncanny things. In this ceremony he wears a mask having no eye openings, and demonstrates that he has the power to discover hidden things through the influence of the spirits of the animal totems of the Order.

One of the peculiar rites is that of the doll. The shaman stands the doll upon the altar and, wearing the eyeless mask, makes the doll do some strange things. I have never had the privilege of seeing that ceremony, however.

It may seem a strange and almost an incredible statement when I say that the first American society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, human animals excepted, originated among the Iroquois centuries ago. The members wear symbolic masks like these. The

society is said to have been founded by a hunter who had been kind to all the animals of the field and forest. By some psychic means they revealed to him what man's attitude toward them should be. They told him to carve masks on trees like these, each mask to symbolize some animal or force of nature or perhaps some human emotion. One of the duties of the members is the protection of game animals. A snipe clansman who was a member was to sprinkle the snow with seed in winter for the birds. A wolf clansman was to kill a deer and leave its carcass for the famishing wolves, and so on; each member would care for the class of animals that fell his duty.

If you ever go through the woods in the Iroquois country and see a man rubbing a turtle shell rattle on a tree and wearing a strange mask like this, don't run. Rather bid him build a fire and rub coals of fire on your head for this is his wont, when people ask. In the winter ceremonies in the Long Houses these medicine-mask wearers commonly plunge their naked hands in the fire, and many white people have seen them.

There are certain masks especially designed for the driving away of witches, and if you could see one of these exorcisor masks you would agree that it was capable of driving anything away in all haste.

The Indian's belief in witches was substantially that of the whites when they came to America. The Iroquois thought that they had good evidence of witchcraft, and their punishment of the crime was in accord with the sacred scriptures, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." In this picture we have a drawing by an Indian artist, who wished to record how, sitting in the branches of a tree, he discovered a witch endeavoring to bewitch a sleeping person.

The execution of a Seneca woman accused of witchcraft by Tommy Jemmy, a Seneca chief, was the occasion for his arrest by the authorities of the city of Buffalo. Red Jacket, the Seneca orator, went as Chief Jemmy's attorney, and noting the looks of contempt cast upon the Indians for their superstition, he burst out with the exclamation, "What! Do you denounce us as fools and bigots because we still continue to believe what you yourselves believed less than a century ago? Your 'black-coats' thundered this doctrine from their pulpits, your judges pronounced it from the bench and your courts sanctioned its punishment with all the formalities of law. And you would now punish this unfortunate brother for adhering to the laws of his fathers and your fathers! Go to Salem and look at the records of your own people and there read a story of hundreds persecuted and slain for the same crime that has brought forth the sentence of condemnation and drawn down the arm of justice upon the dead woman. What crime therefore has this man committed more than the rulers of your own people in carrying out in a summary way the laws of his country and the commands of his God and your God?"

Jemmy was acquitted. Inseparably intertwined in the life story of the Iroquois is their religion. It never necessarily follows that a noble race has a high type of religion. The Greeks, the Romans and the Egyptians had religions, but what corrupt apologies they were! In astonishing

contrast stands out the religion of the Iroquois, though they were the uncivilized barbarians of America! They believed in one supreme Creator and revered him. The religion of the Iroquois was a doxology. Thanksgiving to the Supreme Being was the great rite upon all occasions. They had six great national thanksgivings each year, lasting from one day to nine. So reverent were they that they had no way of taking the name of God in vain. He could not swear in the olden days when he was a simple pagan deity—but nowadays I often hear him curse in the wild, profane language he has learned from pale invaders, and little wonder he curses bitterly.

The white man boasts his reforms and pities the drunken Indian, indolent and ambitionless. And, by the way, all Indians are not drunkards, as some would have us believe. Let me ask you who the first great temperance advocate in America was? You think of white men and women who have bravely struggled to curb the drink curse, but this first leader of the temperance reform in America was a drink-cursed Indian, Handsome Lake, the Seneca prophet. His activity led to the reclamation of his people from the clutches of drunkenness which had been shoved upon them by land traders and other unscrupulous persons. Let history then record that the war on run-cursed humanity was opened by the attacks of a run-cursed red man.

In the philosophy of the Iroquois a murderer was more respected than a liar, especially if that liar was a slanderer. A murderer could atone for his crime, but a liar was never forgiven by his people. A murderer merely destroyed his victim, but a liar by his false statements and insinuations disturbed the natural course of things and made his victims suffer a living death. It is said that a liar once convicted lived only long enough to prepare his head for the death man, an instrument that settled his lying propensities most effectually.

The Iroquois believed that a sin once committed was an historical fact that could not be blotted out nor forgiven by the Creator. Sins with the Iroquois were of three classes—sins against the state, sins against one's fellow man and sins against self. No one could sin against the Creator since he was above the injury of man.

GLIMPSE OF MODERN SENECA LIFE.

