INDIAN CHARACTER AND CUSTOMS AS PORTRAYED IN THE NOVELS OF JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

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BY

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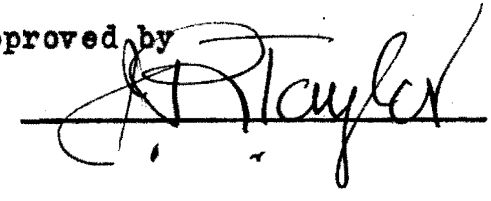

Acknowledgment

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Foreword

The suggestion for this thesis grew out of a course in "The Novel" taken by the writer, at this university, under the instruction of Prof. J. R. Taylor. In connection with this course, "The Last of the Mohicans" was re-read. The picture of the Indian as presented by Fenimore Cooper, in that book, made such a vivid impression on the reader, that a desire to know how the author had treated the Indian in his other novels dealing with Indian life, resulted in this investigation.

Critics have, ever since the first appearance of these novels, debated to what extent the redman, as drawn by Cooper, is true to life, and to what extent he is romanticized. Some of these criticisms have apparently failed to consider all of the material presented.

As far as the writer knows, there has been no attempt to collect and organize the material relating to Indians in these novels. Readers are generally acquainted with most of The Leatherstocking Tales, but "Wyandotte," "Oak Openings," "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish," and others, are less known.

The object of this study is an attempt to present, as far as possible, by actual quotation or paraphrase, the character and customs of the Indian as portrayed in the novels of James Fenimore Cooper.

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Introduction

The tribes and tribal names of the North American Indian are so numerous that any satisfactory discussion of them must be preceded by a designation of the particular groups in question. This is especially true of the study of the Indians in the novels of James Fenimore Cooper, because he not only differentiates between the several tribes but also refers to them by the nicknames bestowed upon them by their enemies, as well as by the different aboriginal names of their tribe, clan, or confederacy.

As might be expected, the author, in several passages throughout the novels, explains, for the benefit of the reader, the origin and names of practically all of the groups mentioned. In all cases of doubt in this matter, the statements about Indians which are not taken from the novels are based on the admirable "Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico", edited by F. W. Hodge, and listed in the bibliography accompanying this thesis.

The following citation from "The Pioneers" furnishes much of the tribal explanation necessary for a thorough appreciation of the novels in question.

> "Before the Europeans, or to use a more significant term, the Christians, dispossessed the original owners of the soil, all that section of the country which contains the New England States, and those of the Middle which lie east of the mountains, was occupied by two great nations of Indians, from whom had descended numberless tribes.
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> .....
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> "These two great divisions consisted, on the one side, of Five, or as they were afterwards called, the Six Nations, and their allies; and, on the other, of the Lenni Lenope, or Delawares, with the numerous and powerful tribes that owned that nation as their grandfather. The former was generally called by the Anglo-Americans, Iroquois or the Six Nations, and sometimes Mingoes. Their appelation,

among their rivals, seems generally to have been the Mengwe, or Maqua. They consisted of the tribes or as their allies were fond of asserting, in order to raise their consequence, of the several nations of the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas; who ranked, in the Confederation, in the order in which they are named. The Tuscaroras were admitted to this union near a century after its formation, and thus completed the number of six.

"Of the Lenni Lenape, or as they were called by the whites, from the circumstances of their holding their great Council-fire on the banks of that river, the Delaware Nation, the principal tribes, besides that which bore the generic name, were the Mahicanni, Mohicans, or Nentigoes. Of these the latter held the country along the waters of the Chesapeake and the seashore; while the Mohegans occupied the district between the Hudson and the ocean, including much of New England."1

To the above mentioned tribes must be added the Wyandots or Hurons of the Iroquoian Family. One of the novels takes its name from a member of this tribe.

In "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish", dealing with the puritan in New England and King Phillip's War, the Massacheusetts, the Wamponoags, and Narragansetts are the principal tribes. These are all members of the Algonquin Family, a linguistic stock, to which the Delaware belong.

In "Oak Openings", the principal scenes of which are laid in the middle west, the following Algonquin tribes figure: the Chippewa, the Ottawa, the Pottawattami, the Nenominee, and Sacs,—known also as the Ojebway nation.

Finally, in "The Prairie" we deal with the Pawnee Loup of the Algonquin Family and with the Dacotan or Siouan Family, the principal tribes of which are the Teton, Konza, Osage, Omaha, Quapaw, and Ponza.

1. Cooper: The Pioneers, p-77-78

In period of time the incidents of these novels take place from around the Middle of the seventeenth century through the beginning of the nineteenth. Many of the stories are linked up with our Revolutionary War.

THE INDIAN CHIEF

Chief Mahtoree, with the idea that he had embraced all the gradations of human excellence, from the highest to the lowest, says, in conversation with Leatherstocking, "The Master of life has made chiefs, and warriors, and women."[1]

We shall begin our discussion with the chiefs.

I Types, Number, and Authority

In the following illuminating passage from "The Deerslayer," Cooper explains the kind and number of chiefs commonly found among the Indians of North America:

> "As was not unusual among the tribes and wondering bands of aborigines, two chiefs shared, in nearly equal degrees, the principal and primitive authority that was wielded over these children of the forest. There were several who might claim the distinction of being chief men, but the two in question were so much superior to all the rest in influence, that, when they agreed, no one disputed their mandates; and when they were divided, the band hesitated, like men who had lost their governing principle of action. It was also in conformity with practice—perhaps we might add in conformity with nature, that one of the chiefs was indebted to his mind for his influence, whereas the other owed his distinction altogether to qualities that were physical. One was a senior, well-known for eloquence in debate, wisdom in council, and prudence in measures; while his great competitor, if not his rival, was a brave, distinguished in war, notorious for ferocity, and remarkable in the way of intellect, for nothing but the cunning and expedients of the warpath."[2]

The chiefs, then, held the highest political office among the Indians. The government, however, was not despotic. Heredity exerted influence, but, as might be expected from a people who placed so much stress upon physical fitness and individual prowess, personal qualifications were more significant. In the following paragraph Cooper accounts for the titles of king and prince among them.

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-240
2. Ibid : The Deerslayer, p-508-509

> ".....it is well known that little which could be called monarchial or despotic, entered into the politics of the North American tribes, although the first colonists, bringing with them to this hemisphere the notions and opinions of their own countries often dignified the chief men of those tribes with the titles of kings and princes. Hereditary influence did certainly exist; but there is much reason to believe it existed rather as a consequence of hereditary merit and acquired qualifications than as a birthright."1

The following passage is even more emphatic on this point of heredity vs. personal qualifications as the basis for the authority of chiefs.

> "The authority of an Indian chief is far from despotic, and though there is reason to think it is often aided, if not generated, by the accidental causes of birth and descent, it receives its main support in the personal qualities of him who rules."2

More frequently than otherwise, the daring and wisdom of the father was to be seen also in the son. At any rate, a successful or renowned chief was always able to cope with the savage humors and rankling desire for vengeance in the boldest of his subalterns. The most powerful chief, however, maintained his authority only by constant appeal to the opinions of his inferiors.

The Indians held their chiefs in great respect, but they were rarely if ever allowed to trespass on any important rights of the tribe. Of this Cooper says:

> "Doubtless they have after a fashion their own demagogues and Caesars, but they are usually kept within moderate limits; and in rare instances, indeed, do either ever seriously trespass on the rights of the tribe. As human nature is everywhere the same, it is not to be supposed that pure justice prevails even among savages; but one thing would seem to be certain, that, all over the world, man in his simplest and wildest state is more apt to

1. Cooper: The Deerslayer, p-533
2. Cooper: The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p-332

> respect his own ordinances than when living in what is deemed a condition of high civilization."1

The chiefs then were men of vastly superior endowments as compared with the rest of the tribe. Rivenoak, a chief who appears in "The Deerslayer," had no hereditary claims--having risen to consideration purely by the force of talents, sagacity, and, as Bacon expresses it, in relation to all distinguished statesmen, 'by a union of great and mean qualities';.....

> "Next to arms, eloquence offers the great avenue to popular favor, whether it be in civilized or savage life; and Rivenoak had succeeded, as so many have succeeded before him, quite as much rendering fallacies acceptable to his listeners, as by any profound or learned expositions of truth, or the accuracy of logic. Nevertheless, he had influence; and was far from being altogether without just claims to its possession. Like most men who reason more than they feel, the Huron was not addicted to the indulgence of the mere ferocious passions of his people: he had been commonly found on the side of mercy, in all the scenes of vindictive torture and revenge that had occurred in his tribe, since his own attainment to power."2

It is interesting and commendable that Cooper always considers his "red men" humans, and takes many occasions to point out, as in the above passage, the similarity between parts of their behavior and that of more civilized peoples.

In many instances the chiefs had enjoyed superior advantages of contact with members of the colonists and for this reason, too, they were in advance of their own people. This was true of Chingachgook, of Mahatoree, of Conanchet, and others.

We shall see that, in general, the chiefs took the responsibilility of leadership of their people seriously, and usually bore themselves with dignity and gravity. As might be expected, they invariably showed coolness in confusion; were not so readily the victims of superstitions or incredible beliefs as their followers.

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-112
2. Ibid: The Deerslayer, p-533

They deplored the use of "firewater" among their people, and were interested in learning new ways of helping them. However, when such superior powers were used for selfish or sinister motives by the unprincipled among them, the results were doubly atrocious.

II The Council

It is in the councils held by the chiefs for transacting their business that we may see more clearly what their duties, personalities, and relationships were. Numerous examples are given in the novels of both formal and informal councils--when only a few persons gathered, to occasions when the nation was assembled to decide upon, or to investigate some issue. The manner of conducting each is practically the same: a council-fire is lighted and a pipe is generally smoked; the proceedings are deliberate and marked by great solemnity, dignity and decorum; great deference is paid to the age and rank of the participants; when the occasion demands it, all of the eloquence and political maneuvers known to the chiefs are exercised in their effort to carry their points. The oldest women of the tribes were frequently privileged to sit in on these proceedings, and when a council of the nation was called, men, women, and children attended.

On The Trail

We shall begin with a council that is marked by simplicity, but which is typical of those frequently held at any time or place when some decision is necessary for further action. The occasion for this deliberation was in order to decide what trail should be taken in the rescue of the daughters of Colonel Munro.

The warriors, with Hawkeye, took their seats with much gravity and decorum, within the curl of the smoke of the fire, which had been replenished.

"After a short and impressive pause, Chingachgook lighted a pipe whose bowl was curiously carved in one of the soft stones of the country, and whose stem was a tube of wood, and commenced smoking. When he had inhaled enough of the fragrance of the soothing weed, he passed the instrument into the hands of the scout. In this manner the pipe had made its round several times, amid the most profound silence, before either of the party opened his lips. Then the sagamore, as the oldest and highest in rank, in a few calm and dignified words proposed the subject for deliberation. He was answered by the scout; and Chingachgook rejoined, when the other objected to his opinions. But the youthful Uncas continued a silent and respectful listener, until Hawkeye in complaisance demanded his opinion..

....

"Notwithstanding the increasing warmth of the amicable contest, the most decorous Christian assembly, not even excepting those in which its reverend ministers are collected, might have learned a wholesome lesson of moderation from the forbearance and courtesy of the disputants. The words of Uncas were received with the same deep attention as those which fell from the maturer wisdom of his father; and, so far from manifesting any impatience, neither spoke in reply, until a few moments of silent meditation were, seemingly, bestowed in deliberating on what had already been said.

....

"The instant the matter in discussion was decided, the debate and everything connected with it, except the result, appeared to be forgotten."1

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans", p-220-22

In a Tribe

A somewhat different picture is presented in "The Prairie" of a council held by the Tetons under their chief, Mahtoree, to decide upon the fate of some prisoners taken in warfare. There is much division of opinion as to what shall be done with the captives who consist of a renowned young chief of an enemy tribe, two "pale-face" men by the names of Middleton and Paul with the bride and sweetheart respectively, of these men, a medicine man of the palefaces called Obed, and the old trapper.

In this instance we are introduced to a powerful chief who did not hesitate to use his great influence for carrying out his own selfish purposes. He had fallen in love with the surpassing loveliness of the "pale-face" bride of Middleton, and the determination to secure her for himself influenced all of his plans and actions on behalf of his tribe. The author explains that he had had just enough contact with the traders and troopers of Canada to unsettle many of his own wild opinions, which were his birthright, without perhaps substituting any others of a definite enough nature to be profitable. His reasoning was subtle and audacious, rather than truthful and profound.

> "Like thousands of more enlightened beings who fancy they are able to go through the trials of human existence without any other support than their own resolutions, his morals were accommodating and his motives selfish."1

This personal desire on the part of Mahtoree was not likely to be displeasing nor necessarily detrimental to the tribe. It explains,

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-319

however, his situation in the proceedings which follow.

> "A fierce and savage joy had existed in the camp, from the instant when it had been announced that their own chief was returning with the long-dreaded and hated partisan of their enemies. For many hours the crones of the tribe had been going from lodge to lodge, in order to stimulate the tempers of the warriors to such a pass as might leave but little room for mercy. To one they spoke of a son whose scalp was drying in the smoke of a Pawnee lodge. To another, they enumerated his own scars, his disgraces, and defeats; with a third, they dwelt on his losses of skins and horses; and a fourth was reminded of vengeance by a significant question concerning some flagrant adventure in which he was known to have been a sufferer."1

These means used by the old women of the tribe excited the men sufficiently to cause them to assemble in groups according to their deeds and reputations, for a discussion of the matter. Anyone approaching the lodges could readily observe that some event of more interest than usual was about to take place. Not only had the old crones clustered together, but every Indian boy, who was old enough to understand the significance of the council manifested the most intense interest.

> "They who were of that equivocal age which admitted them to the hunts, while their discretion was still too doubtful to permit them to be trusted on the warpath, hung around the skirts of the whole, catching from the fierce models before them that gravity of demeanor and restraint of manner which in time was to become so deeply ingrafted in their own characters. A few of the still older class, and who had heard the whoop in anger, were a little more presuming, pressing higher to the chiefs, though far from presuming to mingle in their councils, sufficiently distinguished by being permitted to catch the wisdom which fell from lips so venerated. The ordinary warriors of the band were still less diffident, not hesitating to mingle among the chiefs of lesser note, though far from assuming the right to dispute the sentiments of any established brave, or to call in question the prudence of measures that were recommended by the more gifted counsellors of the nation."2

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-332-3
2. Ibid, p-301-2

The following description of the chiefs is particularly interesting because it defines more clearly the distinctions between the two classes and the characteristics of each. Mahtoree, their acknowledged leader, who possessed in a rare combination, the qualities of both groups, is conspicuous among them.

