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Author's Statement.

The reluctancy of the Indian to give the world a full view of his religion and faith is, perhaps, the chief reason why he is greatly misunderstood. He holds these things so sacred that he will say but little about them outside of his place of worship, and less to one not of his own blood.

Were it not for the fact that the blood of my race is fast disappearing, and that if these things are not recorded now, they may be lost forever, and for the further reason that I believe they are worthy of careful consideration, I would not attempt to write this book.

The Delaware Indians have kept no written records, but have from time immemorial trained certain young men as teachers, who are to succeed the older men as they die, and at the annual meetings these young men assist in conducting the ceremonies, and finally take their places as leaders themselves.

I have been collecting the data for this book

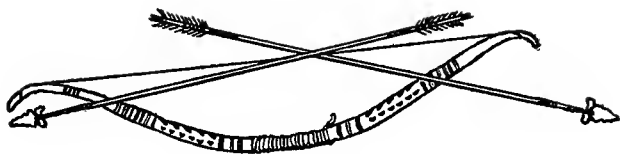
for a number of years. I have talked with many of the old people, who are now dead, and have had some of them review my manuscript. I have attended their meetings, and have taken notes while they were going on, and, try as hard as I may, I feel that I can not do them justice in my effort to translate their orations and songs, for it is almost impossible for me to find words in the English language to convey to you the beautiful thoughts our orators express in their native tongue.

One of our teachers of this faith, after being persuaded to assist me in this work, said: "Yes, I will help, because I am afraid there are so few of us that our meetings will soon be a thing of the past. Our people are becoming too much like the white men now; interested in making money, so much so, that even brothers and sisters today do not take as much interest in each other as members of different clans did years ago. This is the result of the teaching of the white man, which appeals more to the selfish interest of the individual, and suits many of our young people better. In following the white man's faith you can do as you please until you are ready to die, then, by repenting, can escape all responsibility for your acts, and go to Heaven without any efforts of your own. According to our faith you must follow the dictates of your guardian spirit, or conscience, which is the connecting link with

the Great Spirit, and thus improve yourself in each sphere you pass through until you have finally reached the Happy Hunting Ground, and have in some manner merited a reward yourself.”

There are now living in the Cherokee Nation about 1,150 Delaware Indians. Perhaps two-thirds of them can read and write. About 200 are full bloods, one-half of whom adhere to the old faith, while about one-third of the tribe profess the Christian faith; which to me is a most remarkable thing, considering the massacre of the Christian Indians in Gnadenhutzen, Pa., and Gnadenhutzen, Ohio, and the further persecution of them after that, at the hands of the race who taught them that faith.

At some future time I may attempt to publish the twelve opening orations, and as many of the others as I can obtain.



THANKSGIVING DANCE.

Traditions of our people as far back as the memories of our tribe are that we always had a Thanksgiving Dance. That many, many generations ago we came from a far-off country in the northwest; came across a land of ice and snow, until we reached the Great Fish River, or Mississippi River, where we found many people living in that valley who fiercely opposed our progress, but, after a long war, we completely overcame them, and proceeded on our journey until we finally settled in that country watered by the Susquehanna and the Delaware Rivers, our territory extending from the mountains to the tide water. Here all the Algonquin Tribes lived near them, and they became powerful and rich, so much so that they forgot to give thanks to the Great Spirit.

About that time there was a great famine or drouth. Following this great earthquakes came, rivers went dry, streams and springs started up in places where water had scarcely been seen before. Mountains came and disappeared and great fear prevailed among the people.

About this time there came to the head chief, or sachem, of the Delawares a little boy, who told the chief that his people had treated him very badly; that they would make him do more work than he was able to do and would give him but little to eat; that he had felt very badly about the way he was treated, but had put up with it. Finally, one day his people told him to go out and gather some wild sweet potatoes, which were considered a great delicacy. He went, and, to show that he was industrious, and thinking to get a little praise, or if not that, at least, to escape blame by bringing home a bountiful supply, he worked hard and got all he could carry.