The picture before you is that of the gorge of the Genesee. The scene is that which meets your eye at Mount Morris, where the river emerges from its high banks and flows onward through a smiling valley to Ontario, the "beautiful lake." This valley was the chosen country of the Senecas, the great majority of whom lived within the borders of what is now Livingston county. Through treaty and trade they have relinquished this region, hallowed as it is to the memory of their ancestors. They have passed westward, and now live on several reservations in Erie and Cattaraugus counties with small sections jutting into adjacent counties. Let us look westward over these cliffs and see how the Senecas of today live.

The work of the missionaries has wrought a sweeping change

in the Seneca nation. This house which stands in the midst of the Christian district of the Cattaraugus reservation is the home of the late Andrew John, the ambassador of the Senecas, who spent many years in Washington. From this point it is my design to carry you along in a picture journey through a mile or two of Indian country. Just above the John house is the Thomas Indian school, an institution that owes in a large measure its existence to the influence of one of the honored members of your society. When the State was about to withdraw its support and leave the little institution without means to carry on its good work, it was the great heart of Wm. Pryor Letchworth that responded to the crisis and it was he who brought about influences by which it was saved for greater good than ever.

Above the school is the national dispensary. A few years ago it was closed by government orders and the good doctor was left stranded with a few hogsheds of cod oil and several pecks of iron pills, the idea of the government being, I assume, that all Indians are either anemic or suffering from tuberculosis. At this stage of affairs (the doctor being unwilling to desert his post), a tall, broad-chested Indian would drive up to the door, suddenly stoop over, cough in a hollow manner. Without a word a quart of cod liver oil would be forthcoming. The red man would rub his chest as if in pain, hop in his wagon, that creaked and groaned as it was slowly drawn up the road. At the first shady nook the Indian would hop out, take off the wheels of the conveyance, rub the cod oil on the axle, hop in and drive on. Teachers also sometimes complained that students who had claimed to be "run down" were in the habit of blowing pills through putty blowers, to their great discomfort. However, the supplies of proper medicine were resumed and medicine ceased to be misapplied.

Above the dispensary is the Presbyterian Mission House. The missionaries who have lived in that building have been the great uplifting, civilizing force of the Senecas for many years. The present pastor and missionary is the Rev. J. Emroy Fisher, whose work in uplifting and broadening the spiritual and mental horizon of the people has been wonderfully successful.

On the same side of the road and just above the mission is the farm of a progressive young Indian, who applies his college-learned chemistry to his farming activities. He sometimes pays as high as \$3.00 a peck for seed wheat, and raises new and rare varieties, selling the seed to Indian and white farmers for miles around.

Above this farm is the Iroquois National Fair Ground. The fair ground is under the supervision of the local agricultural society and which conducts a fair similar to county fairs everywhere in the state. Within this building you see the different varieties of Indian corn. Six or seven of these varieties are not cultivated by white farmers and farming experts, tell me that they are not grown by anyone except the Indians.

The hand-stand in the foreground stands in the fair ground, and the band that occupies the musicians' seats is celebrated for its fine work. Many of these men are artists that have traveled all over the United States and England, not to say parts of continental Europe.

This is the National Court House of the Seneca nation. The people gathered about are receiving their annuities of money and cloth. These things are not gratuities but interest due on certain rights and monies held in government trust.

Above the court house is a church built largely through the work of the Women's Sewing Society. One of the lay preachers whom I met one hot summer's day responded to my inquiry as to his work as follows, "Sir, I do not work, I never work, remember I am a preacher."

Passing up the road from this point for a couple of miles we come to another section of the reservation. The people have for many years, as did their ancestors before them, rejected the religion of the white man. It is the time of a pagan ceremony, and a man clad in the costume of his fathers blocks the way inquiring, "Why come you here?" We assure him of our interest in his religion, and he says pleasantly, "Pass on."

We journey down the road and are met by the pagan preacher. He objects to the word "pagan," however, since he is a believer in a moral religion that teaches immortality and reverence for the Creator. He invites us to the Long House, where the rites and religious festivals of his people are held.

Outside of the Long House on the commons you see a group of Indians playing the national game, lacrosse. The Canadian team takes its defeat good naturedly, and both parties line up for their pictures.

A little ways from the Long House you will find a medicine man carrying the masks which you saw a short time ago. The carving is first done on the trunk of a living tree, and when it is removed the mask is supposed to take within itself the spirit of the tree.

You have now caught a glimpse of progressive and conservative Seneca life. These descendants of the Keepers of the Western Door of the Iroquois Confederacy are proud of their ancestry and wish to live as a distinct people as they always have. Most of them have no desire to become citizens of the new America.

The Senecas were a splendid people. In the olden days their trails ran through the deep forests and tangled morasses in every direction and no foe dared intrude unless he courted death itself. Where once these trails were, now are great modern highways of stone and iron, the paths of the white man's commerce.

The sentinels who guarded the old paths were ever watchful and their arrows flew swift and sharp-tipped and laden with venom they killed when they struck.

They have long since ceased guarding the paths, for an invading race came in great numbers and moved down the forest before them. The old council houses, such as this, moulder in forgotten places. Nature, smiling upon the memory of her children, has been kind to this crumbling monument and surrounded it with a sea of nodding daisies and waving grasses, while a bunch of elders like a bouquet presses close against it. In the background rises a stately young pine to symbolize as it ever did that the Iroquois live and shall ever live.