> "Among the chiefs themselves there was a singular compound of exterior. They were divided into two classes: those who were mainly indebted for their influence to physical causes and to deeds in arms, and those who had become distinguished rather for their wisdom than for their services in the field. The former were by far the most numerous and most important class. They were men of stature and mien, whose stern countenances were rendered doubly imposing by those evidences of their valor which had been roughly traced on their lineaments by the hands of their enemies. The class which had gained its influence by a moral ascendency was extremely limited. They were uniformly to be distinguished by the quick and lively expression of their eyes, by the air of distrust that marked their movements, and occasionally by the vehemence of their utterance in those sudden outbreakings of the mind by which their present consultations were from time to time distinguished.
>
> "In the very center of the ring formed by these chosen counsellors was to be seen the person of the disquited but seemingly calm Mahtoree. There was a conjunction of all the several qualities of the others in his person and character. Mind as well as matter had contributed to establish his authority. His scars were as numerous and deep as those of the whitest heads in his nation; his limbs were in their greatest vigor; his courage at its fullest height. Endowed with this rare combination of moral and physical influence, the keenest eye in all that assembly was want to lower before his threatening glance. Courage and cunning had established his ascendency, and it had been rendered in some degree sacred by time. He knew so well how to unite the powers of reason and force, that, in a state of society which admitted of greater display of his energies, the Teton would in all probability have become a conqueror and a despot." 1

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-302

Mahtoree had suspended the discussions in order to ascertain how far the execution of the prisoners might propitiate or retard his own particular views. Up to this point the consultations had been merely preliminary. A variety of opinions still prevailed, but each chief had discovered how many supporters were of his own particular views. The moment for the formal council of the tribe had now arrived, and preparations were made for this momentous occasion with great dignity and solemnity.

> "With a refinement in cruelty that none but an Indian would have imagined, the place selected for the grave deliberation was immediately about the post to which the most important of its subjects was attached. Middleton and Paul were brought in their bonds, and laid at the feet of the Pawnee; then the men began to take their places; according to their several claims to distinction. As warrior after warrior approached, he seated himself in the wide circle with a mien as composed and thoughtful as if his mind were actually in a condition to deal out justice, tempered, as it should be, with the heavenly quality of mercy. A place was reserved for three or four of the principal chiefs; and a few of the oldest of the women, as withered as age, exposure, hardships, and lives of savage passions could make them, thrust themselves into the foremost circle with a temerity to which they were impelled by their insatiable desire for cruelty, and which nothing but their years and their long-tried fidelity to the nation could have excused.
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> "All, but the chiefs already named, were now in their places. These had delayed their appearance, in the vain hope that their own unaminity might smooth the way to that of their respective factions; for, notwithstanding the superior influence of Mahtoree, his power was to be maintained only by constant appeals to the opinions of his inferiors. As these important personages at length entered the circle in a body, their sullen looks and clouded brows, notwithstanding the time given for consultation, sufficiently proclaimed the discontent which reigned among them. The eye of Mahtoree was varying in its expression, from sudden gleams, that seemed to kindle with the burning impulses of his soul, to that cold and guarded steadiness which was

> thought more peculiarly to become a chief in council. He took his seat with the studied simplicity of a demagogue; though the keen and flashing glance that he immediately threw around the silent assembly betrayed the more predominant temper of a tyrant."1

This very vivid and detailed description of the proceedings and participants of this council exposes its innermost workings. One is reminded of the most astute political gathering among people of the highest civilization. Tradition and experience had taught these wily chiefs many of the fine points of governmental control.

The speeches of the chiefs following the formal opening of this council not only reveal the character, motives, and ideas of the respective speakers, but also shed light on their customs and language. The account continues:

> "When all were present an aged warrior lighted the great pipe of his people, and blew the smoke toward the four quarters of the heavens. So soon as this propitiatory offering was made, he tendered it to Mahtoree, who, in affected humility, passed it to a gray-bearded chief by his side. After the influence of the soothing weed had been courted by all, a grave silence succeeded, as if each was not only qualified to, but actually did, think more deeply on the matters before them. Then an old Indian arose and spoke as follows:
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> "'The eagle, at the falls of the endless river, was in its egg, many snows after my hand had struck a Pawnee. What my tongue says, my eyes have seen. Bohracheena is very old. The hills have stood longer in their places than he has been in his tribe, and the rivers were full and empty before he was born; but where is the Sioux that knows it besides himself? What he says, they will hear. If any of his words fall to the ground they will pick them up and hold them to their ears. If any blow away in the wind, my young men who are very nimble will catch them. Now listen. Since water ran and trees grew, the Sioux has found the Pawnee on his warpath. As the cougar loves the antelope, the Dahcotah loves his enemy. When the wolf

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-333-4

finds the fawn, does he lie down and sleep? When the panther sees the doe at the spring does he shut his eyes? He drinks, too; but it is of blood! A Sioux is a leaping panther, a Pawnee a trembling deer. Let my children hear me. They will find my words good. I have spoken.'

"A deep gutteral exclamation of assent broke from the lips of all the partisans of Mahtoree, as they listened to this sanguinary advice from one who was certainly among the most aged of the nation. That deeply seated love of vengeance, which formed so prominent a feature in their characters, was gratified by his metaphorical allusions; and the chief himself augered favorably of the success of his own schemes, by the number of supporters who manifested themselves to be in favor of the counsels of his friend. But still unanimity was far from prevailing. A long and decorous pause was suffered to succeed the words of the first speaker, in order that all might duly deliberate on their wisdom, before another chief took on himself the office of refutation. The second orator, though past the prime of his days, was far less aged than the one who had preceded him. He felt the disadvantage of this circumstance, and endeavored to counteract it, as far as possible, by the excess of his humility.

"I am but an infant, "he commenced, looking furtively around him in order to detect how far his well-established character for prudence and courage contradicted his assertions. "I have lived with the women since my father has been a man. If my head is getting gray, it is not because I am old. Some of the snow which fell on it while I have been sleeping on the warpaths have frozen there, and the hot sun near the Osage villages has not been strong enough to melt it.' A low murmur was heard, expressive of admiration of the services to which he thus artfully alluded. The orator modestly awaited for the feeling to subside a little, and then he continued, with increasing energy, encouraged by their commendations: 'But the eyes of a young brave are good. He can see very far. He is a lynx. Look at me well. I will now turn my back, that you may see both sides of me. Now do you know I am your friend for you look on a part that a Pawnee never saw. Now look at my face--- not in this seam, for there your eyes can never see into my spirit. It is a hole cut by Konza. But here is an opening made by the Wahcotah, (Great Spirit) through which you may look into the soul. What am I? A Dacotah within and without. You know it. Therefore hear me. The blood of every creature on the prairie is red. Who can tell the spot where a Pawnee was struck from the place where my young men took a bison? It is of the same color. The Master of Life made them for each other. He made them alike. But will the grass grow green where a pale-face is killed? my young men must not think that nation so numerous that it

> will not miss a warrior. They call them over often, and say, 'where are my sons?' If they miss one they will send into the prairies to look for him. If they cannot find him they will tell their runners to ask for him among the Sioux. My brethren, the Big-knives are not fools. There is a mighty medicine of their nation now among us; who can tell how loud is his voice, or how long his arms?..... ....."1

The speech of this orator, who had shown his superstitious beliefs and fear of the white man, was cut short just as he was beginning to enter his subject with warmth. The impatient Mahtoree arose suddenly and ordered, in a voice mingled with contempt and irony, that the evil spirit of the pale-faces he brought forth so that the speaker might see this medicine.

> "A death-like and solemn stillness succeeded this extraordinary interruption. It not only involved a deep offense against the sacred courtesy of debate, but the mandate was likely to brave the unknown power of one of those incomprehensible beings whom few Indians were enlightened enough at that day to regard without reverence, or few hardy enough to oppose."2

Mahtoree entertained none of these fears. So anxious was he that the prisoners, with the possible exception of the trapper, whose age he respected, be put to death that he had defied conventional rules in this manner. Moreover, he had anticipated just such a reaction to the medicine-man on the part of many of his associates and had ordered that Obed be deprived of his regular apparel and be dressed and painted most fantastically in Indian style, with the idea of making him appear ridiculous. The said Obed even wore a scalp-lock, and from conspicuous parts of his body were hung frogs, lizzards, toads, and butterflies, em-

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-334-5-6
2. Ibid, p-336

blems in mockery of his profession. With the exception of the more intelligent chiefs, his appearance was regarded with secret awe by most of the band in spite of this ridiculous attire. A brief interruption was followed by another period of motionless silence.

> "Then Mahtoree arose, evidently prepared to speak. First placing himself in an attitude of dignity, he turned a steady and severe look on the whole assembly. The expression of his eye, however, changed as it glanced across the different countenances of his supporters and of his opponents. To the former, the look, though stern, was not threatening, while it seemed to tell the latter all the hazards they incurred, in daring to brave the resentment of one so powerful.
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> "Still, in the midst of so much "hanteur" and confidence, the sagacity and cunning of the Teton did not desert him. When he had thrown the gauntlet, as it were, to the whole tribe, and sufficiently asserted his claim to superiority, his mien became more affable and his eye less angry. Then it was that he raised his voice, in the midst of a death-like stillness, varying its tones to suit the changing character of his images and of his eloquence.
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> "What is a Sioux? the chief sagaciously began. "He is the ruler of the prairies, and master of its beasts. The fishes in the "river of the troubled waters" know him, and come at his call. He is a fox in council, an eagle in sight, a grizzly bear in combat. A Dacotah is a man!"
>
> "After waiting for the low murmur of approbation which followed this flattering portrait of his people to subside, the Teton continued:
>
> "What is a Pawnee? A thief, who only steals from women; a red-skin who is not a brave; a hunter that begs for venison. In council he is a squirrel, hopping from place to place, he is an owl, that goes on the prairie at night; in battle he is an elk, whose legs are long. A Pawnee is a woman."[1]

Another pause was followed by a yell of delight and a demand was made that these taunting words should be translated

1. Cooper: The Prairie, pp-341-2

into Pawnee language for the captive's benefits. This was done by the trapper, but the speech produced no visible effect on this brave, young chief. One could observe from Mahtoree's expression how inextinguishable was the hatred he felt towards this captive, the only chief, far or near, whose fame might advantageously be compared with his own. His speech, intended to quicken the tempers of his men to work his savage purposes, was continued.

> "If the earth was covered with rats which are good for nothing," he said, "there would be no room for buffaloes, which give food and clothes to an Indian. If the prairies were covered with Pawnees, there would be no room for the foot of a Decatoh. A Loup is a rat, a Sioux a heavy buffalo; let the buffaloes tread upon the rats and make room for themselves."1

It will be observed that in these speeches the orators generally gain favor with their audiences by artfully alluding to their own services. They then flatter their listeners with eulogies on their own tribe, after which they attempt to convince their hearers of the soundness of their own views on the issue in question, by appealing to their weaknesses or prejudices.

Feeling confident that he had aroused the fury of his followers against the young chief sufficiently for the present, Mahtoree now directed his attention to the pale-face men whose deaths he no doubt contrived primarily as a step toward the realization of his own scheme. He began by alluding to the previous speaker.

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-342

"My brothers, a little child has spoken to you. He tells you his hair is not gray, but frozen; that the grass will not grow where a paleface has died! Does he know the color of the blood of a Big-knife? No! I know he does not; he has never seen it. What Dacotah besides Mahtoree has ever struck a pale-face? Not one. But Mahtoree must be silent. Every Teton will shut his ears when he speaks. The scalps over his lodge were taken by the women. They were taken by Mahtoree and he is a woman. His mouth is shut; he waits for the feasts to sing among the girls!"1

(As has probably been observed, the term "woman" is among the most reproachful or degrading that could be used in connection with a warrior or a chief, who disdained the work of a woman and regarded their duties as being of a vastly superior order. The expression, "Big-knife", was one of the names given white men in allusion to the weapons used by them.)

Exclamations of regret and resentment followed this self-abasement on the part of their great chief, who took his seat as if resolved to speak no more. So great was the confusion that a dissolution of the council seemed probable unless their chief came to the rescue, so he arose and resumed his speech by changing his manner to that of a warrior bent on revenge. Using his deep-toned and stirring voice to its utmost power he called the names of the warriors of his tribe who had met their deaths at the hands of either a Pawnee or a white man in such a cunning and thrilling manner as to affect all who heard him.

"It was in the midst of one of his highest flights of eloquence that, a man, so aged as to walk with the greatest difficulty, entered the very center of the circle, and took his stand directly in front of the speaker.

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-342-3

> .....The stranger had once been distinguished for his beauty and proportions, as had been his eagle eye for its irresistable and terrible glance. But his skin was now wrinkled, and his features furrowed..... The murmurs of "Le Balafré!" that rang through the assembly when he appeared, announced not only his name and the high estimation of his character, but how extraordinary his visit was considered. As he neither spoke nor moved, however, the sensation created by his appearance soon subsided, and then every eye was again turned upon the speaker, and every ear, once more drank in the intoxication of his maddening appeals."1

The triumph of Mahtoree was reflected on the countenances of his auditors by looks of ferocity and revenge. These were followed by bursts of admiration which grew less and less restrained. Closing his speech by a rapid appeal to the pride and hardihood of this native band, the Teton, in the height of his success, suddenly took his seat.

It was then that Le Balafré began to speak in a low, feeble, and hollow voice, as if it rolled from the innermost cavities of his chest and gathered strength and energy as it broke upon the air.

> "The day of Le Balafré is near its end," were the first words that were distinctly audible. "He is like a buffalo on whom the hair will grow no longer. He will soon be ready to leave his lodge, to go in search of another that is far from the villages of the Sioux; therefore, what he says has to concern not him but those he leaves behind. His words are like the fruit on a tree, ripe, and fit to be given to chiefs.
>
> "Many snows have fallen since Le Balafré has been bound on the war-path. His blood has been very hot but now it has had time to cool. The Wahcondah gives him dreams of war no longer; he sees that it is better to live in peace.

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-343-4

> "My brothers, one foot is turned to the happy hunting grounds, the other will soon follow, and then an old chief will be seen looking for the prints of his father's moccasins, that he may make no mistake, but be sure to come before the Master of Life by the same path as so many good Indians have already travelled. But who will follow? Le Balafré has no son. His oldest has ridden too many Pawnee horses; the bones of the youngest have been gnawed by Konza dogs! Le Balafré has come to look for a young arm on which he may lean, and to find a son, that when he is gone his lodge may not be empty....."1

This old veteran's speech had been calm, but distinct and decided. It was his desire to adopt the young Pawnee captive as a son for the reasons he had given. His resolution was in strict conformity with the usages of the tribe, besides no one presumed to oppose so aged and venerated a brave, so that his proposal was listened to in grave and respectful silence. Mahtoree, towards whom many eyes turned, was apparently content to await the result of this proposal with seeming composure, though the occasional gleams of ferocity which played about his eyes betrayed his true feelings on the subject.

By order of Le Balafré the young chief was released from his post and examined by the old man with evident satisfaction. He

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-344-5

then proposed the question to the youth in the following figurative language:

> "My son opened his eyes on the 'waters of the wolves', ...but he will shut them in the bend of the 'river with a troubled stream.' He has born a Pawnee, but he will die a Dacotah. Look at me. I am a sycamore that once covered many with my shadow. The leaves are falled and the branches begin to drop. But a single sucker is springing from my roots; it is a little vine, and it winds itself about a tree that is green. I have long looked for one fit to grow by my side. Now I have found him. Le Balafré is no longer without a son; his name will not be forgotten when he is gone.-----Men of the Tetons, I take this youth into my lodge."1

Although the council dared not dispute a right that had been exercised so often by warriors far inferior to Le Balafré, the youth himself had not been consulted. When the moment arrived for him to speak it was as follows:

> "My father is very old, but he has not yet looked upon everything,.. ....He has never seen a buffalo changed to a bat: he will never see a Pawnee become a Sioux."2

Le Balafré, instead of being repulsed by this clear-cut and positive refusal, accepted it, as indicative of the young chief's gallantry. He was soon disillusioned. The Pawnee took the wrinkled hand of Le Balafré and laid it with reverence on his head as if to acknowledge the extent of his obligation. He then explained more fully why he would never become a Sioux and closed by saying, "When the Tetons see the sun come from the Rocky Mountains, and move toward the land of the pale-faces, the mind of Hard-Heart (meaning his own) will soften, and his spirit will become a Sioux. Until that day he will live and die a Pawnee."3

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-346
2. Ibid: p-347
3. Ibid: p-348

This declaration on the part of Hard-heart, for so he was called, was greeted by a yell in which admiration for his fidelity to his tribe, and a desire for revenge were mingled. An attitude assumed shortly afterwards by the Pawnee was misconstrued for contempt. Unable to restrain their fury any longer, the old crones commenced reviling the captive. The excitement soon spread among the inferior warriors but they would not begin without the consent of the chiefs. Mahtoree, who had been awaiting just such a movement, shortly gave a signal for the tormenting to proceed. Death by torture for the captive men, would have been almost certain had not other events interceded. In this manner the council was dissolved.