He reached home as early as possible, and his people put the potatoes on to cook in a large kettle at noon. They cooked them until the evening star went down, but before this time they made the little boy go to bed without any supper. After he had been in bed some time they began to eat the potatoes and other food. They called the boy, and he answered, and jumped quickly from the bed, thinking he was invited to take part in the feast. He was only abused, however, called a glutton and told to go away. So, heart-broken and in despair, he left the house and wandered aimlessly until he was utterly exhausted. He then went to sleep. Before this he was moaning to himself over his unfortunate lot. He cried out to the

Great Spirit to give him relief. He began his supplication with O-oo and heard twelve voices with the same sound.

When he went to sleep there came to him a man with his face painted red, and as he emerged from the darkness only half of his face showed. This man talked to him and told of the great things there were in the world beyond; that his people were wicked, not only his own family but all his tribe; that they had forgotten the Great Spirit, which was the reason why the earthquakes and other trouble had been visited upon them, and that more would follow, if they did not repent. The boy asked why he heard twelve voices answer his prayer, and the spirit to whom he was talking replied that he would have to pass through twelve worlds or spheres before he could get to the home of the Great Spirit; that in each sphere there was a Manitou ruling, and that no prayer could reach the Great Spirit that did not come through the twelve spheres; that his cry had reached the first, who transmitted it to the second, and he in turn to the third, and so on until the twelfth delivered it to the Great Spirit himself.

He was told to go to the head chief or sachem and tell him that the people should return thanks each autumn to the Great Spirit, and when the people all met he should say that the Great Spirit sent him to talk to them; that he

was a medicine man, made so this night ; that he had received the gift of the Great Medicine from the Great Spirit himself. He was to tell the people they should never be discouraged when trials and tribulations came to them, for it was under those circumstances, and when in that condition, that the Great Spirit took compassion upon mortals, and made them superior and possessed of great influence over their fellow men ; that none of the tribe had gone through as great trials as he had.

The chief or sachem called the people together, and renewed the Thanksgiving Dance of the Delawares. The little boy told what he had seen. He told them that they were to prepare a long, large house, and inside this house were to be twelve posts, each with a face carved on it, half the face to be painted red and the other half black. There should also be a center post with four faces carved on it. These posts were to represent the twelve Manitous who guarded the twelve spheres through which the people should pass to reach the Happy Hunting Ground. The center post represented the Great Spirit, who saw and knew all things.

Every year after that they were to return thanks to the Great Spirit in the time of the autumn full moon, when nature had painted the forest in brilliant hues and the harvest was over. The dance was to last twelve days, which was the time it would take the twelve

Manitous to convey their thanks and prayers to the Great Spirit.

All the people are to enter at the east and retire the same way. When they come in they are to pass to the right of the fire and each clan takes its place, sitting on the ground (skins or robes are thrown down for them to sit on) next to the wall.

The Turtle clan on the south, the Turkey on the west, and the Wolf on the north, and, in no case, shall any one pass between the center post and the east door, but must go around the center post to go to the north side of the dance house. The medicine man shall lead the dance. A tortoise shell, dried and polished, and containing several pebbles, is to be placed in the southeast corner, near the door, in front of the first person, known as the orator. If he has anything to say, he will take the shell and rattle it, and an answer shall come from the south of the dance house from the singers who hit on a dry deer hide. Then the parties who had the tortoise shell shall make a talk to the people, and thank the Great Spirit for their blessings, and then proceed to dance, going to the right and around the fire, followed by all who wished to dance, and, finally, coming to the center post, stop there. All the people shall shake hands with him, and return to their seats. Then the shell should be passed to the next person, who shall either pass it on or rattle it, as

he chooses. They shall have a doorkeeper and a leader, and twelve oshkosh to sweep the ground with turkey wings, make fires, and serve as messengers. The ashes should always be taken out of the west door. In front of the east door, outside, should be a high pole, on which venison should hang. The oshkosh shall distribute food among the people. The officers and oshkosh are to be paid in wampum for their services. In no case shall they allow a dog to enter the dance house, and no one should laugh inside or in any way be rude. The orators repeat the traditions, but each party is allowed to speak and tell his dream or give advice. Every one has a guardian spirit. Sometimes representations of it come in the form of some bird, animal, or anything; at times we see it in dreams, and at other times by impression; and it tells us what to do or what will happen, etc. The guardian spirit is sent from the Great Spirit. It is the inward voice.

