

**CIVILIZATION AND BARBARISM,
ILLUSTRATED BY ESPECIAL
REFERENCE TO METACOMET AND
THE EXTINCTION OF HIS RACE**

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BY

FREDERICK FREEMAN.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT was said by an Indian warrior who long since yielded with his tribe to destiny, "We have been driven back until we can retreat no farther. Our hatchets are broken; our bows are snapped; our fires are nearly extinguished; a little longer, and the white man will cease to oppress, for we shall have ceased to exist." This gloomy foreboding has well-nigh been realized. Not only have the tribes in New England, and Indians who once peopled the Hudson, Potomac, Susquehanna, Rappahannock and the valley of the Shenandoah, become extinct save only a shade of the original Red Man, met here and there, chiefly solitary, but even what were, within the memory of such as have approximated to three-score and ten, frontiers of white settlements, have been divested alike of primeval forests and of marks of the footsteps of the once proud lords of the domain. All which is left to tell that these lands were once inhabited by a people who for long centuries flourished in their primitive condition, are names of villages, streams, bays, lakes, valleys, and mountains; names retained as a matter of convenience rather than of choice.

From the shores of Huron and Superior, from the tributary streams of the Missouri and Mississippi, and from every remote spot of their once cherished and thickly-settled homes or local hunting-grounds, they disappear, vanishing like vapor from the face of the earth. "Although," as said the eloquent Washington Irving, "worthy of an age of poetry, and fit subject for local story and thrilling romance, they have left scarcely any authentic traces for the page of history, but stalk like gigantic shadows in the dim twilight of tradition."

This is not all: whilst aborigines have been despoiled of their hereditary possessions, nationality, and even existence, by the mercenary acts of their relentless oppressors, they have been shamefully traduced. Bigotry, with stolid disregard of the Red Man's humanity, has contributed its full share of the prejudice. Little allowance has been made for inherited principles or popular ignorance. Too many writers seem to have been educated to regard the Indian as only a pagan. He is branded a "worthless savage," a "Canaanitish devil," a "wild and dangerous beast," worthy of nothing better than extermination. Too many, even in this enlightened nineteenth century, seem to believe that applause of such proscscription is an act of patriotism and filial piety.

In the pages which shall follow care will be taken to exhibit with impartiality naked facts. That they may be presented as they really exist, reference will necessarily be made almost entirely to the records of the doings of the white man and of the provocations of the dispossessed. The chronicles of such as had the ability to transmit to other generations the doings of the one, or of the provocations and sufferings of the other, must be our guide.

It has been pertinently remarked by another, that Metacomet and his race, the kindly reception accorded to their invaders notwithstanding, "lived like fugitives in their native land, and went down like a bark foundering amid darkness and tempest, without a pitying eye to weep their fate or a friendly hand to make record of their struggle." Still it is not so much the intent of our narrative to perform an act of humanity for the natives, or to qualify the impressions made by the spirit of their oppressors, as to set forth a plain and unvarnished tale of facts in their due connection and with important bearings, leaving the reader to his own conclusions.

If it be true, as a respected correspondent suggests, that "the Puritans are demi-gods, and woe betides the man who ventures to intimate that they were liable to the faults of ordinary mortals," then, the writer supposes he must expect some obloquy. He, nevertheless, trusts that they who would censure will consider the sources from whence the facts stated are drawn; and will remember that the facts must be invalidated before censure is just.

Confidently believing myself to be incapable of feelings hostile to the Pilgrim Fathers, or Puritans, — as early settlers of two of the original colonies are sometimes indiscriminately called, — we aver that, do others claim such paternity, we can do more. Through nine generations, unmixed by any other than Pilgrim blood, ours has flowed. We honor the ancestry, but entertain no idea that obedience to a Divine command involves a suppression of truth. If, in giving the history of an important era, or of a race, faithfulness requires exposure of historic facts unquestionable, as painful, we cannot accuse ourself of irreverence, nor are we without support in the example of many worthy descendants of both Pilgrims and Puritans, whose eminence we do not claim. Well assured, not only that a full rather than an incomplete account is to be commended, and that by candidly conceding the errors of those who preceded us foundation is laid for perpetuating what were really their characteristic virtues, and a beacon set to guard against possible mistakes and imperfections, all attempts at white-washing are disregarded. Nor, whatever reason may have existed for our correspondent's suggestion that errors of predecessors are not with impunity to be exposed, do we find that the regrets, disgusts, and condemnations, called forth from the pens of Bentley, Trumbull, Dwight, Davis, Baylies, Bancroft, Sparks, Saltonstall, Savage, and others, of traits and transactions which they severally deplored, have lessened the esteem of these writers among candid and intelligent descendants of Pilgrims or Puritans.

We would have it distinctly understood that we shall make free use of both authentic statements and pertinent suggestions, avoiding embellishments and conforming as far as compatible with unoffending diction to the words of the narrators. The aim will be, not rhetoric, but a comprehensive view of the whole subject presented.

Theological dogmas and ecclesiastical polity of early settlers, we do not purpose to agitate; neither questions of right or wrong arising from the planting of colonies among barbarians. Letters and Christianity are expected to triumph in all contests with rude races. It seems to be a fixed fact that in all such strife barbarism shall decline. There is also no dis-

pute that the aborigines did, in large degree, occupy a soil only partially cultivated. So far as the mere question of subsistence was involved, there was room for occupancy.

In what may be regarded as paramount claims of civilization and Christianity there are important questions. But that the allusions frequent in history to Indians as rebels, conspirators, traitors, culprits, or savages, are sufficient to blot out their rights and claims to the soil of their fathers of which they had legal sovereignty, will not be thought.

Could we take up the views and opinions of Indians themselves respecting the invasions of early New England, and write aided by such lights and counsels and struggles of the aborigines, doubtless the subject might be more fairly and adequately presented. The people who fought against them and took possession of their heritage were not the best qualified to be exponents of Indians' views, or motives to action, nor to be alone their judges. History may well be exacting to secure perfect fairness and accuracy, and ought not to be content with merely plausible surmise or hearsay testimony. Any historian who would be true to his vocation must be allowed to look on much with a cold eye, lest he abate the truth or be influenced by local bias, national sympathy, or hereditary prejudices.

NEW ENGLAND INDIAN HISTORY

CONTINUED.

CHAPTER I.

THE name "Indian" was given to the aborigines of this country by Amerigo Vespucci, who, two years after John Cabot had explored the coast of North America, made discovery of some parts of South America, and had the singular fortune to confer his own name on both parts of the continent. When first discovered by Columbus, he supposed, as did others after him, that these coasts were the eastern shores of India; hence the name "Indians" given to the inhabitants. The origin of the North American Indians remains an unsolved problem.

The Indians of New England, when the white man first came among them, were destitute of the peculiar advantages and improvements which attend civilized life.

Government they had to a certain extent. Each nation or tribe had an acknowledged head or chief; the son of such chief succeeded generally to the father, or, if there were no son, the queen or next of kin ruled. The king, or chief they called "Sachem." Tribute for the support of a chief was paid by all.¹

¹ Some have supposed that the titles of "Chief" and "Sagamore" were used by Indians indifferently. But others, and their opinions are probably correct, think that Sagamores, a name which to a limited extent only was in use in New England, ruled a lesser territory, and were in degree subordinate and accountable to the "Sachems." There were many Sagamores within the Massachusetts Bay