It may be clearly seen that a people possessing such deep-seated passions for revenge and cruelty as shown in this council could only be held in check by a chief whom they both respected and feared. We have had presented to us in Mahtoree such a person. His powerful and authoritative call could arrest the actions of his warriors when bent on the most bloody revenge.

From a Number of Tribes

In "Oak Openings" an interesting and picturesque council, known as the "Council of the Bottom Land, near to the spring of gushing water," was called by the great Onoah, the "Tribeless," who had labored to awaken a national spirit among the Indians of all tribes with the hope of completely exterminating the encroaching pale-faces. Cooper ranks him above Tecumthe, and his brother the Prophet. In his person united the characters of warrior, prophet and councillor, and so great had been his success that he deemed his project feasible. For wisdom, eloquence, and vengeance on his enemies his followers considered him unsurpassed. The whites, scattered along the frontier had given him the "sobriquet" of "Scalping Peter," but they knew little of his career and less of his true character, which was shrouded in mystery.

At this secret council, which was held after midnight, were nearly fifty chiefs from different tribes. Its effect upon two white men, a corporal and a bee-hunter, who happened to be out at that hour and overheard the proceedings, is graphically described by the author. They watched with a feeling of awe mingled with curiosity the aspects, movements, dress and appearance in general, of these painted warriors.

> "The Indians already present were not seated. They stood in groups, conversing, or stalked across the arena, resembling so many dark and stately spectres. No sound was heard among them, a circumstance that added largely to the wild and supernatural aspect of the scene. If any spoke, it was in a tone so low and gentle as to carry the sound

> no farther than to the ears that were listening; two never spoke at the same time and in the same group, while the moccasin permitted no foot-fall to be audible. Nothing could have been more unearthly than the picture presented in that little wood-circled arena of velvet-like grass and rural beauty. The erect, stalking forms, half-naked, if not even more; the swarthy skins; the faces fierce in the savage conceits which were intended to strike terror into the bosoms of enemies, and the glittering eyes that fairly sparkled in their midst, all contributed to the character of the scene..... 1

For half an hour no one spoke, coughed, laughed, or exclaimed. Suddenly every chief stood still and all faces turned in the same direction, as if in expectation of someone. In half a minute Onoah, accompanied by a missionary called Parson Amen, came out of the obscurity and advanced with a dignified and deliberate tread to the center of the arena.

It was by mere chance occurrence that Parson Amen attended this meeting. Onoah had encountered the missionary in the forest looking for his two white companions, and, instead of attempting to throw him off, had quietly invited him to join his party. Respect for the great chief prevented any manifestations of surprise or discontent at the unexpected appearance of this "medicine-man of the pale-faces," but his presence was sufficient to change the entire course of the proceedings, and incidently gives the reader a deeper insight into the opinions and beliefs of these redmen.

A few of the oldest chiefs approached Peter and conversed in low tones, after which all of the company seated themselves in a circle around the fire, which was replenished with a few dry

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-342

sticks. The pipes were prepared by two of the younger chiefs.

"As this smoking was just then more a matter of ceremony than for any other purpose, a whiff or two sufficed for each chief, the smoker passing the pipe to his neighbor as soon as he had inhaled a few puffs. The Indians are models of propriety in their happiest moods, and every one in that dark and menancing circle was permitted to have his turn with the pipe, before any other step was taken. There were but two pipes lighted, and mouths being numerous, some time was necessary in order to complete this ceremony. Still, no sign of impatience was seen, the lowest chief having as much respect paid to his feelings, as related to this attention, as the highest. At length the pipes completed their circuit, even Parson Amen getting, and using his turn, when a dead pause succeeded. The silence resembled that of a quaker meeting, and was broken only by the rising of one of the principal chiefs, evidently about to speak.

....

"Brothers of the many tribes of the Ojebways," commenced this personage, "the Great Spirit has permitted us to meet in council. The Manitou of our fathers is now among these oaks, listening to our words and looking in at our hearts. Wise Indians will be careful of what they say in such a presence, and careful of what they think. All should be said and thought for the best. We are a scattered nation, and the time is come when we must stop in our tracks, or travel beyond the sound of each other's cries. If we travel beyond the hearing of our own people, soon will our children learn tongues that Ojebway's ears cannot understand. The mother talks to her child and the child learns her words. But no child can hear across a great lake. Once we lived near the rising sun. Where are we now? Some of our young men say they have seen the sun go down in the lakes of the sweet water. There can be no hunting beyond "that" spot; and if we would live, we must stand still in our tracks. How to do this, we have met to consider.

"Brothers, many wise chiefs and braves are seated at this council-fire. It is pleasant to my eyes to look upon them. Ottaways, Chippeways, Pottawattanies, Nemominees, Hurons, and all. Our father at Quebec has dug up the hatchet against the Yankees. The war-path is open between Detroit and all of the villages of the redmen. The prophets are speaking to our people, and we listen. One is here; he is about to speak. The Council will have but a single sense, which will be that of hearing."1

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-245-6

In this speech the purpose of the council is stated. Throughout these novels the Indian is ever perplexed that he should have to give up his lands to strangers, who, in their opinion, wanted everything. They resented the idea of being scattered and pushed farther and farther west.

The war alluded to, is that of 1812, around which many of the incidents of this story are built.

The ideas of these chiefs about the Great Spirit is partly explained by the presence of the Missionary among them. Onoah gives more of these opinions in the speech which follows. The latter arose in the midst of the deep calm that followed the last orator. It was a moment of intense interest on the part of the circle, as this deliberate, dignified, and eloquent leader commenced.

> "Chiefs of the Ojebway nation, I wish you well, said Peter, stretching out his arms towards the circle, as if desirous of embracing all present. 'The Manitou has been good to me. He has cleared a path to this spring and to this council fire. I see around it the faces of many friends. Why should we not all be friendly? Why should a redman ever strike a blow at a redman? The Great Spirit made us of the same color, and placed us on the same hunting-grounds. He meant that we should hunt in company, not take each other' scalps. How many warriors have fallen in our family wars? Who has counted them? Who can say? Perhaps enough, had 1 they not been killed, to drive the pale-faces into the sea!'"

Here the speaker paused to allow the idea he had just thrown out to take effect on the minds of his listeners. In a few minutes he continued in a voice of gradually increasing volume.

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-247

"Yes,.....the Manitou has been very kind. Who is the Manitou? Has any Indian ever seen him? Every Indian has seen him. No one can look on the hunting-grounds, on the lakes, on the prairies, on the trees, on the game, without seeing his hand. His face is to be seen in the sun at noon-day, his eyes in the stars at night. Has any Indian ever heard the Manitou? When it thunders, he speaks. When the crash is loudest, then he scolds. Some Indian has done wrong. Perhaps one redman has taken another redman's scalp!

"Another pause succeeded, briefer and less imposing than the first, but one that sufficed to impress on the listeners anew the great evil of an Indian's raising his hand against an Indian.

"Here is a medicine-priest of the pale-faces; he tells me that the voice of the Manitou reaches into the largest villages of his people, beneath the rising sun, when it is heard by the redmen across the great lakes, and near the rocks of the setting sun. It is a loud voice; woe to him who does not remember it. It speaks to all colors, and to every people and tribe and nation.

"Brothers, that is a lying tradition which says there is one Manitou for a Sac and another for the Ojebway----- one Manitou for the redman and another for the pale-face. In this we are all alike. One Great Spirit made all, governs all, rewards all, punishes all. He may keep the Happy Hunting-grounds of an Indian separate from the white man's heaven, for who knows that their customs are different, and what would please a warrior would displease a trader; and what would please a trader would displease a warrior. He has thought of these things and has made several places for the spirits of the good, let their colors be what they may. Is it the same with the places of the spirits of the bad? I think not. To me it would seem best to let <u>them</u> go together, that they may torment one another. A wicked Indian and a wicked pale-face would make a bad neighborhood. I think the Manitou would let <u>them</u> go together.

"Brothers, if the Manitou keeps the good Indian and the good pale-face apart in another world, what has brought them together in this? If he brings the bad spirit of all colors together in another world, why should they come together here before their time? A place for wicked spirits should not be found on earth. This is wrong; it must be looked into.

"Brothers, I have done; this pale-face wishes to speak, and I have said that you would hear his words. When he has spoken his mind I may have more to tell you. Now

> listen to the stranger. He is a medicine-priest of the white men; and says he has a great secret to tell our people. When he has told it I have another for their ears, too---Mine must be spoken when there is no one near but the children of red clay.'1

One cannot help but be amused at this mixture of Christian and Indian religious beliefs on the part of Onoah, who was not only preparing the way for the missionary's message but also attempting to show why the pale-faces and redmen should not dwell together on earth. Amen had been Onoah's companion on a long voyage and it is quite likely that this zealous missionary had taken advantage of the opportunity to instruct the chief in Christian doctrines. The latter had apparently absorbed enough to answer his own purposes. Cooper explains that the Indians in the region of the great lakes had long been accustomed to missionaries, and it is probably that even some of their own traditions on religious matters had been insensibly colored by, or absolutely derived from, men of this character. Amen saw in that circle faces of persons who had prayed with him in days gone by.

The missionary first affirmed some of the religious statements which Onoah had made and then proceeded to propound to them very adroitly his favorite theory that the Indians were the "lost tribes of Israel." When he remarked that the Great Spirit had made all men of the same clay, a slight sensation was perceptible among the chiefs, indicating that many of them were of a decidedly different opinion on this point of natural history.

1. Oak Openings, p-247-8-9

"You are now red, but all of your people were once fairer than the fairest of the pale-faces," the Missionary told them. "It is climate and hardships and sufferings that have changed your color."

"If suffering can do that," returned Peter with emphasis, "I wonder we are not black. When all our hunting-grounds are covered with the farms of your people, I think we shall be black."

"Signs of powerful disgust were now visible among the listeners, and Indian having much of the contempt that seems to weigh so heavily on that unfortunate class, for all of the color mentioned." 1

His explanation of the different colors of men prompted Peter to obtain permission to ask the following question:

"Let my brother say why the Great Spirit turned the Indian to a red color. Was he angry with him? or did he paint him so out of love?" 2

This the missionary did not know. He could only affirm that a pale-face could not be made a redskin, nor a redskin a pale-face.

"Good---that is what we Indians say. The manitou has made us different. He did not mean that we should live on the same hunting-grounds." rejoined Peter, who rarely failed to improve every opportunity in order to impress on the minds of his followers the necessity of now crushing the serpent in the shell."

"No man can say that," answered Amen. "Unless my people had come to this continent, the word of God could not have been preached by me along the shores of these lakes...."3

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-263
2. Ibid: 253
3. Ibid: 253

Quite unexpectedly at this point a runner arrived with news of great concern to the tribe, but no one showed impatience in any way, nor was the assembly greatly disturbed. At length the message was given that Detroit had fallen into the hands of the British. Murmurs expressive of satisfaction passed around the circle for many of the chiefs were not backward in expressing their contempt for the Yankee. Peter interpreted the event as favoring his own scheme of getting rid of these pale-faces, saying:

> "It will be with our sons as it was with our fathers. Our hunting-grounds will be our own, and the Buffalo and deer will be plenty in our wigwams. The fire-water (meaning whiskey) will flow after them that brought it into the country, and the redman will once more be happy, as in times past!"1

As might be expected Parson Amen was much troubled to hear of this defeat but upon being told that the "ears of his friends were open" he resumed his tradition of the "lost tribes."

The reaction of the Indians to this current theory of their origin is interesting. One chief thought it wonderful that so many as ten tribes should be lost at the same time and no one know what has become of them. They wanted to be told where these tribes could be found so that they could go and look at them.

The statement from the "medicine-priest of the pale-faces" that they themselves were the lost tribes or Jews was received at first with admiration and wonder. Their own tradition gave no account of this, but neither did it contradict it. Amen

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-255

was not left unquestioned, however, One chief wanted to know where the tradition came from,—if Amen had first heard it from his fathers. They could not understand how Judea, the land of the lost tribes could be reached by directly opposite routes or "by paths that lead before and behind", because they very generally believed the earth to be flat. Furthermore, the fact that the Manitou had permitted the pale-faces to take away their hunting-grounds—had made them poor and the pale-faces rich—proved that they were not chosen people and that the tradition was a "lying tradition."

After thanking the missionary for what he had told them, they offered to give this far-off rich land of Judea to the pale-faces, if the latter would let them alone on their hunting-grounds, where they had so long been, with the request that, if possible, the small-pox and fire-water be taken away with them.

The well-meaning missionary frankly told them that such an offer would do no good. He also tried to make clear to them that, in spite of their hardships now, it was not for them to understand the wisdom of God; and, if lost, he firmly believed that one day they would again be a great and glorious people restored to the lands of their fathers.

Although the Indians could not understand him, this announcement coming from one whom they respected did not fail to produce a deep sensation.

> "If their fortunes were really the care of the Great Spirit, and justice was to be done to them by his love and wisdom, then would the projects of Peter and those who acted and

> felt with him be unnecessary, and might lead to evil instead of to good."1

The wise Peter did not fail to see this point and thought it best to say a word to lessen the influence of Parson Amen. So thoroughly had he become absorbed in his scheme of vengeance on the oppressors of his race that a redemption of his people in a peaceful manner would have given him pain instead of pleasure.

Therefore, when Peter arose, fierce and malignant passions were at work in his bosom but his self-command succeeded in suppressing the volcano that was raging within sufficiently to enable him to speak with his usual dignity and calmness of exterior. His speech, however, was full of irony. He spoke of how good it was to learn—that it was because the pale-faces had learned more than the redskin that the former had gotten possession of the latter's hunting-grounds and built their villages upon them. He would question the medicine-man further, so that they would learn more. But when Amen produced the "good-book of the pale-faces", Peter was a little abashed.