The last thing, when the dance is over, all the people are to go out and stand in a line east and west, with their faces south, and bow down and thank the Great Spirit, and then go home.

Some of the Delaware Indians still keep up this dance, but the dance house is not so large as it used to be, and the attendance now is not more than one hundred. Any Indian of any tribe can participate in the dance.

At the dance all who take part repeat what the leader says, both the song and the exhortation. The leader often repeats the story of the little boy, comparing our trials to that of the little boy who had met with disappointments, but telling that after a while the Great Spirit sent him gifts, by which he was enabled to overcome these disappointments, or be strong enough to bear them.

Sometimes in their dreams or visions they see men, sometimes birds or animals, and in telling of them they do not say they had a dream, but say: "There came to me this," etc.

These dreams and impressions are sometimes used as illustrations by the orator before repeating the orations that have been handed down from memory. There are quite a number of these orations. On the following pages are some expressed as nearly as can well be translated.

The historical or opening oration gives one a fair idea of what their faith is. Each night the orations are different, and each night several dances take place; and preceding the dance will be an oration of instructions, an oration of thanks, an oration of praise and encouragement, or an address in which the speaker gives his impressions, and speaks generally for the good of the assembly.

Before the dance closes each night hominy is passed around, and all partake of it and say: "For this we are thankful."

Fire is made with the use of fire sticks by friction, which they call pure fire. Smoking is permissible in the dance house, but the smoker must use the fire that is burning in the center, and made by the oshkosh, which is called pure fire. No matches are allowed to be used.

When the Manitou appeared to the little boy his face was painted red, but as he emerged from utter darkness only one-half of his face showed, and he was singing—



Ah nah adee loo- hol la na pa



Nah an dee loo hol la na pe



1. Wan nee la na pa wee ta Wa na la ---
2. U het mah no la loma coop u het mah ---



na - - pe wee ta Kat tunah Ka-
 ho - - la lom a coop Wan e ka Sha





lum muck a Kat tum ah Ka lum muck a
lum oh kung Wan e ka Sha lum oh kung.

The above, translated in English, means:

“These Delawares are my own people, and here is where I bring them in their days of tribulation that they make supplications to my Maker, the Creator.”

SONG OF THANKSGIVING DANCE.



A hu mah too mah Kan nee na



op A hu mah too mah Kanneena op Yuh pa mee



ton uk nun nee Yuh pa mee



ton uk nun nee A lung goo mung



wa nee la na pa A lung goo mungwa

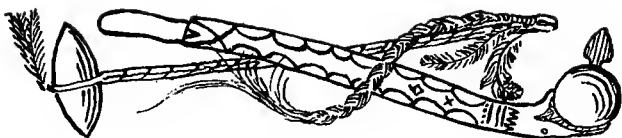


nee la na pa

There are many songs they sing at this dance, and the following is the English translation of the words with music above:*

“There’s a highway over there,
There’s a highway over there,
Flowing fast towards us,
Flowing fast towards us,
Calling to the Delawares,
Calling to the Delawares.”

*This song refers to the Milky Way, which is supposed to be the road to the Happy Hunting Ground.



HISTORICAL OR OPENING ORATION
OF THE
THANKSGIVING DANCE OF THE
DELAWARES.

Long before our greatgrandfathers
Heard the story I now tell you,
We were once a nation great,
Who from out the west of north came
Through a land of ice and snow.
Came unto the great fish river,
Where fierce warriors there did meet us
And quite vainly did oppose us,
In the course we did pursue.
When at last we settled firmly,
In a country rich with game,
And began to grow and prosper,
We forgot then to be grateful
For the blessings that came to us.

Then there was a little boy,
Who with sorrow deep was burdened;
For his father and his mother
From this life had both departed.
He with strangers was then living,
Who abused him without mercy;
He was forced to many hardships,

And with hunger did he suffer.
But the Manitou who rules us
With compassion looked upon him,
And at night he came unto him,
For he heard his cry of sorrow.