After the manner of the red man, the white sought to bind his

treaties with Indians, in symbols wrought in wampum belts. Claspéd hand in hand are the two parties of the compact. The white man waited and when he felt his red brother weaken he withdrew his hand and struck the blow that sent him reeling, fainting to the ground. The belt of promises was rent in a thousand pieces, and the red man of now needs no telling to know his destiny. The policy of the powers that be seems to have been to regard an Indian treaty only operative as long as convenient to the dominant party, which is not the Indian.

The Indians have been accused of cruelty, and so they were, but their deeds were not more cruel than those of the white races of the times. Think of the hideous tortures that characterized England and Europe during the period of the reformation—cruelties and outrages committed in the name of civilization and religion. Think of the barbarism of the Spanish invaders of America, of the atrocities of the Pilgrim Fathers and the depredations of the Continental army, and the much-talked-of savagery of the Indian paled into civility.

Is there any more shameful record in the annals of the Indian than the accounts of our own Pilgrim Fathers, whose deeds Irving has so graphically pictured? The Pegnods of Connecticut were surprised one night by the invading whites of New England. As the Indians awoke in their retreat they found their lodges wrapped in flame, and when they attempted to flee they were shot down like wolves. "From village to village, from wigwam to wigwam the murderers proceeded, being resolved," as our historian says, "to make a final destruction of them." A small and patriotic band found a refuge in a swamp and when discovered preferred death to submission to an insulting foe. Volleys of musketry were poured into their midst until all were killed and buried in the mire. What noble martyrs thus to die for home and country. How majestic seem these proud red men. Yet Increase Mather, the Puritan preacher, rises in his pulpit the next Sunday and lifting his voice to heaven says, "I thank God that we have this day sent six hundred heathen souls to hell." No pagan Indian ever thanked his great Manitou that he had ever sent a white man's soul to everlasting torment.

(Later, when King Phillip, whose character vies with any in ancient or modern story, was shot and his body cut in pieces to be distributed through Christian New England,) his head was stuck bleeding on a pole and a crowd, that gathers round to rejoice, praises God that they have slain men, women and children without mercy until they lay in heaps upon the snow. The happy people who thus exult over blood and butchery are our Pilgrim Fathers. In writing of this bloody contest one of the eminent church fathers writes, "Nor could they cease praying unto the Lord against Phillip until they had prayed a bullet through his heart. Two and twenty Indian captives were slain and brought down to hell in one day." "A bullet took him (Phillip) in the head and sent his cursed soul among the blasphemers in hell forever."

I have copied and recited these passages verbatim, and you will find them just as I have given them except that more details are added.

Can you wonder that Indians have always been suspicious of

Christianity and that nearly one-third of the New York Indians are non-Christians? The Christian world has no cause for complaint against the Indians.

The history of the Indian has been written by his enemies, who have not endeavored to judge him by the standards of the times or the circumstances incident to a period of invasion. The Indian fought like a good patriot for home and native soil, and he has been vilified for his manhood. Many times I have stated upon the public platform that the most terrible deeds, the most revolting brutality in Indian warfare, is the work of white men who murdered without mercy and robbed the red man of his birthright without a twinge of conscience.

The League of the Five Nations was an empire long before the Empire State, as such, existed. The nations who were the enemies of this League perished. The hundreds of captives from these broken tribes were absorbed to forget their ancestry. In this way the vigor of the nation was preserved. They became a composite nation composed of the fittest of all the tribes of the east, and as a result of their system they became a people without parallel in history.

In the history of the Iroquois came a great epoch. White invaders came and came as supplicants. Failing to achieve their ends, some of these invaders made war. The hostility of the French and their infamous schemes caused the Iroquois to start a war against them that resulted in the extinguishment of French power in America. As the allies of the English the Iroquois remained loyal to their compacts and fought in the front line of the battle for the preservation of this part of America for a people speaking the English tongue.

During the Revolutionary War the Iroquois remained in a large measure the allies of England and suffered greatly by her defeat. Left to the mercy of the infuriated colonists, the Iroquois would have suffered greatly but for the clemency of Washington, who assured them of his friendship and gave them tracts of land where they might be left in peace.

During the War of 1812 many of the Iroquois fought with the Federal army and so patriotic were they that fifteen Oneida women fought as United States soldiers.

When the Civil War broke out, threatening the integrity of the Union, more than 300 Iroquois Indians enlisted. The military secretary and confidential adviser of General Grant during his most critical campaigns was a Seneca Indian, and in his handwriting the terms of Lee's surrender were drawn up. This Seneca was General Ely S. Parker.

In every war since this government was organized there have been Iroquois fighters. The first engineer of the Battleship New York was an Oneida, and it was he who captained one of the captured Spanish torpedo boats from Santiago to Brooklyn Navy Yard. The Iroquois are loyal and patriotic and forgetting the struggles of the past are proud that they are under the jurisdiction of the United States of America.

It is now three hundred years since the Iroquois first met white men. Each year of these three centuries has been marked by the