> "Perhaps half of the chiefs present had seen books before, while those who now laid eyes on them for the first time had heard of this art of the pale-faces, which enabled them to set down their traditions in a way peculiar to themselves. Even the Indians have their records, however, though resorting to the use of natural signs and a species of hieroglyphics, in lieu of the more artistic process of using words and letters in a systematized written language. The Bible, too, was a book of which all had heard more or less, though not one of those present had ever been the subject of its

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-262

> influence. A Christian Indian, indeed,— and a few of those were to be found even at that day,—would hardly have attended a council convened for the objects which had caused this to be convened. Still, a strong but regulated curiosity existed to see and touch and examine the great medicine-book of the pale-faces. There was a good deal of superstition blended with the Indian manner of regarding the sacred volume, some present having their doubts about touching it, even while most excited by admiration and a desire to prove its secrets."1

Peter summoned the courage to take the little volume when it was extended to him but "it was the first time the wary chief had ever suffered that mysterious book to touch him."2 From the fact that all of the pale-faces, including the drunkards at the garrison, "seemed" to reverence this book he had thought it might contain the elements of their of their power. Not knowing what its virtues were, his imagination readily suggested the worse and even though he pretended indifference to this simple act, a heavier draft had never been made on his courage. He thought, since it was the great "medicine-book of the pale-faces," some evil might result from a redman's handling it. When this did not happen, a smile of grim satisfaction passed over his swarthy countenance, and he considered his escape the greater reason why the tradition was not true.

Another serious objection to the theory was that Peter had heard from one of the pale-faces that Jews were not respected by them. Besides, if these Jews were pale-faces, then Indians could not be Jews, because Indians were and always had been red-skins.

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-265
2. Ibid: p-265

They could not understand Amen's explanation, in the course of the discussion, that the white race in coming to this country was lead by the hand of God, and had no choice in the matter. They (the Indians) always knew where they were going; even their squaws and papooses knew that. When they went to steal game from the enemy, which was sometimes right,--if it was right to take the enemy's scalp it was right to get his deer and buffalo, too, ---they knew what they were doing, else they would be unfit to go at large or to sit in council. They had not heard before that the pale-faces were so weak, and had such feeble minds, too, that they do not know where they go.

However firmly Amen might have believed this theory, at the end of the discussion, the Indians were unconvinced. They still believed that they were "redmen and Indians" and not "pale-faces and lost," both of which they considered disgraceful: the former, because of their race pride and hatred of the whites; the latter, because an Indian prides himself on being able to follow a trail or path.

OF A NATION

The last two councils which have been discussed have been peculiar in that in each some one chief had a personal end in view, and was attempting to mold opinion in a way entirely to meet his own wishes. This is not true of the council we are considering next, for it was presided over by an impartial judge whose sole aim was to mete out justice to those concerned. It is a council of the nation of the Delawares, found in "The Last of the Mohicans". The circumstances which lead up to it are rather intricate.

Cora and Alice munroe, daughters of a revolutionary colonel, had been taken prisoners by Magua, a malignant Huron chief of suspicious character, even in his own tribe. He had become obscessed with the idea of revenging an injury, inflicted upon himself by their father, on the daughter, Cora, by making her his squaw. In order to separate his prisoners he had left Cora with the Delawares for safe-keeping, a custom of common occurrence among allied tribes--and had secured Alice in his own tribe. Uncas, Leatherstocking, and Heyward, a suitor of Alice, had contrived the rescue of the latter from the Hurons, and, in their flight, had taken refuge with the Delawares, who, according to Indian custom of treating strangers coming in amity, had given them welcome. Magua followed, and by his cunning, led the Delawares to believe that they were shielding an enemy in Leatherstocking, or La Longue Carabine, as he was called by the Hurons; and later demanded all of these strangers as prisoners.

At first, the most distinguished chiefs took council as to what was best to do in this matter, touching both their safety and honor. Their conference was short and was followed by an announcement that a solemn and formal assemblage of the nation would be held to settle the question. Such meetings were rare and only called on occasions of the last importance. The whole encampment became agitated. It might have been half an hour before each individual including even the women and children, and exceeding somewhat one thousand souls, was in this place.

A delay longer than usual had taken place, but not even a child showed impatience. At length, the great patriarch of the tribe appeared and the whole nation arose as if by common impulse, while the name "Tamenund" was whispered around the circle. The fame of this wise and just Delaware had been wide-spread, but could not exceed the affection and reverence with which he was held among his own people.

> "After a suitable and decent pause the principal chiefs arose, and, approaching the patriarch, they placed his hands reverently on their heads, seeming to entreat a blessing. The younger men were content with touching his robe, or even drawing nigh his person, in order to breathe in the atmosphere of one so aged, so just and so valiant. None but the most distinguished of the youthful warriors even presumed so far as to perform the latter ceremony; the great mass of the multitude deeming it sufficient happiness to look upon a form so deeply venerated and so well beloved."[1]

After a short delay, the individuals who had caused all of these solemn preparations, were brought toward the seat of judgment. Under circumstances of this nature, the oldest and most experienced men of the tribe lay the subject before the people,

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-328

rather than the precocious and ambitious orators. This being done, the Huron was called on to declare his object. The wily Huron made a most eloquent speech that was destined to win the sympathies of his listeners. The first part consisted of a virile attack upon the pale-faces; the latter, of unstinted praise of the Delawares. Tamenund seemed almost listless until his own nation was mentioned. He then made an effort to rise, and was assisted to his feet by his supporters. At the close of the speech he asked:

> "Who calls upon the children of the Lenope?".....
> "It is a Wyandot," said Magua, stepping nigher to the rude platform on which the other stood; "a friend of Tamenund."
> "A friend.... ....
> "What brings a Huron here?"
> "Justice. His prisoners are with his brothers and he comes for his own."
> Tamenund turned his head toward one of his supporters and listened to the short explanation the man gave. Then facing the applicant, he regarded him a moment with deep attention; after which he said, in a low and reluctant voice:
> "Justice is the law of the great Manitto (Great Spirit). My children, give the stranger food. Then Huron take thine own and depart."1

After delivering this solemn judgment, the sage seated himself and closed his eyes. No Delaware dared oppose such a decree. Leatherstocking and Heyward were bound and Magna was preparing to leave with his prisoners when Cora begged for mercy at the feet of the judge. A dramatic appeal followed, but to no avail. Tamenund interpreted her objections as the natural repulsions of a pale-face for members of his race, and saw no reason for changing his decision.

1. The Last of the Mohicans, p-338

Unable to effect her purpose she reminded the sage that one captive had not been brought and asked that he might speak before the Huron was allowed to leave in triumph.

> "Observing Tamenund to look about him doubtingly, one of his companions said:
> "It is a snake--a red-skin in the pay of the Yengeese. We keep him for the torture."
> "Let him come," returned the sage. 1

Until this time, Uncas had not appeared on the scene, so deadly had been the influence of Magna. All eyes now bent in secret admiration on the erect, agile, and faultless person of the captive. When questioned, his claim of kinship with the Delawares was met with scorn. Not even Tamenund believed that a Delaware would become a traitor, as Uncas was thought to be; but the voice of the latter afterwards convinced him that he did belong to their nation. It was then that Tamenund rebuked the lad for deserting his tribe in times of peril, and because the law of the Manitto must be just, he sorrowfully turned this youth of their own tribe over to the people with the admonition to deal justly by him.

After the last syllable of this sentence was delivered, a yell of vengeance burst from the lips of the nation. Meanwhile a chief proclaimed in a high voice that the captive was condemned to endure the dreadful torture of trial by fire. With a single effort, a young tormenter tore the hunting-shirt from the lad; and, he was about to be lead to the stake, when there came into view the figure of a small tortoise beautifully tattoed on the breast of the captive in a bright blue tint.

1. The Last of the Mohicans, p-342

All around him stood gazing in frozen amazement, for this totem indicated that he was the son of Chingachgook, the last surviving member of the tribe that was the parent-stock of the Delaware nation.

Tamenund's soliloquy at this point is eloquent, befitting a great sage who reminisces. Uncas replied in tones no less lofty, explaining the policy of his family and the hopes he held of restoring their nation to its former grandeur under the rising sun when the great Manitto should be ready. The whole nation received him with all the respect that superstition could lend to the finding of a lost and revered leader. Uncas, then, looking around him, perceived his friend Leatherstocking in bonds. He made eagerly towards him, and, cutting his throngs with his own knife, led him to the feet of the patriarch.

> "Father," he said, "look at this pale-face; a just man, and the friend of the Delawares."
> "Is he a son of Minquon?" (meaning Wm. Penn, whose fair dealings with the Indians caused him to be revered by them)
> "Not so; a warrior known to the Yengeese, and feared by the Magnas."
> "What name has he gained by his deeds?"
> "We call him Hawkeye," Uncas replied using the Delaware phrase; "for his sight never fails. The Mingoes know him better by the death he gives their warriors: with them he is "The Long Rifle."
> "La Longue Carabine! exclaimed Tamenund opening his eyes, and regarding the scout sternly. "My son has not done well to call him friend."
>
> "I call him so who proves himself such," returned the young chief, with great calmness, but with a steady mien. "If Uncas is welcome among his the Delawares, then is Hawkeye with his friends..... 1"

Leatherstocking then spoke for himself and won the admiration of those who had been led to believe him an enemy. By

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-347-8

request of Tamenund, Uncas explained that the Huron had a conqueror's right over Cora, only. Those who had escaped from his tribe were according to their law, no longer under his jurisdiction. The Delawares were reluctant to admit the justice of even this claim to one who had dealt with them so falsely. Besides, it was evident that Uncas was grieved, for he had turned his face away in sorrow. When Magna expressed the wish to make Cora his wife, Tamenund, on learning that he was a great chief, thought that should appease the young woman; but seeing her unwillingness, he offered the wampum in amity. Magna would not consent, so bent was he on getting his victim. At length the sage decreed:

> "Then depart with thine own. The Great Manitto forbids that a Delaware should be unjust....."
> "Mighty ruler of Providence!" exclaimed Heyward, clasping his hands together in agony, "can this be suffered? To you, just Tamenund, I appeal for mercy."
>
> "The words of the Delaware are said," returned the sage, closing his eyes and dropping back into his seat, alike wearied with his mental and his bodily exertions. 'Men speak not twice."1

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-350

Other Councils

Of the many other councils held throughout these novels, three deserve mention: a second that was held on the prairie in connection with Onoah's project; one which is held in "The Redskins"; and one in "The Wept-of- Wish-ton-Wish." In the first, there is a clash of personalities. A chief lead solely by a desire to oppose the great Onoah points out inconsistencies in the decisions of the latter, and sharply satirizes him for not revealing the name of his tribe. Onoah retaliates, but finally gives in with the grace of a diplomat. The second is a council of ceremony held to pay tribute to a renowned old Indian, who has taken up his abode among his pale-face friends. A body of chiefs come fifty miles out of their way to see him. The last is a council called to ascertain whether a pale-face girl adopted into their tribe was the one being sought by a stranger, who had come among them. The council is marked by its open and fair dealings.

THE WARRIOR

Number, Rank

Next to the chiefs in rank among the Indians comes the warrior. This is the largest class and includes practically all of the men. We have seen that the majority of the chiefs were noted warriors, so that a discussion of this class will be, in part, a continued discussion of the chiefs. It will also concern the hunter, who ranks second to the warrior. Inasmuch as an Indian generally becomes skilled in hunting before he goes on the warpath, an account of the hunter logically precedes that of the warrior.

THE HUNTER

Relationship to Warrior

Little space is devoted to the occupation of hunting in these novels, although enough is given concerning it for the reader to get a rather clear idea of the duties connected with it, and of the Indian's attitude towards it. The rank of the hunter is more fully explained in the passage which follows:

> "Next to the warpath, the hunting-ground is the great field of an Indian's glory, deeds and facts so far eclipsing purely intellectual qualities with savages as to throw oratory, though much esteemed by them, quite into the shade. In all this we find the same propensity among ourselves. The common mind, ever subject to these impulses, looks rather to such ex-

> ploits as address themselves to the senses and the imagination, than to those qualities which the reason alone can best appreciate, and in this, ignorance asserts its negative power over conditions of life."1

His Attitude and Work

One of the warriors in Cooper's novels follows the occupation of hunting over a period of time. He assumed the responsibility of supplying the members of his party, who consisted of a chief, three white men, and two white women with such means of sustenance as could be found in the forest and streams. He did not consider this duty sport, but took the responsibility seriously, and at all times manifested the care of an experienced and faithful provider. He was usually out hunting from the rising to the setting of the sun, and, in this way, kept the larder as well supplied as comported with the warmth of the weather. When he came from the hunt he would generally lie down and take a rest.

Once when surprised was expressed that he had returned so soon since so many of his people were known to be in the forest, he replied:

> "No want to eat den, eh? How you all eat if hunter don't do he duty? S'pose squaw don't cook vittles, you no like it, eh? Juss so wid hunter--no kill vittles, don't like it nudder."2

The Chippewa never betrayed exultation at the success of his exertions. He would bring in venison, wild ducks, prairie fowls, trout, bear's meat, wild pigeons, fish, game, birds, and game of other varieties as luck favored him. One day, as

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-422
2. Ibid, p-282

the young woman received his game, she said:

"Thank you, Pigeonswing"... . .."No pale-face could be a better provider, and many are not one half as good."

"What provider mean, eh?" demanded the literal-minded savage. "Mean good, mean bad, eh?"

"Oh, it means good, of course. I could say nothing against a hunter who takes so good care of us all."

"What he mean, den?"

"It means a man who keeps his wife and children well supplied with food."

"You get 'nough, eh?"

"I get enough, Pigeonswing, thanks to your industry, such as it is. Injin diet, however, is not always the best for Christian folk, though a body may live on it. I miss many things out here in the Openings, to which I've been used all the early part of my life."

"What squaw miss, eh? P'raps Injin find him sometime."

"I thank you, Pigeonswing, with all my heart, and am just as grateful for your good intentions as I should be was you to do all you wish.. . ..... But you can never find the food of a pale-face kitchen out here in these Openings of Michigan....."[1]

The Chippewa, on being asked if he were going to attend a council that was held in the Openings replied:

"Don't know.....Hunter nebber tell. Chief want venison, and he must hunt. Just like squaw in pale-face wigwam...work, work--sweep, sweep--cook, cook--nebber know when work done. So hunter hunt--hunt--hunt."[2]

Hunters used the bow and arrow, the knife, and the rifle. Several references are made in "The Pioneers"to the Indian custom of killing just the amount of game that was needed for food, as contrasted with the white man's reckless hunting for sport. When a deer or other large animal was killed, the hunter would "skin 'em, cut 'em up, hang 'em on tree, where wolf can't get 'em." Others would assist in bringing it in. Often the game was floated down a stream on a raft of logs, and towed

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-351-2
2. Ibid; p-225

into port when it arrived. It was considered a disgrace for a squaw to have to beg food for herself and papooses, but it is very obvious that when its supply depended so largely on the skill, industry, and good fortune of the hunter, it was often lacking in many wigwams. References to Indian skill in fishing are frequently made in "The Pioneers", and to his great efficiency in handling the canoe in most of the novels.

Eating and Drinking Among Indians

An allusion has been made to the meagreness of Indian diet. Its principal, and frequently sole, item, when on the warpath, was meat. We are told that the women tended gardens, so that they must have had vegetables as well as the berries and fruits of the forest and fields, during certain seasons. Mention is made of succotash being served in the wigwam. Pathfinder says:

> "..... a red-skin never repines, but is always thankful for the food he gets, whether it be fat or lean, venison or bear, wild-turkey's breast or wild-goose's wing."1

In the course of these novels several meals are eaten on the warpath by Indians at convenient times and places. One consisted of a platter of venison steaks, which served for the common use. "The Indians were silent and industrious, the appetite of the aboriginal Americans for venison being seemingly unappeasible."2

On another occasion the frugal menu consisted only of fried bear's meat. One Indian guide made a meal of parched corn, which he carried in his wallet. A fourth instance is given when choice parts of a stag were eaten raw. The fact that one individual did not eat is commented upon,--abstinence in an Indian when he possesses means of satisfying his hunger being so unusual. The eating of raw meat, when hunger was keen and cooking inconvenient, seems not to habe been an unusual custom. The Leatherstocking refers to an incident when he was too weak and too ravenous to stop for the flesh of a deer he had killed, but drank the blood, while the Indians ate the flesh.