Thus the Manitou spoke to him,
To the chieftain of the nation,
Do proceed when comes the morning;
Say to him that I have called you
For my people, the Lenape;
And unless they harken to me,
Mighty earthquakes will I send them—
Then will follow other troubles
Fast to make them feel their weakness.

Say to them to build a long house,
Lengthwise from the east to westward,
And when the moon is bright in autumn,
All the clans should there assemble.
From the east door they shall enter,
To the right must they pass forward,
'Round the fire that's in the center
'Till the clans all take their places.
There shall be twelve oshkosh ready,
Six of men and six of women,
Who shall keep the fires burning
And the dust sweep from the dance ground.
They shall be paid well in wampum
For their service to the people.

As the oshkosh makes the fire,
With the fire sticks in his hand,
By the constant, tireless rubbing,
'Till the burning embers come,
So must we have so much friction
And must suffer so much pain,

That our spirits glow more brightly,
By the test of each ordeal.

When the clans are well assembled
On the south shall sit the singers;
On the north shall sit the speaker,
And a tortoise shell with pebbles
Shall be placed before the speaker.
He who feels it is his duty
To address his fellow creatures
And give thanks to the Great Spirit
May attract them with the rattle,
As from left to right it passes.

And when all are well assembled
They should send their thanks with pleasure
To the greatest of the spirits,
By the Manitou who greets him;
For twelve Manitous are ruling,
One in each sphere you must pass through
Ere you reach the great hereafter,
Where abides the Great, Great Spirit.

On the wall of the long dance house
Shall twelve faces there be carven,
And the post that's in the center
Carve four faces there upon it;
This reminds you as you see them
That e'en Manitous look to him,
But the Spirit who is greater
Watches each and all together,
So to Him you must be thankful
For each blessing you're receiving;
And to Him, when you're in trouble,
Send a cry of tribulation,
For, the best of all the greetings,
Said he this, " they are my people."

And if we will but remember
The Great Spirit hears our cry,
As with the right hand thus extended,
Twelve times call we forth Oh-o-o;
And no other message send Him,
Save a cry of sore distress.

Who would dare presume to mention
To his Maker what is needed?
What to you would be most pleasing,
May your brother greatly grieve.

Thus in singing, dance, and feasting,
For twelve nights and days assembled,
Show him you are glad and happy,
That you thus have been remembered,
And are promised greater blessings
In the lives that come hereafter;
'Till at last you've reached the station
Where the Great Spirit abideth
And you'll hear the best of greetings,
"Welcome here, you are my people."

You must always help each other
And respect the older people;
You must always teach your children
To be grateful to their Maker,
And to try always to please Him
Daily by their thoughts and actions;
That at last when they have passed through
All the lives that are before them,
They will fear not then to meet Him,
And will know that he will greet them
With the best of all the greetings,
"Welcome here, you are my people."

Why should we have been created
If our existence here is ended?

Why have we ambition here, then,
If no progress is beyond this?
Who is here contented fully,
Be his station high or low?
This to you should be convincing.
There is much we have to gather
In the life we now are living,
And much more to be accomplished
In the lives that come hereafter,
E'er we pass the last divide,
And shall hear the best of greetings,
"Welcome here, you are my people."

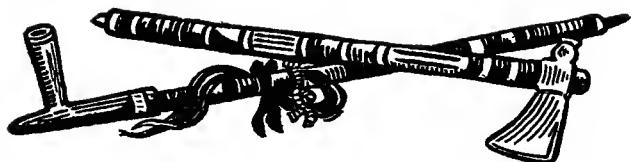
There's no person who's so humble,
There's no person who's so low,
But who yet may freely enter
In that chamber where now dwells
Those who speak to the Great Spirit;
But he long may go astray,
And in darkness may he wander,
'Til at last he finds the way there.
Thus we are now here assembled
In obedience to the call,
While I now repeat the teachings
You have often heard before,
How to hear the best of greetings,
"Welcome here, you are my people."

On the twelfth day of the meeting,
Just before you do disband,
All shall march in single file
To the eastward from the door,
And when all are well outside
To the south must you look forth,
And while standing thus in line
Twelve times then with reverence bow
To acknowledge your dependence,

On the Spirit who is greatest,
Who, we're promised, yet will greet us
With the best of all the greetings,
" Welcome here, you are my people."