1. Cooper: Pathfinder, p-124
2. Ibid: p-23

Eating for the Indian was a business and not a social affair. Of the Chippewa Cooper says:

> ".....the Indian seldom did two things at the same time. This was the hour for acting; when that for talking should arrive, he would be found equal to its duties. Pigeonswing could either abstain from food, or could indulge in it without measure, just as occasion offered. He had often gone for days without tasting a mouthful, with the exception of a few berries, perhaps; and he had lain about the camp-fire a week at a time, gorging himself with venison, like an anaconda. It is perhaps fortunate for the American Indian that this particular quality of food is so very easy of digestion, since his excesses on it are notorious, and so common to his habits as almost to belong to his nature. Death might otherwise often be the consequence."1

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-146-7

Drinking

It has already been mentioned that the chiefs regretted the presence of fire-water among their people, and good reason had they for doing so, inasmuch as we are told that the denial of the beverage was extraordinary in an Indian.

When the Upright Onandago was asked why two or three shipfuls of white men had become strong enough to drive back from the sea all the red warriors, and become masters of the land, he answered:

> "Cause he bring fire-water wid him, and redman big fool to drink."1

One need only read the amusing incidents connected with whiskey in "Oak Openings" to get an idea of how much the Indians loved the beverage. They came upon a spot where whiskey had been spilled. Their regrets at the accident, for accident it must have been, "their movements, gestures, and genuflections" all proved how much concerned they were. (Chapter VIII)

The author explains:

> "Whiskey has unfortunately obtained a power over the redmen of this continent that it would require many Father Matthews to suppress, and which can only be likened to that which is supposed to belong to the influence of witchcraft. The Indian is quite as sensible as the white man of the mischief that the "fire-water" produces; but, like the white man, he finds how hard it is to get rid of a master passion, when we have once submitted ourselves to its sway."2

The warriors generally abstained from the use of the beverage on the warpath, but one instance is given in the "Pathfinder" when the besiegers were under the influence of the liquor. One who has any conception of the ordinary behavior of the Indian

1. Oak Openings, p-112-13
2. Ibid, p-117

when his thirst for blood is aroused, can very readily imagine what a grusome effect such a stimulant would produce on him in battle; hence, we shall pass over the incident.

The drunken debauchery of Indian John in "The Pioneers" and his subsequent shame are pathetic indeed, especially when we recall that he is none other than the admirable friend of The Leatherstocking in the series.

At a shooting match, John is asked to take the first shot at a turkey since the other competitors were somewhat nervous because of their over-anxiety; while an Indian is never troubled by such feelings, and can shoot as well at one time as another.

> "The Indian turned his head gloomily, and after looking keenly for a moment, in profound silence, at his companion, replied:
>
> "When John was young, eyesight was not straighter than a bullet. The Mingo squaws cried out at the sound of his rifle. The Mingo warriors were made squaws. When did he ever shoot twice? The eagle went above the clouds when he passed the wigwam of Chingachgooh; his feathers were plenty with the women. But see," he said, raising his voice from the low mournful tones in which he had spoken to a pitch of keen excitement, and stretching forth both hands, "they shake like a deer at the wolf's howl. Is John old? When was a Mohican a squaw with seventy winters? No! the white man brings old age with him--rum is his tomahawk!"
>
> "Why then do you use it, old man?" exclaimed the young hunter; "why will one, so noble by nature, aid the devices of the devil by making himself a beast?"
>
> "Beast! is John a beast?" replied the Indian slowly; "yes; you say no lie, child of the fire-water! John is a beast.
>
> ....
>
> yes, yes--you say no lie, young Eagle; John is a Christian beast."1

1. The Pioneers: p-178-9

Habits and Traits of Warriors

We now return to the popular warrior class. There are certain traits that every Indian warrior of any significance possesses. It is generally known that an Indian is not servile. He will not work in the ordinary meaning of the term, for he considers that beneath his dignity. He is adverse to toil in any form and will seldom condescent to carry burdens, which is regarded as a woman's work and degrading to a warrior. To have to make baskets and brooms in old age is to him deplorable. A chief will frequently consent to carry game, for, as has been stated, in hunting all Indians take pride.

When the warrior is not on duty he maintains a dignified idleness. ".....eating and sleeping are very customary occupations of his race, when not engaged in some hunt, or on the warpath, or as a runner."[1] He summons "terrible energies when energy is required, but is frequently listless when not pressed upon by necessity, pleasure, war, or interest."2 To be sure his mode of life necessitates that he must always be ready to endure hardships or to sacrifice his life for the safety or honor of his tribe.

An Indian on the warpath has many of the qualities of the stoic. He is "equally ready to eat or to fast; his powers of endurance both ways, most especially when the food is game, amounting to something wonderful."3

1. The Chainbearer, p-312
2. Ibid; p-316
3. Cooper: Satanstoe, p-418

Neither does he seem to know fatigue or pain; his habits of self-command being so severe as to enable him to conceal his sufferings in these hardships as well as in most others. In the words of our author, it requires "nothing less than a thunderbolt" to disturb his composure, once he has assumed such an attitude. He manifests no surprise; is too well schooled to betray alarm; and, creature of passion as he is, he seldom gives way to sudden and foolish anger. He awaits the result of danger with calmness and fortitude, for he is "no woman to cry out like a child." In "The Last of the Mohicans", in spite of the nearness of Uncas and Chingachgooh to danger, no perceptible emotion could be discovered in their countenances--their rigid features expressed neither hope nor alarm. When the danger abated for a few moments, the father and son "cast calm but inquiring glances at each other, to learn if either had sustained any injury by the fire; for both well knew that no cry or exclamation would, in such a moment of necessity, have been permitted to betray the accident."

> "A few large drops of blood were trickling down the shoulders of the sagamore, who, when he perceived that the eye of Uncas dwelt too long on the sight, raised some water in the hollow of his hand, and, washing off the stain, was content to manifest, in this simple manner, the slightness of the injury."1

In "Deerslayer" a savage is startled by his sudden discovery of the danger he ran. He acts consumately with ease

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-233

and self-possession, but, "the volcano that raged within, caused his nostrils to dilate, like those of some wild beast that is suddenly prevented from taking the fatal leap."1

This habitual self-control over his emotions is not easily thrown off. A sudden appearance of an enemy, something strange, or particularly beautiful to him, may produce a recognition or slight exclamation, but not for long. An order to be released from the stake is met with the same indifference as that to be bound to it. In fact, we shall see that there is no more certain mode of securing his respect than by imitating his self-command.

It is also in conformity with his habits for him to maintain silence whenever any unusual events awaken feelings in others. In fact, the warrior, when on duty or among strangers, is silent and reserved most of the time, either in keeping with his dignity and gravity, or merely out of prudence or both. Cooper remarks, on several occasions, that he seldom laughs; his words are few and pointed, and seldom will he express himself in English, or in the enemy's tongue, if it can be avoided.

Talkers are called "old women."

> ".....the redman regards the indulgence of a too eager curiosity as womanish, and unworthy of the self-command and dignity of a warrior."2

In "Oak Openings" the Chippewa tells his white friend in the following broken English:

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-123
2. Redskins, p-291

"Mustn't be squaw, and ask too many questions..... mustn't be squaw, Bourdon--bad for warrior be squaw. Always bess be man, and patient, like man."1

In the words of the author:

"An American Indian does possess this merit of adopting his deportment to his circumstances. When engaged in war, he usually prepares himself in the coolest and wisest manner to meet its struggles, indulging only in moments of leisure and comparative security. It is true that the march of civilization is fast changing the redman's character, and he is very apt now to do that which he sees done by the "Christians" around him." 2

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-420-1
2. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-110

His Appearance

It is natural that physical excellence would be highly prized by a people who lead such active lives. This they develop along with a native grace and dignity of carriage that accompany such perfection. Their mode of life and freedom from toil keep them erect and active far into old age.

Cooper has given us numerous portraits of the Indian warrior under varying circumstances which leave no doubt as to his appearance, dress and general bearing. The following description is that of a young Pawnee chief taken from "The Prairie":

> "The Indian in question was in every particular a warrior of fine stature and admirable proportions. As he cast aside his mask, composed of such party-colored leaves as he had hurriedly collected, his countenance appeared in all the gravity, the dignity, and it may be added, in the terror of his profession. The outlines of his lineaments were strikingly noble, and nearly approaching to Roman, though the secondary features of his face were slightly marked with the well-known traces of his Asiatic origin. The peculiar tint of the skin, which in itself is so well designed to aid the effect of martial expression, had received an additional aspect of wild ferocity from the colors of the war-paint. But, as if he disdained the usual artifices of his people, he bore none of those strange and horrid devices with which the children of the forest are accustomed, like the more civilized heroes of the mustache, to back their reputation for courage, contenting himself with a broad and deep shadowing of black, that served as a sufficient and an admirable foil to the brighter gleamings of his native swarthiness. His head was as usual shaved to the crown, where a large and gallant scalp-lock seemed to challenge the grasp of his enemies. The ornaments that were ordinarily pendant from the cartilages of his ears had been removed, on account of his present pursuit. His body, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, was nearly naked, and the portion which was clad, bore a vestment no warmer than a light robe of the finest dressed deer-skin, beautifully stained with a rude design of some daring exploit, and which was carelessly worn, as if more in pride than from

any unmanly regard for comfort. His leggings were of a bright scarlet cloth, the only evidence about his person that he had held communion with the traders of the pale-faces. But as if to furnish some offset to this solitary submission to a womanish vanity, they were fearfully fringed, from the gartered knee to the bottom of the moccasin with the hair of human scalps. He leaned lightly with one hand on a hickory bow, while the other rather touched than sought support from the long, delicate handle of an ashen lance. A quiver made of the cougar-skin, from which the tail of the animal depended, as a characteristic ornament, was slung at his back; and a shield of hides, quaintly emblazoned with another of his warlike deeds, was suspended from his neck by a thong of sinews.

"As the trapper approached, this warrior maintained his calm, upright attitude, discovering neither an eagerness to ascertain the character of those who advanced upon him, nor the smallest wish to avoid a scrutiny in his own person. An eye that was darker and more shining than that of the stag was incessantly glancing, however, from one to another of the stranger party, seemingly never knowing rest for an instant."1

Below is a description of a "bad"and inferior warrior who is taken prisoner:

"The Indian was one of those dark and malignant-looking savages that possess most of the sinister properties of their condition, with few or none of the redeeming qualities. His eye was lowering and distrustful, bespeaking equally apprehension and revenge; his form of that middling degree of perfection which leaves as little to admire as to condemn, and his attire such as denoted him one who might be ranked among the warriors of the secondary class. Still, in the composure of his mien, the tranquility of his step, and the self-possession of all his movements, he displayed that high bearing his people rarely fail to exhibit, ere too much intercourse with the whites begin to destroy their distinctive traits." 2

The military leaders were generally men of large and commanding statures and could be distinguished from the other by their fine appearance, generally, and by their lofty bearing.

1. Cooper; The Prairie, p-205-6
2. Cooper; Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p-363

All of the warriors went to the battle with naked limbs and nearly uncovered bodies, and carried the rifle, the bright, well-scoured tomahawk, the sheathed knife, the horn, and bullet-pouch. The spear, quiver, and shield of hides were also carried at times by some tribes. The usual attire of an Indian is: the leggings, moccasin, breech-piece, blanket or calico shirt, according to the season. Ornaments and paint are used on special occasions--the kind and manner of using these being peculiar to each tribe, so that an experienced person can determine the tribe to which an Indian belongs from these particular devices.

The warrior, in moments of inactivity, is characterized by a peculiar repose into which he invariably falls. The fierceness of his countenance seems to slumber, and in its place there is a quiet, vacant composure; but occasional gleams that pass over his visage are indicative of how easily his passions and facilities may be aroused out of their leathary.

One must not forget, however, that in spite of their cold, fierce, and unnatural bearing when on the warpath, they are very human. What Pathfinder says of Chingachgook may generally be stated of all the rest:

> "There is a soul and a heart under that redskin, rely on it; although they are a soul and a heart with gifts different from our own." 1

1. Cooper: The Pathfinder, p-75

Moral and Social Values Among Indians

Any appreciation of their behavior in warfare must be preceded by a knowledge of what constitutes their code of morals and values in life. These understood, their behavior becomes plausible, if not excusable.

Indian Courtesy

No other single phase of Indian behavior is alluded to, in these novels, more than the seemingly innate courtesy of the redman. One character says that the Indian is rarely guilty of any act of rudeness unless he really means to play the brute in good earnest. In fact he generally appears to be a model of propriety and polite behavior when passion or policy does not thrust in new and sudden principles of action. He does not pry into the affairs of others, but maintains at all times a delicacy and reserve. Leatherstocking says:

> "The Sarpent, here, would turn his head aside, if he found himself onknowingly lookin' into another chief's wigwam; whereas, in the settlements, while all pretend to be great people, most prove they've got betters, by the manner in which they talk of their consarns. I'll be bound, Judith, you wouldn't get the Sarpent, there, to confess there was another in the tribe so much greater than himself, as to become the subject of his ideas, and to employ his tongue in conversation about his movements, and ways, and food, and all the other little ways that occupy a man when he's not empl'y'd in his great duties."1

Strangers among them are left to follow their own habits and customs as they see fit. An Indian will take no part in a discourse between others, unless he is directly appealed to. He will not interrupt the speech of others. He will listen

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-233

with profound and respectful attention, even when he doesn't agree with or understand what is being said. An instance of this is given in "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish":

> "Philip (Metacom) listened with the high courtesy of an Indian prince. Unintelligible as was the meaning of the speaker, his countenance betrayed no glimmerings of impatience, his lip no smile of ridicule. On the contrary, a noble and lofty gravity reigned in every feature, and as ignorant as he was of what the other wished to say, his attentive eye and bending head expressed every wish to comprehend."1

In "Redskins", an Indian comes to old Jaaf, a Negro, who is present at a council, for the pipe which he had been permitted to smoke. Jaaf would not give it up, and grumbled many uncouth things in his ignorance of, and lack of sympathy with Indian customs.