You should never shirk a danger,
You should never shun a duty;
But should always move with caution
And defend yourselves with vigor.
Your Creator hates a coward;
Your Creator hates a liar,
And he does not love a boaster
Or a person seeking quarrels.
If you follow well these teachings
All the nations will respect you,
And when you've passed the twelve divisions
That the future has before you,
And have reached the final station,
Where the past and where the future
Have been blended all together,
And where mystery can not baffle
Those who hear the best of greetings
From the greatest of the spirits,
" Welcome here, you are my people."

There you'll move with perfect freedom,
Space and time no more a barrier,
And the distant starry highway
You will know and travel often,
Helping weaker kindred spirits
To the limit of the journey
'Till they reach the height of knowledge,
'Till they hear the best of greetings
By the greatest of the spirits,
" Welcome here, you are my people."



THANKSGIVING ORATION.

There's a Spirit of whose greatness
Far excels all other spirits,
Who neglects not e'en the smallest
Or the greatest of events;
Who ordained the starry highway,
The sun, the moon, the earth, the sea,
And for His glory we're created,
And for this we're very thankful.

There are Manitous who serve Him,
Each have duties of their own,
In the spheres they are controlling,
As the Great Spirit wills they should.
But not the least of all their duties
Is to hear our humble cry,
And convey it without waiting
To the Spirit who is greatest,
And for this we're very thankful.

We've had chiefs and teachers with us
Who were faithful, brave, and true,
And the lessons they have taught us
Our recorders oft' repeat.

We have those who are inspired
And who tell us what they see,
And their teachings often cheer us,
And for this we're very thankful.

We have warriors brave and skillful,
We have mothers good and true,
And their children are attentive

And with reverence seek to learn,
By each example set before them,
That they, too, may be respected,
And for this we're very thankful.

We have wives who are devoted
And their husbands do adore them;
We have children born unto us,
Who with pride we look upon,
And who yet will make the nation
What it once has been before,
And for this we're very thankful.

We have guardian spirits with us
Who, without our knowing guide us
Past much danger in our way,
And who often have enticed us
To the pleasures that we find;
Of the voice that speaks within us
We may learn which is our friend,
And for this we're very thankful.

We have friends that have departed
To the life to us unknown;
While we grieve much and we miss them,
Yet we know they are progressing,
Nearer to the final station,
Where their knowledge will be perfect
And their happiness completed,
And for this we're very thankful.

We belong unto a nation
Which now shattered, wrecked, and severed,
Still belongs to the Great Spirit,
Who announces us His own,
And has pointed out a highway
We may travel to his realm,
And for this we're very thankful.



EXALTING ORATION.

Forget not this where'er you travel,
Forget not this whate'er your danger,
Your heart may well be strong within you,
For you are of the Lenape;
For better still of all the greetings
Brought us by the good Manitou,
Said the spirit who is greatest,
"These are my people, the Lenape."

Tho' you meet with daily trials
And your burdens seem most heavy,
Great temptations may ensnare you,
You may fail to do your duty.
But do children walk from child-birth?
Do not strong men even stumble?
Let no failure leave you doubting,
For you are of the Lenape.

If you see a tribesman falter,
Even tho' he's much discouraged
And he seems to be unworthy
Of the help of even humans,
Turn not from him, don't forsake him,
For the Spirit who is greatest
Looks upon us with compassion,
And has said this in his greeting,
"These are my people, the Lenape."

Go and cheer your fallen comrade,
Tell him none can here be perfect;

If each life reflected to us,
All their errors and omissions,
His may yet be far the brighter,
For he has hidden from us nothing,
And he yet may reach the station
Where we are to be made perfect,
In advance of those who shun him,
If he only will remember
That he's of the Lenni Lenape.

When we think much of the future,
Of the mysteries that surround us,
Of the earth on which we're living,
Of ourselves as we are born,
Of ourselves as we are dying,
Then we must be truly happy
That the spirit who ordained this,
Has remembered us with greetings,
"These are my people, the Lenape."

Let your spirit then be cheerful
And your efforts do not slacken,
To perform your daily duty;
Hearken to your guardian spirit,
As impressions it will give you,
You will know when it is speaking,
For vibrations come unto you,
From the greatest of the spirits,
Who has sent to us this greeting,
"These are my people, the Lenape."



THANKSGIVING
ORATION OF COLONEL JACKSON,
AT THE DANCE HOUSE,
NOVEMBER, 1903.

Thankful now I am we meet here tonight, again to assemble as our forefathers worshiped, as our grandfathers taught us what their grandfathers taught, and, as I am impressed, is the true way to worship. And each one must feel in his own heart sincere, that our meeting may be pleasing to Him who has made us. This place is made sacred, and we must keep it pure, that the blessings we've received may continue to follow.

Many friends are missing who last season were present, but with the Great Spirit their spirits are roaming, and for this we're thankful.

Many now are with us who enjoy many blessings; children have been sent us to strengthen the nation, and for this we're thankful.

Our crops have been gathered, our fields have been fruitful; as winter approaches our

wants are supplied, and for this we're thankful.

When trials and tribulations on every side confront us; when our hearts are most sad and our spirits most heavy; when our homes were threatened to be taken from us, we were told in the east that great men befriend us, and for this we're thankful.

While some yet were doubting, and others were fearful, there came to our meeting true friends of our people. Great men from the east who were known to be mighty, and who pledged us their friendship, and for this we're thankful.

In the hearts of every one present, and in the hearts of our children, Senator Quay and Senator Clark will long be remembered, and for this we're thankful.

And there comes to me now an impression most certain that the Great Spirit smiles on these true friends now with us, and in their own hearts they will feel the reflection, the greatest reward that can yet be granted, and for this we're thankful.

THE AUTHOR'S
OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS.



THE VIEWS OF LIFE HEREAFTER.

The Indian's faith hath taught him
That beyond this life on earth,
A paradise is waiting
For those who prove their worth;
There a happy hunting ground
Abounds with fish and game,
And only those can enter
That do his faith proclaim.

The Moslem has a Heaven
Where maidens wait with glee,
With flowers and caresses
To deck him eternally.
And in this blissful Heaven
Are harems set apart
For each one of the faithful
With maidens true in heart.

The white man has a Heaven
For those who heed the laws,
And threatens with dire vengeance
All who deny his cause;
But to make Heav'n enticing,
His fellow men are told,
The very streets of Heaven
Are paved with bricks of gold.

So each and every nation,
From every clime and zone,

Does picture out their Heaven
With visions of their own;
But all expect those pleasures
Their hearts do most desire,
And the less they are deserving
Their rewards will be the higher.

But I myself feel doubtful
As to what there may be,
Where space is without limit
And time eternity;
Where spheres without number,
Driven by a force unknwn,
Explored by immortal spirits
Who knows, perhaps, our own.

Are we, then, here receiving,
While in this mortal life,
A kindergarten lesson
To prepare us for the strife;
Where chances will be boundless,
And pleasures all depend,
Upon how much we profit
By the lessons at this end?

And when we cross the river
Where God's judgment may decree,
That we shall fill such places
As our values there shall be?
And in the scale of justice
That is held by Him above,
Will there be virtue equal
To true brotherhood and love?



THE SECRET OF THE EYES.

Of all the secrets I would know,
There's none I'd prize so high,
As that which could be told to me
By friend's or stranger's eye;
But could they tell me, if they would,
The reason how and why,
There is an understanding shown
In glances of the eye?

Have we in other spheres or times
Lived, loved, and then grown cold,
And through the eyes do recognize
Acquaintance of the soul?
While though as strangers now we meet,
We knew each other well,
And recognize that instantly
But when we can not tell.

Some strangers whom I meet at times
Have eyes that seem to say,
"I've known you always, even though
We've only met today."
While others whom I've always known,
And bound by friendship's ties,
Do seem to ask me who I am,
When I look in their eyes.

And then we find some other eyes
Repulsive to our view,

While they are strangers to us, though,
 We feel we know them, too;
And oft we hate them at first sight,
 What can the reason be?
Have they wronged us in times gone by
 And do this wrong we see?