> "Although it is probable that Prairie-fire (the Indian Chief) did not understand one-half of the Negro's words, he comprehended his wish to finish the tobacco before he relinquished the pipe. This was against all rule, and a species of slight on Indian usages, but the redman overlooked all, with the courtesy of one trained in high society, and walked away as composedly as if everything were right. In these particulars the high breeding of an Indian is always apparent. No one ever sees in his deportment a shrug, or a half-concealed smile, or a look of intelligence; a wink or a nod, or any other of that class of signs, or communications, which it is usually deemed underlined to resort to in company. In all things, he is dignified and quiet, whether it be the effect of coldness, or the result of character." 2

> "Saucy Nick" in "Wyandotte" was a gentleman of the forest in spite of his numerous failings, and though he had penetrated Maud's secret love for Bob, he had too much consideration to make a woman's affections the subject of his coarseness and merriment.
>
> "Had Nick been a pale-face, of the class of those with whom he usually associated, his discovery would have gone

1. Cooper: The Wept of Wish - ton-Wish, p-376
2. Cooper: Redskins, p-452

through the settlement with scoffings and exaggerations;..... The secret of Maud would not have been more sacred with her own brother, ...than it would with Saucy Nick." 1

1. Cooper: Wyandotte, p-309-10

The Indian and Truth

Numerous references are made to the sacredness of an Indian's word. Needless to say, he practices all manner of cunning and deceit with the enemy in order to elude, capture, or kill, according to his purpose. Treachery, cunning, and "circumvention" are considered virtues on the warpath. In the words of one of their own,".....Injun knows how to look two way.....warrior must, if great warrior."1

But he will "do what he say" in amity, if it is at all possible. When an Indian sincerely allies himself with any cause, he bends all of his energies in its behalf; there are no sacrifices too great for him to make. "The Last of the Mohicans" is almost wholly a story of the hazardous risks Uncas and his father, together with the scout, make in behalf of the daughters of Munro whom they were befriending against their enemy, the Hurons. Hard-Heart allied himself with a party of whites against his enemy, the Tetons, and stood by them at the risk of his life. When the Chippewa, who was engaged as a runner for the Americans in one of the colonial wars was captured by the enemy, he chewed the paper on which the message was written "like so much 'baccy", in order that the secret would not be revealed.

1. Cooper: Wyandotte, p-412

His Traditions

When commenting on the close scrutiny a body of Indian chiefs were bestowing on a scene where an important battle was fought, a character in "Redskins" explains that they were checking the actual surroundings of the place with the traditions that they had heard of it. He makes the statement that their traditions are surprisingly true and accurate. Cooper implies that an Indian tradition is usually more accurate than a white man's written history. He is evidently alluding to the fact that authors do not hesitate to abridge, or color their histories in accordance with a particular policy or view of a question, while an Indian strives to hand down the true facts according to his beliefs. Nevertheless, they exaggerate the role played by themselves. The author refers to their boastfulness in this respect in the following conversation between Deerslayer and a companion:

> ".. .....'twould warm the heart within you to sit in their lodges of a winter's night, and listen to the traditions of the ancient greatness and power of the Mohicans!"
>
> ".....if a man believed all that other people choose to say in their own favor, he might get an oversized opinion of them, and an undersized opinion of himself. These redskins are notable boasters, and I set down more than half of their tradition as pure talk."
>
> "There is truth in what you say I'll not deny it, for I've seen it and believe it. They do boast, but then that is a gift from nature; and it's sinful to withstand nat'ral gifts."1

The part that tradition plays in the lives of the redmen is brought out particularly in "Oak Openings" when the question

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-31

of their origin is discussed. One Indian remarks:

> "When we have learned how to take game, and how to keep the wigwam fitted, then we may learn traditions. Traditions tell us of our fathers. We have many traditions. Some are talked of even to the squaws. Some are told around the fires of the tribe. Some are known only to the aged chiefs. This is right, too. Injuns ought not to say too much, nor too little. They should say what is wise, what is best...."1

The author tells us that it is said that Indians have traditions which are communicated only to a favorite few, and which by them have been transmitted from generation to generation.

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-273

His Admiration of Bravery

The Indian's great admiration of bravery, and self-control places a stamp of approval on physical tortures of all kinds. The more courageous and important the captive the greater the torture, by which they seek to do the victim honor. In "Oak Openings" a soldier, who had been taken captive by Indians, killed one chief and wounded several others. Exclamations of admiration succeeded this display of manhood. He was afterwards told that he would be honored by being subject to "torture by saplings."

> "We had rather torment a bold warrior, like you, who makes us admire him for his manliness. We love our squaws, but not in the warpath. They are best in the lodges; here we want nothing but men. You are a man--a brave--we honor you.--It is right to torment so great a brave, and we mean to do it. It is only just to you to do so. An old warrior who has seen so many enemies, and who has so big a heart, ought not to be knocked in the head like a papoose or a squaw.... If you are firm, we will do you honor; if you faint and screech, our young men will laugh at you. This is the way with Injins. They honor braves; they point the finger at cowards."1

It is a custom among Indians to give their prisoners parole on their promise to return at a stipulated time. There is no instance of a trust having been betrayed, even when return meant death, for an Indian warrior of any character would prefer death to the brand of a coward by his friends or foes. To escape from one's captors when under guard, however, is considered commendable and honorable. Prisoners often attempt it successfully. To boast or act defiantly when tied to the stake also signifies bravery, and evokes admiration. It is not unusual, however, for a warrior to boast in his more direct and

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-390-392-395

useful narrative. The renowned among them never boast of their deeds till the proper moment and occasion.

Young warriors who have reputations to acquire for their brave deeds strive to be discreet and modest in their suggestions, and often follow up their suspicions and clues alone in dread of the ridicule and contempt that certainly follow a false alarm. Should he really achieve anything, his glory would be the greater for being unshared. An example is given in "The Deerslayer" of how a young warrior met his death in such an attempt.[1] The knavish Indian will often "hang upon the skirts of the war-party to scalp the dead and go in and make their boast among the squaws of the valiant deeds done on the pale-faces."[2] These braggarts are generally detected, however.

1. Cooper: The Deerslayer, p-64
2. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-216

The Indian and Friendship

Some of the most interesting pages in these novels deal with the Indian and friendship. A review of these sections will, no doubt convince one of the desirability of being a friend to the redman rather than an enemy. Leatherstocking, on one occasion, says:

> ".....the winds of heaven are not more deceitful than these savages when the devil has fairly beset them..... Make a redskin once your friend, he is yours so long as you deal honestly by him."1

The most outstanding example of deceitfulness given, is, undoubtedly, that practiced by Onoah in connection with his project to destroy all of the whites. By his words and actions, his white companions had every reason to believe that in him they could place implicit trust, when all the time it was his purpose to scalp the whole party after they had served his purpose. The following conversation is between Onoah and another chief named Crowsfeather:

> "My father, then, intends to lead his pale-faces on a crooked path, and take their scalps when he has done with them," said Crowsfeather, who had been gravely listening to Peter's plans of future proceedings; but who is to get the scalp of the Chippewa?"
>
> "One of my Pottawattamie young men; but not until I have use of him. I have a medicine-priest of the palefaces and a warrior with me, but shall not put their scalps on my pole until they have paddled me farther. The council is to be held in the Oak Openings,"....."and I wish to show my prisoners to the chiefs, that they may see how easy it is to cut off all the Yankees. I have now four men of that people, and two squaws, in my power; let every redman destroy as many, and the land will soon be clear of them all!"2

When the time came, he led the simply trusting missionary and the soldier to the slaughter like sheep, and intended to

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-290
2. Ibid: Oak Openings, p-180

sacrifice all of the others, save two, who had become endeared to him. We must not forget, however, that in doing this he was acting according to his true convictions and to what he considered was his duty to his race. In his own words:

> "My wish is to cut off the pale-faces. This must be done, or the pale-faces will cut off the Injuns. There is no choice. One nation or the other must be destroyed. I am a redman; my heart tells me that the pale-faces should die. They are on strange hunting-grounds, not the redmen. They are wrong, we are right. But Bourdon, I have friends among the pale-faces and it is not natural to scalp our friends. I do not understand a religion that tells us to love our enemies, and to do good to them that do harm to us: it is a strange religion. I am a poor Injun and do not know what to think! I shall not believe that anyone do this till I see it. I understand that we ought to love our friends. Your squaw is my daughter. I have called her daughter: she knows it, and my tongue is not forked like a snake's. What it says, I mean. Now I do not mean to scalp her; my hand shall never harm her. My wisdom shall tell her how to escape from the hands of redmen who seek her scalp. You, too; now you are her husband, and are a great medicine-man of the bees, my hand shall not hurt you either....."1

It seems that every treacherous deed of theirs can be paralleled by deeds of trust and friendship.....a friendship of the kind that enables them to make all manner of sacrifices, life not excepted, for the one befriended. A warrior seems never to forget that death is one of the contingencies of the warpath, but this thought does not deter the brave among them, when they feel that death is met honorably and in a good cause.

It has been evidenced that every acquaintance who is on good terms with an Indian is not by him, regarded as a friend. There must be a closer bond than this. Bona fide friendships generally grow out of some favor or benefit bestowed, some mutual at-

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-365

traction, or the like. Such is the friendship of the Chippewa for the Bee Hunter in "Oak Openings"; of Susquesus for the Little pages in "The Little page Manuscripts"; of Wyandotte for Maud in "Wyandotte"; of Leatherstocking and Chingachgook for each other; of Conanchet for his Puritan friends.

To be more specific, besides the mutual attractions the Chippewa and the Bee Hunter had for each other, and the fact that they were allies in the war, the latter had rescued the Indian from his enemies. That was a favor never to be forgotten. When the Chippewa was acquainted with the plan of the great Onoah to do away with all of the whites, the conflict of loyalties between his race and his white friend that go on in the breast of the well-meaning Chippewa, makes a genuine appeal on one's sympathy. Until he becomes convinced of the impracticality of Onoah's plan, he gives his friend numerous hints of impending danger, but none of sufficient clarity to be effective, since Onoah is also regarded by Bourdon as a friend. Afterwards, he frankly tells the Bee Hunter how to determine if Peter means to act treacherously by him. During the escape which followed, the faithful Chippewa kept on the skirts of the enemy the entire time "traveling hundreds of miles and enduring hunger and fatigue, besides risking his life at nearly every step, in order to be of use to those whom he considered himself pledged to serve."1

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-455

When Conanchet and a friend were overtaken by enemies, the latter urged the young chief to flee for his life, having himself resolved to die on the spot. Conanchet calmly replied:

> "The enemies of a chief must not say that he led his friend into a trap, and that when his leg was fast he ran away himself, like a lucky fox. If my brother stays to be killed, Conanchet will be found near him."1

In the flight that followed the friend was saved by the ingeniuty of the Indian, who hazarded and lost his own life as a result.

Susquesus allowed himself to be captured so that he might be imprisoned with his friend in order to be able to serve him the better.[2]

The sacrifices that Chingachgook, Uncas and Leatherstocking made for each other are just as thrilling and beautiful. On one occasion when the Leatherstocking and the chief were wondering where each would be on the morrow, since the former was a captive, the sagamore said:

> "Chingachgook will be with his friend, Deerslayer; if he be in the land of the spirits, the great serpent (this is the meaning of Chingachgook) will crawl at his side; if beneath yonder sun, its warmth and light will fall on both."[3]

The death of a friend is invariably vindicated. When Susquesus hears that his friend, the Chainbearer, has been mortally wounded he says:

> "Dat bad--must take scalp to pay for dat! Ole fri'nd--good fri'nd. Always kill murdered." 4

Later in the story the suspected one is fatally shot and all evidences seem to indicate that Susquesus had dealt out Indian

2. Cooper: The Chainbearer, p-283
1. Ibid : The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p-382
3. Ibid : The Deerslayer, p-470
4. Ibid: The Chainbearer, p 393

justice, without hesitation or compunction.

This same kind of loyalty or vengeance is also exercised in behalf of the tribe. One instance is given of a soldier who killed a chief while in captivity among Indians. This chief had few friends.

> "No one regretted him very much and some were actually glad of his fate. But the dignity of the conquerors must be vindicated. It would never do for a pale-face to obtain so great an advantage and not take a signal vengeance for his deeds." 1

Among the Indians the warpath is always open as long as there is a death to be revenged, especially if it is the death of one held in great esteem.

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-388

Indian Law and Justice

The reader has already been given an insight into Indian law and justice in connection with the councils, presided over by the chiefs. In this section the subject will be dealt with more directly.

Cooper makes clear that if the Indian is judged according to his own code, he will be found to be law-abiding and just. Such expressions as the following are typical:

> "Redmen have laws as well as pale-faces. If there is a difference it is in keeping those laws..... .....
>
> ".....there is an authority among redmen beyond that of a chief. It is the redman's law."
>
> ".. .....No men honor right and justice more than redmen, though it's in their own fashion."1
>
> "Among the American savage the rights of property are distinctly recognized, so far as their habits and resources extend. The hunting-grounds belong to the tribe, and occasionally the field; but the wigwam and the arms and the skins, both for use and for market, and often the horses; and all other movables, belong to the individual."2

These property rights are held sacred in the tribe and between friendly tribes, but,as has been stated, they see no wrong in stealing from the enemy. The author explains,

> "The American Indian is seldom a thief in the ordinary sense of the term; but he treats the property of those he stays as his own. In this particular he does not differ materially from the civilized soldier, I believe, plunder being usually considered as a legitimate benefit of war."3
>
> - "Indian justice is stern but it is natural justice. No man is ever put to the ban among redmen, unless they are satisfied he is not fit to enjoy savage rights."4

We have two notable examples of Indians who were banned permanently or temperarily by their tribes. One is Magna in

1. Cooper: Redskins, p-293
2. Ibid: Oak Openings, p-320-1
3. Ibid: Satanstoe, p-415
4. Ibid: Wyandotte, p-117

"The Last of the Mohicans"; the other, Wyandotte in the novel by that name. Magna is a most malignant and fiendish individual who is always manipulating matters for his own private ends; Wyandotte is called a "clever knave", and a "surly scoundrel." His good qualities were almost over-shadowed by his treacherous and suspicious behavior.

There are two instances of Indians being stabbed or brained on the spot for repeated cowardice or treason. In "The Last of the Mohicans" the following speech precedes such an act of summary punishment.

> "Reed-that-bends," said the chief, "addressing the young culprit by name, and in his proper language," though the Great Spirit has made you pleasant to the eyes, it would have been better that you had not been born. Your tongue is loud in the village, but in battle it is still. None of my young men strike the tomahawk deeper into the war-post--none of them so lightly on the Yengeese. The enemy know the shape of your back, but they have never seen the color of your eyes. Three times have they called on you to come, and as often did you forget to answer. Your name will never be mentioned again in your tribe--it is already forgotten."
>
> As the chief slowly uttered these words, pausing impressively between each sentence, the culprit raised his face, in deference to the other's rank and years. Shame, horror, and pride struggled in his lineaments. His eye, which was contracted with inward anguish, gleamed on the persons of those whose breath was his fame; and the latter emotion for an instant predominated. He arose to his feet and baring his bosom, looked steadily on the keen glittering knife that was already upheld by his inexorable judge. As the weapon passed slowly into his heart, he even smiled, as if in joy at having found death less dreadful than he had anticipated....."1

The other instance occurs in The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, page 380.

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-271-2

The Principle of Revenge in Practice

With the Indian it is a species of religious principle never to forget a benefit or to forgive an injury.

> "They are taught from infancy upward, to believe it a duty never to allow an injury to pass unrevenged; and nothing but the stronger claims of hospitality can guard one against their resentments when they have power."1

Throughout the novels one frequently comes across expressions such as "good for good, bad for bad", "never forget a favor; never forgive an enemy", in connection with them. The best example of this principle in action is the story of Wyandotte.

This Indian had been a chief in his own tribe, but had fallen from that high estate and lived almost wholly among the pale-faces—with the family of one Captain Willoughby, in particular.

The Captain had on several occasions ordered that Wyandotte be lashed for his misdemeanors in and around the garrison. It seems that of all ill-treatments, an Indian regards that of being flogged the most disgraceful, particularly if he is a chief. In his mind the wounds never heal--the smart continues until revenge is taken, and that revenge is frequently the death of the offender.