And some we've known through all our lives,
 Their eyes so questioning are.
Are they then seeking for a soul,
 Now is some distant star?
And questioning all that come along,
 That soul, where can it be?
Or waiting, sighing for the time
 When it shall yet be free.

And when from bondage of this life,
 At last it soars away,
Will this attraction draw it on
 To where those spirits play,
That loved each other in this life
 Or at some other time,
And will the meeting of them be
 Their happiness sublime?

Can you tell me the reason why
 Some eyes responsive are
To some, while others in them see
 A blank and vacant stare?
Do our souls hold a secret, then,
 They can not, will not, tell,
But can not hide from certain souls
 That share it just as well?



LENNI LENAPE.

(Indian name of Delaware Indians, meaning "Men of Men.")

While the blood of proud ancestors
Still courses in the vein,
And our souls glow with ambition,
Our position to regain
That in wealth and honor equalled,
Once our people standing, when
All the tribes and nations knew them
By the title "Men of Men."

Still we feel our nation's weakness,
As we see the great array
Of the grasping, surging numbers
Stand defiant in our way,
With designs of every manner,
Some e'en posing as a friend.
Oh! my people, we must rally
For the title "Men of Men."

It is said of our ancestors,
Who were warriors brave and true,
(As our record keepers tell it
I relate it now to you),
That in strife and battle always
Each would on himself depend,
While they always stood together—
Thus the title "Men of Men."

And from youth they were in training,
Eager, faithful each to learn,

All the arts of craft and warfare,
That a title each might earn.
So today in bloodless battle
The strife is raging fierce as then,
And each should train his mind and muscle,
To keep the title "Men of Men."

You have often heard it spoken,
Fifty men with hearts all true
Can repel a host of foemen,
If they only dare to do.
So if now we stand together,
As our rights we do defend,
Then the world in speaking of us
Still will call us "Men of Men."





TO THE DELAWARE INDIANS.

I have traveled o'er the country that once was our
domain,
Saw the rivers and the mountains, the broad and
fertile plain,
Where the Indian chased the buffalo, the antelope,
and deer,
When the smoke from Indian wigwams arose from
far and near;
Saw the lovely Susquehanna, where our council fire
would burn,
And all the tribes and warriors would gather there to
learn
The wise teachings of our chieftains and their tra-
ditions old,
And to tell it to their children as to them it had been
told.

A PROPHECY.

Once, many thousand moons ago, to the dancing house
there came
All the tribes and warriors from the forest, hill, and
plain;
And while they were assembled there a young man
rose to say,
The Manitou had shown him in a vision on that day
From afar a huge canoe, with pinions spreading wide,

Coming o'er the waters from across the sunrise side;
And in that huge canoe were people strange of dress,
All were armed as warriors, though they peacefulness
professed.

They told them of their God, "who came and died
for men,"

And they were messengers from Him to save them
from their sin.

But first, they said, they must have land, and thus a
home prepare,

Then they would teach them truth, and Heaven with
them share.

The young man to the warriors old his vision further
told,

And prophesied that from that day these strangers
would grow bold;

That each would have a different creed to teach a
different tribe,

And when one told another each would think the
other lied.

The young man for his people lamented loud and
long;

He saw the friendship broken that always had been
strong;

Dissension, war, and trouble, their happiness succeed,
Tribes rise against each other, their warriors die and
bleed.

At last, their faith all shattered, home, game, and
country gone,

Dejected, broken-hearted, he saw them westward
roam.

The Manitou was sorrowful that they should faith-
less be,

"And now where is the Heaven the stranger promised
thee?"

THE COURSE OF EVENTS.

And some of the young warriors did live to see the day,
When across the sea from sunrise, with pinions flying
 gay,
Came great canoes with strangers who soon did boldly
 land,
And with a friendly gesture, extended the glad right
 hand.
Forgetful of the warning, they received them all as
 friends,
And made the sacred pledges to share with them their
 lands.
The Indians, true and faithful, their promise did fulfill,
And eager sought the teachings of the white man's
 God and will.
The white man gave his promise, they would lead us
 on to light,
And "in Heaven we'll be rewarded" they say, for
 doing right;
For there the Bible teaches "our treasures we should
 store;"
"If our rights are there established, we need for
 nothing more.
"And Christians will gladly show us the path the
 pilgrims trod,
"That leads unto eternal joy in paradise with God."
So we gave close attention to their actions, one by one,
And this, as we have found it, is part that they have
 done.

THE INDIANS' VERSION.

They took with pious gratitude the land that was
 our own,
They killed the buffalo and deer and drove us from
 our home!
Some of our people plead with them, our country to
 retain,

While others did contest our rights with arms, but all
in vain.
With sorrow, grief, and suffering, we were forced at
last to go
From the graves of our forefathers to a land we did
not know.
But this was now guaranteed to us, "as long as water
shall run,"
Yet on they pushed us, on and on toward the setting
sun!
"And this will be the last move," they tell us, if
we go;
"You will hold the country this time as long as grass
shall grow,
"For the good Great Father's promise is a very sacred
pledge,
"And to all his children does he give the greatest
privilege;"
That is, to all children he adopts from every race of
man,
Except the rightful owners of this broad and bounteous
land!
They must in meek submission bow unto the hand of
might,
To them the courts of law are barred, they can make
no legal fight!
And when the Indian to the white man makes com-
plaint about his land,
He is told with solemn gestures, "Seek the Govern-
ment—not the man.
"He will be your good, great father and adopt you as
his child,
"He knows better what you need, and will protect
you all the while."
But the father was forgetful of his foster children's
care,

So the Indian, thus discouraged, finds relief not anywhere.

Will a nation for its actions have to pass the judgment bar,

Or will God excuse the people, if the deeds the nation's are?

If the Indian seeks the Government, there his grievance to relate,

He must first obtain permission from those who rule the State!

If his rights are there denied him and an attorney he would seek,

He is sternly then reminded that he has no right to speak!

"For under section so and so, which guides your legal move,

"You see no attorney can appear for you, except if we approve;

"And if, in our opinion, your claim does not adhere

"To the interests of the public, then your cause we can not hear."

"This is a Christian nation," they oft' with pride maintain,

And even on their money their faith they do proclaim.

And none can hold an office here in this Christian land,
Unless he believes in Heaven and the future state of man.

In every town are churches, God's word is everywhere,
E'en legislation, good or bad, begins each day with prayer.

"This is the home of freedom, where justice rules the land!

"And all (save Indian people) their rights may here demand!"

The foreigner from Europe's shore, or the ignorant African,

Has the right to sit in Congress' halls and legislation
plan!

Turning the treaty records o'er, in the first that comes
to view,

I see this gracious Government guaranteed these
rights to you,

And why you're treated as children, or ruled with an
iron hand,

Nor allowed to be politically free, is more than I
understand,

Unless it be "in Heaven you are to find your treas-
ures dear,"

And your pious Christian teachers are to take "their
treasures" here.

When on the day of judgment, their records there to see,
As God turns o'er the pages, who will the braver be?

For one is just a savage, his simple faith applies;

The other one, a white man, very highly civilized.

And should they be together long enough to treat,

Do you suppose the white man the Indian there would
cheat?

Or if the chance is given when the judgment's handed
down,

Would the white man take his Heaven or the Indians'
Hunting Ground?

HIS PLEA.

Why should we be a separate people, the target of
every man?

We, who owned this country once, should be right in
the van.

No one would objections raise, and surely Congress can
Declare all Indians vested with the rights of every man;

And grant us prompt permission to prove our every
claim,

And pay us the obligations the Government has made
in vain.

Then to our oppressors will we prove, who deny our
right to live,
That Indians will make good citizens, if to them a
chance you give.
Let the Indian have some duties, treat him as a
worthy man;
Give him a voice in the elections, give him title to
his land;
Give him place of trust and honor, let him feel this
yet his home;
Let him use his mind and muscle, let his actions be
his own;
Pay him what is justly due him, let your Government
be his, too,
He will battle with each problem just as faithfully as
you.
One who proves himself a warrior, and of danger
knows no fear,
Surely can find ways to master each new problem that
draws near.