> "Nick had often meditated this treacherous deed, (Captain Willoughby's death) during the thirty years which had elapsed between his first flogging and the present period; but circumstances had never placed its execution safely in his power. The subsequent punishments had increased the desire, for a few years; but time had so far worn off the craving for revenge, that it would never have been actively revived, perhaps, but for the unfortunate allusions of the

1. Cooper: Pioneers, p-133

> victim himself to the subject. Captain Willoughby had been an English soldier, of the school of the last century. He was naturally a humane and just man, but he believed in the military axiom, that 'the most flogging regiments were the best fighting regiments'; and perhaps he was not in error, as regards the lower English character. It was a fatal error, however, to make in relation to an American savage; one who had formerly exercised the functions, and who had not lost all the feelings, of a chief. Unhappily at a moment when everything depended on the fidelity of the Tuscarora, the captain had bethought him of his old expedient for insuring prompt obedience, and, by way of reminder, he made an allusion to his former mode of punishment. As Nick would have expressed it, "The old sores smarted"; the wavering purpose of thirty years was suddenly and fiercely revived", and when an opportunity came "the knife passed into the heart of the victim, with a rapidity that left no time for appeals to the tribunals of God's mercy."1

The Indian's threat that no man—pale-face or Indian—can give blow on back of Wyandotté (his name as a chief) and see sun set, was carried out.

At the same time that Nick was contemplating the murder of Captain Willoughby he remembered that Mrs. Willoughby had nursed him back to health when he had been very sick. He was particularly fond of an adopted daughter, Maud, who had done little favors for him, as well as placed great trust in him. After stabbing Captain Willoughby he did everything possible to lessen the shock of his death to these women of his household, all of whom had ever stood high in his friendship. He later defended them against members of his own race, risking his life and sustaining cuts and bruises.

This friendliness and generosity for members of the family did not mean that he regretted what he had done; he was simply acting according to his own code or nature.

1. Cooper: Wyandotte, p-397

"Nick walked up to the table, and gazed at the face of his victim with a coldness that proved he felt no compunction. Still he hesitated about touching the body, actually raising his hand, as if with that intent, and then withdrawing it, like one stung by conscience.....

".....The hesitating gesture excepted, the strictest scrutiny, or the keenest suspicion, could have detected no signs of feeling.....He believed that, in curing the sores on his own back in this particular manner, he had done what became a Tuscarora warrior and a chief....."1

It was because of a flogging that Magna, a chief in "The Last of the Mohicans", undertakes such dire vengeance upon Cora, the daughter of his enemy. When the young woman asked him what pleasure he would have in sharing his wigwam with a woman he did not love he answered:

"When the blows scorched the back of the Huron he would know where to find a woman to feel the smart. The daughter of Munro would draw his water, hoe his corn, and cook his venison. The body of the gray-head would sleep among his cannon, but his heart would be within reach of the knife of Le Subtil." 2

The revenge, then, is not always taken out on the offender, but on others dear to him, or of his race, or associates. In "Satanstoe" a body of Indians murder a whole group of surveyors to avenge a flogging of a chief among them, by a Negro who was connected with the surveying party. They showed their enmity for the offender by severely torturing the one member of the massacred group belonging to his race. In such a manner do these creatures of passion avenge their real or fancied griefs.

Frequently, the mere thought of revenge causes a gleam of terrorizing resentment to flash across the dark lineaments of an Indian's countenance. He will loosen a weapon,—and then

1. Cooper: Wyandotte, p-433
2. Ibid; p-114- The Last of the Mohicans

as suddenly settle into as deep a repose as if he never knew the instigation of passion.

To be face to face with death does not alter the sacredness of the virtue of revenge, which is evidenced by the message Hard-Heart sends his people when he thinks he is doomed to die at the hands of the Tetons:

> "Tell them that Hard-Heart has tied a knot in his wampum for every Teton!" burst from the lips of the captive, with that vehemence with which sudden passion is known to break through the barriers of artificial restraint; "if he meets one of them all in the prairies of the Master of Life, his heart will become Sioux!" 1

Perhaps the Delaware girl's definition of neighbor will shed light on who is regarded as an enemy. It was her reaction to the Christian maxim: "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

> "Neighbor for Injun no mean pale-face," answered the Delaware girl with more decision than she had hitherto thought it necessary to use. "Neighbor means Iroquois for Iroquois, Mohican for Mohican, pale-face for pale-face....."2

Beyond a doubt, the Indian's conception of friend and enemy is very distinct; his vengeance is always directed towards the latter. Wyandotte advises Captain Willoughby never to be neutral in a "hot war. Get rob from bot' side. Always be one or to 'oder, cap'in."

When the captain explained that a conscientious man may think neither side wholly right or wrong, and that he never wished "to lift the hatchet"unless his cause were just, Wyandotte replied:

1. Cooper:The Prairie, p-309
2. Ibid: Deerslayer, p-205

"Injun no understand dat. Throw hatchet at enemy--what matter what he say--good t'ing, bad t'ing. He enemy--dat enough. Take scalp from enemy--don't touch friend." 1

1. Cooper: Wyandotté, p-383

The Reward for Good Behavior

As with other peoples, the Indian believes that only if he has lived up to his ideals of right behavior, is he entitled to a reward in after life. Old Chingachgook died happily, singing of his victories over his enemies and of his "good deeds" and did not doubt that he would begin life all over in the Happy Hunting Ground to which his fathers had gone.

The words of the song are interesting:

> "I will come! I will come! to the land of the just I will come! The Maquas I have slain! I have slain the Maquas! and the Great Spirit calls to his son. I will come! I will come to the land of the just! I will come!" 1

Afterwards he said in a low, distinct voice:

> "Who can say that the Maquas know the back of the Mohegan? What enemy that trusted in him did not see the morning? What Ringo that he chased ever sang the song of triumph? Did Mohegan ever lie? No; the truth lived in him. In his youth he was a warrior, and his moccasins left the stain of blood. In his age he was wise; his words at the council-fire did not blow away with the winds." 2

1. Cooper: The Pioneers, p-408
2. Ibid, p-409

On the Warpath

Having considered the Indian warrior's rank, habits, traits, appearance, and ideas, we come next to his actual participation in warfare. In his primitive state, securing the necessities of life, and protecting himself, and those depended upon him, from the enemy, was his great problem and naturally occupied most of his time and attention. The author not only presents the methods used on the warpath, but invariably explains why such practices were followed, to the great enlightenment of the reader. We shall first consider the warrior's skill in observation and trailing.

Indian Skill in Observation

Attentive sagacity forms no small part of an Indian's education. It is a universal practice among Indians not to permit a single distinctive mark which might characterize a person or an object escape them, though they suffer no gaze of idle curiosity to disgrace their manhood. They can invariably tell the air, the stature, the dress, and the features, even to the color of the eyes and the hair of strangers who come among them, and make other conjectures as to their physical powers, abilities, and intentions.

Their senses are keenly developed through practice, and one might be sure that they will be the first to detect sounds, sights, and appearances, all of which are frought with meaning for them. So practiced and acute do their senses

become when whetted by the apprehensions and wants of savage life, and more especially when they are on the war-path, that trifles apparently of the most insignificant sort often prove to be clues to lead them to their object. They become adept at interpreting evidences and seldom fail to tell the purposes or behavior of the enemy.

"With an Indian to describe, and an Indian to interpret or apply, escape from discovery was next to impossible." 1

They are always on the look-out for camp-fires and can tell by the nature of the smoke the circumstances connected with it. Naturally people who are so skilled in the art of cunning and dissimulation are not easily deceived themselves. The disguise of two white men in "Redskins" was effective with their friends and even with members of their family, but an old Indian penetrated the ruse at once.

The Indian and Trailing

Their knowledge of trails seems to amount to an instinct. They never seem at a loss to find the particular place sought. It is true they have generally roamed the forest since childhood, and an Indian always takes particular note of the facilities of places that are susceptible of being made use of later. In "Satanstoe", an Indian proved to be a more satisfactory guide than a compass in the obscure and tangled virgin forests. Deerslayer says, ".....a hound is not more sartain on a scent than a redskin, when he expects to get anything by it. Let this party see

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-117

scalps afore 'em, or plunder, or honor according to their idees of what honor is, and 'twill be a tight log that hides a canoe from the eyes."1

An Indian never starts on an expedition without smoking over his council-fire and deliberating on the course to pursue. They have the custom of trailing at sundown. In speaking of their enemies Deerslayer says to his companions:

> "These varlets pretend to be bent on their sun-down meal; but the moment it is dark they will be on our trail as true as hounds on the scent."2

The following paragraph gives an idea of how a trail was covered.

> "The canoe was lifted from the water, and borne on the shoulders of the party. They proceeded into the wood, making as broad and obvious a trail as possible. They soon reached a water-course, which they crossed, and continued onward until they came to an extensive and naked rock. At this point, where their footsteps might be expected to be no longer visible, they retraced their route to the brook, walking backward with the utmost care. They now followed the bed of the little stream to the lake into which they immediately launched their canoe again. A low point concealed them from the headland, and the margin of the lake was fringed for some distance with dense and over-hanging bushes. Under the cover of these natural advantages, they toiled their way, with patient industry, until the scout announced that it would be safe once more to land.
>
> "The halt continued until evening rendered objects indistinct and uncertain to the eye. Then they resumed their route, and, favored by darkness, pushed silently and vigorously toward the western shore.....
>
> "The boat was again liften and borne into the woods, where it was carefully concealed under a pile of brush. The adventurers assumed thier arms and packs" and proceeded. 3

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-52
2. Ibid: The Last of the Mohicans, p-234
3. Ibid: p-235

One frequently comes across the expression in these novels, "water leaves no trail", and it is often resorted to for this reason. For the next passage is descriptive of a search for a lost trail.

> "Hawkeye and the Mohicans now applied themselves to their task in good earnest. A circle of a few hundred feet in circumference was drawn, and each of the party took a segment for his portion. The examination, however, resulted in no discovery. The impressions of footsteps were numerous, but they all appeared like those of men who had wandered about the spot without any design to quit it. Again the scout and his companions made the circuit of the halting-place, each slowly following the other, until they assembled in the center once more, no wiser than when they started.
>
> "We must get down to it, sagamore, beginning at the spring and going over the ground by inches," (exclaimed Hawkeye), "The Huron shall never brag in his tribe that he has a foot that leaves no print."
>
> "Setting the example himself, the scout engaged in the scrutiny with renewed zeal. Not a leaf was left unturned. The sticks were removed and the stones lifted—for Indian cunning was frequently known to adopt these objects as covers, laboring with the utmost patience and industry to conceal each footstep as they proceeded. Still no discovery was made. At length Uncas, whose activity had enabled him to achieve his portion of the soonest, raked the earth across the turbid little rill which ran from the spring, and diverted its course into another channel. So soon as the narrow bed below the dam was dry, he stooped over it with keen and curious eyes. A cry of exultation immediately announced the success of the young warrior. The whole party crowded to the spot where Uncas pointed out the impression of a moccasin in the moist alluvion."1

The expediency resorted to by Uncas in the last paragraph has been styled improbable by some critics of the author. It is possibly the most ingenius device related in this connection,

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p 240

though numerous others less fantastic would appear improbable to one unacquainted with Indian acumen in such matters. For this study, however, the incident serves to emphasize the idea of their resourcefulness and close scrutiny.

The Tuscarora, in "Wyandotte", was able to tell that a party which he had followed was composed chiefly of white men by the trail they left. His explanation follows:

> "When did red warriors ever travel on their path like hogs in a drove?.....
>
> "Toe turn out....step too short...trail too broad..trail too plain..march too short."1

The Indian walks in-toed and bends at the knee, but their movements are light, springy, and swift. The native warrior never moves through a forest in a disorderly group.

> "....usually he marches in a line of single files, which has obtained the name of Indian file with us; and whenever there are strong reasons for concealing his numbers, it is his practice for each succeeding man to follow, as nearly as possible, in the footsteps of the warrior who precedes him; thereby rendering a computation difficult if not impossible."2

1. Cooper: "Wyandotte", p-305
2. Cooper: Satanstoe, p-416

Indian Warfare

We come not to the actual methods of Indian warfare. The philosophy of an Indian attack consists mainly in a ready hand, a quick eye, and a good cover, among which they can move in as sudden and rapid a manner as possible, thereby defying the enemy's aim. It is always conducted with great precaution and stealth, is preceded by profound stillness, and generally comes when the enemy least expects it, in order to insure their blow. The author explains:

> "It is seldom, indeed, that the aboriginal Americans venture on an open assault of any fortified place, however small and feeble it may be. Ignorant of the use of artillery, and totally without that all-important arm, their approaches to any cover, whence a bullet may be sent against them are ever wary, slow, and well concerted. They have no idea of trenches, do not possess the means of making them, indeed; but they have such substitutes of their own as usually meet all their wants, more particularly in the portion of the country that are wooded."1

Again, he says:

> ".....Indians would never approach a stockade in open day, and expose themselves to the hazards of losing some fifteen or twenty of their number before they could carry the place. This was opposed to all their notions of war, neither honor nor advantage tempting them to adopt it. As for the first, agreeable to savage notions, glory was to measured by the number of scalps taken and lost....."2

For a vivid and thrilling account of a hand to hand combat, when only weapons of offense are used, the reader is referred to Chapter twelve of "The Last of the Mohicans." Among whoops and leapin , blows are passed "with the fury of the

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-397
2. Ibid: Wyandotte, p-337

whirlwind and the rush of lightening." The tomahawk is hurled; the long and dangerous knife is thrust; victims are crushed to the earth with a blow. The deadly strife wreaks with blood and hair-breath escapes; and in the end only one member of the defeated party cunningly escapes alive.

This battle, however, is tame as compared with the blood curdling "Massacre of William Henry" recorded in the same book. On this occasion the redmen's blood was hot and temper up. They became maddened fiends who perpetrated deeds on women and children too horrible to relate. When a fatal and appalling whoop was raised,

> "More than two thousand savages broke from the forest at the signal, and threw themselves across the fatal plain with instinctive alacrity. We shall not dwell on the revolting horrors that succeeded. Death was everywhere and in his most terrific and disgusting aspects. Resistance only served to inflame the murderers, who inflicted their furious blows long after their victims were beyond the power of resentment. The flow of blood might be likened to the outbreaking of a torrent; and as the natives became heated and maddened by the sight, many among them even kneeled to the earth, and drank freely, exultingly, hellishly, of the crimson tide." 1

The examples of Indian warfare already cited illustrate its fierce, terrible, and cruel aspects, more than the methods used by the warriors. For the latter, we turn to the night attack on the home of the Puritans in "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish." When the enemy could be overcome in no other way, fire was often resorted to. The following paragraph describes the throwing of a brand.

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-195

"A small bright ball of fire had arisen out of the fields, and, describing an arc in the air, it sailed above their heads and fell on the shingles of a building which formed a part of the quadrangle of the inner court. The movement was that of an arrow thrown from a distant bow, and its way was to be traced by a long trail of light, that followed its course like a blazing meteor. This burning arrow had been sent with a cool and practised judgment. It lighted upon a portion of the combustibles that was nearly as inflamable as gunpowder, and the eye had scarcely succeeded in tracing it to its fall, ere the bright flames were seen stealing over the heated roof."1

By this time the vast range of out-buildings were wrapped in fire. Through the openings between the buildings the eye could look out upon the fields, where every evidence of a sullen intention on the part of the savages to persevere in their object was seen.

"Dark, fierce looking, and nearly naked human bodies were seen flitting from cover to cover, while there was no stump nor log within arrow's flight of the defenses, that did not protect the person of a daring and indefatigable enemy. It was plain the Indians were there in hundreds, and as the assualts continued after the failure of a surprise, it was evident that they were bent on victory, at some hazard to themselves. No usual means of adding to the horror of the scene were neglected. Whoops and yells were incessantly ringing around the place, while the loud and oft repeated tones of a couch betrayed the artifice by which the savages had so often endeavered, in the earlier part of the night, to lure the garrison out of the palisades. A few scattering shot, discharged with deliberation and from every exposed point within the works, proclaimed the coolness and the vigilance of the defendants." 2

The Indians cease their attacks as suddenly as they begin them, and maintain a profound stillness as before. A surprise on them often disconcerts the main body of their warriors, but at such times the coolness of the chiefs is generally shown.

1. Cooper: Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p-172
2. Ibid, p-164-5

"Though a panic is not usual among these wild warriors, they seldom rally on the field. If once driven against their will, a close pursuit will usually disperse them for a time."1

Indians have often been accused of cowardice because they do not persist in the face of failure. Cooper offers an explanation on this point:

"It is not unusual for the Indians to retire satisfied with their first blow. So much of their military success was depended on surprise, that it often happened the retreat commenced with its failure, than that victory was obtained by perseverance. So long as the battle raged, their courage was equal to its dangers; but among people who made so great a merit of artifice, it is not at all surprising that they seldom put more to the hazard than was justified by the most severe descretion." 2

The contrast between the undisciplined fighting of the Indians and the steady tramp of the Red-Coats is sharply drawn in "The Deerslayer."

Cunning and treachery play such a large part in Indian warfare that these and similar traits deserve especial mention. Pathfinder says,

"One redskin has more cunning in his natur' than a whole regiment from the other side of the water--that is what I call cunning of the woods."3

".....it is an Indian's natur' to be found where he is least expected. No fear of him on a beaten path, for he wishes to come upon you when unprepared to meet him, and the fiery villians make it a point to deceive you one way or another."4

They watch the smallest movements without the appearance of observing at all; they answer questions evasively; they pretend to be the dupes of others when at the same time, they understand what is being done, and, await the opportune time to strike back.

1. Cooper: Satanstoe, p-466
2. Ibid: Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p-333
3. Ibid: Pathfinder, p-50
4. Ibid: p-39

With dead bodies they work all manner of artifices to make them appear as if alive, in order to allure others to the spot, on so that their havoc may prove the more dreadful on discovery. On one occasion, they propped the bodies in reclining positions, and threw them into attitudes that had the horrible resemblance of a circle of men reposing after a meal and passing a few minutes in idle talk. Often the limbs of the dead were allowed to stiffen in attitudes of mocking levity, and with such an art as to deceive a negligent observer at a distance of a hundred yards.

They seem to be adept in ingenius disguising. Chingachgook took advantage of his knowledge of the Iroquioan language, and in the dark, pretended to be one of them, and succeeded in taking a boat for his own use. They often used leaves as a protective covering or hid themselves in the carcasses of animals.

The description of the manner of Chief Mahtoree's wary approach to the tents of a squatter under cover of darkness, in order to ascertain their number and means of defense, illustrates the artifice, the craftiness, and the subtlety, practiced by the skilled and experienced warrior. (The Prairie, Chapter IV) An excerpt follows:

> ".....to one less accustomed to such a species of exercise, it would have proved painfully laborious. But the advance of the wily snake itself is not more certain or noiseless than was his approach. He drew his form, foot by foot, through the bending grass, pausing at each movement to catch the smallest sound that might betray any knowledge, on the part of the travellers, of his proximity. He succeeded, at length, in dragging himself out of the sickly light of the moon into the shadows of the brake, where not only his own dark person was much less liable to be seen, but where the surrounding objects became more distinctly visible to his keen and active glances."1

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-53

The entire story of Arrowhead in "The Pathfinder" is one of treachery and deception. He could invariably find an excuse for his questionable behavior that either appeased or baffled those with whom he feigned friendship. When the final clash came, however, he was found to be the leader of the foe.

Deerslayer narrowly escaped being shot by an Indian of the opposing ranks whom he had just left, after settling the question of the ownership of a boat in peace and to the apparent satisfaction of the savage.

> "The parting words were friendly, and while the red-man walked calmly towards the wood, with the rifle in the hollow of his arm, without once looking back in uneasiness or distrust, the white man moved toward the remaining canoe, carrying his peace in the same pacific manner, it is true, but keeping his eye fastened on the movements of the other. This distrust, however, seemed to be altogether uncalled for, and, as if ashamed to have entertained it, the young man averted his look, and stepped carelessly up to his boat. Here he began to push the canoe from the shore, and to make his other preparations for departing. He might have been thus employed a minute, when, happening to turn his face towards the land, his quick and certain eye told him, at a glance, the imminent jeopardy in which his life was placed. The black, perocious eyes of the savage were glancing on him, like those of the crouching tiger, through a small opening in the bushes, and the muzzle of his rifle seemed already to be opening in a line with his own body."1

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-135

Scalping in War

A footnote in "The Last of the Mohicans" sums up briefly the pertinent facts about the honor attached to scalping by the Indian.

> "The North American warrior caused the hair to be plucked from his whole body; a small tuft was only left on the crown of his head, in order that his enemy might avail himself of it in wrenching off his scalp in the event of his fall. The scalp was the only admissable trophy of victory: Thus it was deemed more important to obtain the scalp than to kill the man. Some tribes lay great stress on the honor of striking the dead body. These practices have nearly disappeared among the Indians of the Atlantic States."1

It must be mentioned also that the French and English paid high prices for scalps during the contest over the ownership over this country and the early colonial period. Deerslayer says, on one occasion, that two scalps would purchase a keg of powder and a rifle. In these novels the greater emphasis is laid upon the honor attached to scalping, however, and numerous incidents are given to illustrate this view. Nick in "Wyandotte" met the bewildered gaze of Major Willoughby with a smile of grim triumph, as he pointed to the three bodies of the latter's father, mother, and sister, over whom he stood guard, and said:

"See--all got scalp! Deat' nothin'--scalp, ebberyt'ing."2

The reeking token of an Indian triumph often swung before the still conscious eyes of the mangled victim from whose head it had been torn. The bodies of their own dead were removed at all hazards, and concealed in order to prevent the customary mutilation; and, among some tribes, as stated, to prevent the dead body from being struck. This latter custom was held sacred

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-27
2. Ibid: Wyandotte, p-443

by some of the western tribes, and is illustrated by the following incident:

> "A Pawnee Chief had sunk under the numerous wounds he had received, and he fell, a target for a dozen arrows, in the very last group of his retiring party. Regardless alike of inflicting further injury on their foes; and of the temerity of the act, the Sioux braves bounded forward with a whoop, each man burning with the wish to reap the high renown of striking the body of the dead. They were met by Hard-Heart and a chosen knot of warriors, all of whom were just as stoutly bent on saving the honor of their nation from so deadly a stain. The struggle was hand to hand and blood began to flow more freely. As the Pawnees retired with the body, the Sioux pressed upon their footsteps, and at length the whole of the latter broke out of the cover with a common yell, and threatened to bear down all opposition by sheer physical superiority."1

In connection with this same battle an aged and wounded warrior rode a mile on horseback, strapped to the belt of his companion without a murmur, in order that his "white hairs" might not be carried into the village of the enemy. When he saw that their pursuers were steadily gaining ground upon them, he stopped his companion and requested that his head be severed from his less valuable trunk in order to lessen the weight and insure victory. This was done instantly by his understanding comrade, and the latter rode to safety flourishing the grim and bloody visage and shouting triumphantly.

When Chingachgook heard that Deerslayer had killed a warrior, but had not scalped him, the chief replied:

> "Good! A Delaware will look for the scalp, and hang it on a pole, and sing a song in his honor when we go back to our people. The honor belongs to the tribe; it must not be lost."2

The honor attached to scalping is the only excuse one can

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-375-6
2. Ibid: The Deerslayer, p-169

offer for the well-known incident in "The Last of the Mohicans" when Chingachgook returned and scalped the harmless Frenchman who was doing sentinel duty on the banks of the "bloody pond." To be sure, some warriors were more ruthless than others, and preferred toaking life to scalping. Such base fellows were generally known in their tribes. Wencha in "The Prairies", and the "Weasel" in "Oak Openings" illustrate this type.

Knowing with how much disgust the average civilized person regards this custom of scalping among the Indians, Cooper makes the following explanation:

> "Let not the refined reader feel disgust at this exhibition of the propensities of an American savage. Civilized life has had, and still has many customs little less excusable than that of scalping. Without dragging into account the thousand and one sins that disgrace and deform society, it will be sufficient to look into the single interest of civilized warfare, in order to make out our case. In the first place, the noblest strategy of the art is, to put the greatest possible force on the least of the enemy, and to slay the weaker party by the mere power of numbers. Then, every engine that ingenuity can invent is drawn into the conflict; and rockets, revolvers, shells, and all other infernal devices are resorted to in order to get the better of an enemy who is not provided with such available means of destruction. And after the battle is over, each side commonly slaims the victory; sometimes, because a partial success has been obtained in a small portion of the field; sometimes because half a dozen horses have run away with a gun, carrying it into the hostile ranks; and again because a bit of rag has fallen from the hands of a dead man, and been picked up by one of the opposing side. How often has it happened that a belligerent, well practiced in the art, has kept his own colors out of the affair, and boasted that they were not lost! Now an Indian practices no such shameless expedients. His point of honor is not a bit or rag, but a bit of skin. He shaves his head because the hair encumbers him; but he chivalrously leaves a scalp-lock, by the aid of which his conqueror can the more easily carry away the

> coveted trophy. The thought of cheating in such a matter never occurs to his unsophisticated mind; and as for leaving his "Colors" in the barracks, while he goes into the field himself, he would disdain it--nay, cannot practise it, for the obvious reason that his head would have to be left with them." 1

If Cooper wrote such scathing criticism of civilized warfare in his time, what would he say of that of today? Certainly one of the reasons why this author has succeeded so admirably in his portrayal of Indian life is because he has dealt with it sympathetically, and judged the Indian according to his own pattern of culture in true sociological fashion. Many writers today fail in their treatment of what is known as "racial groups" because they make no such comprehensive approach.

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-149-50

The Yell

Thus far in this discussion "Yells" have been incidentally mentioned. They play no small part in Indian warfare. In the words of Leatherstocking, "An Indian yell is plain language to men who have passed their days in the woods."[1] Different types are used on different occasions, the most important of which are explained below.

> "The yell was the customary lamentation at the loss of a warrior, the shout a sign of rejoicing that the conqueror had not been able to secure the scalp.. ....." 2

One yell called the "death halloo" by the whites was first a low and fearful sound, succeeded by a high, shrill, yell, drawn out to equal the longest and most plaintive howl of the wolf. It represented equally the wailings of the dead and the triumph of the victors, and each repetition was intended to announce to the tribe, the fate of the enemy. Such a yell was given by a party returning from the war-path.

A yell of defeat was one as fierce and savage as will and revengeful passions could throw in the air. Yells of disappointment were equally frightful and often accompanied by frantic gestures and other unrestrained behavior. A whoop, fatal and appalling, was generally the signal for the plunge into battle, which was obeyed "as coursers bound at the signal to quit the goal." It was answered by horrible yells that were intended to bespeak terror into the bosoms of the opponents, and served to spur on themselves.

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-132
2. Ibid: Deerslayer, p-132

They raised no shoop when a scout fell into the hands of the enemy. Scouts were generally sent out to over-look the enemy and secure the facts necessary to make the wisest attack. Naturally, such an occupation was full of perils.

Other signals used are bird calls, or the imitation of animals, usually the symbol of the tribe. Deerslayer attracted the "Great Serpent's" attention by hissing like a snake. Signals were also sent by smoke from fire made of different materials.

Messengers in War

Several instances are given in which messengers were sent between the warring parties. They were recognized by certain symbols and were always respected. The usual sign of peace was by exhibiting the naked hand. Sometimes the arms were thrown upward toward the heavens and then allowed to fall impressively on the breast. The advisability of sending a messenger to treat with the enemy is discussed in a scene in "Satanstoe". The question was asked of a friendly Indian:

> "Do you think it safe to send a messenger out to treat the Hurons, in order to inquire after our friends, and to treat with them?"
>
> "No send? Why not?" returned the Indian. Redman glad to see messenger. Go when he want; come back when he want, How can make bargain, if scalp messenger?" 1

The first speaker then comments as follows:

> "I had heard that the most savage tribes respected a messenger; and, indeed, the necessity of so doing was, of itself, a sort of security that such must be the case. It was true, that the bearer of a flag might be in more danger, on such an errand than would be the case in a camp of civilized men; but these Canada Indians had been long serving with the French, and their chiefs, beyond a question, had obtained some of the notions of pale-face war-fare." 2

The Indian willingly agreed to be the messenger. He washed the war-paint from his face, put a calico shirt over his shoulders, and assumed the guise of peace. He was given a small white flag to carry by his doubting friends. The Indian found some wampum in which he apparently had as much faith than anything else.

1. Cooper: Satanstoe, p-458
2. Ibid: p-459

The messenger was received and three Chiefs came to the parley. A request to speak to one of the prisoners was granted by the Indians with great delicacy and with no show of suspicion. As often happened; the prisoners took this opportunity to free themselves.

On one occasion when a messenger was sent to the Indians to sue for peace, a bundle of arrows wrapped in the glossy striped skin of the rattlesnake was returned. Their meaning was very obvious.

Treatment of Prisoners

It was a policy among the Indians to take their prisoners alive. A warrior in "Deerslayer" was"ashamed to be seen with traces of blood about him after having used so many injunctions to convince his young warriors of the necessity of taking their prisoners alive."[1]

Immemorial and sacred usage protected the persons of prisoners until the tribe in council deliberated and determined his fate. They were sometimes bound to stakes; sometimes, allowed to run the gauntlet, a severe trial which ended variously for the victims: in death, freedom, or continued captivity. Members of the tribe, including women and children, provided with as deadly weapons as could be procured, formed themselves in a double line through which the victims were suppose to run, while his tormentors made every effort to cut them down with fatal blows. In chapter twenty-three, of "The Last of the Mohicans" a vivid and detailed account is given of a prisoner attempting this feat.

> "Instead of rushing through the hostile lines, as had been expected, he just entered the dangerous defile, and before time was given for a single blow, turned short, and, leaping the heads of a row of children, he gained at once the exterior and safer side of the formidable array. The artifice was answered by a hundred voices raised in imprecations, and the whole of the excited multitude broke from their order and spread themselves about the place in wild confusion."[2]

When a prisoner was tortured every method was used to intimidate him, or to sap his resolution; for nothing gives an Indian greater satisfaction than for a captive to show weak-

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-385
2. Ibid: The Last of the Mohicans, p-265

ness in such an ordeal, Knives and tomahawks were hurled at his head, the aim being to strike as close to the victim as possible without absolutely hitting him. Sometimes the rifle was used. Only those expert with the weapons were allowed to attempt such a hazardous experiment, less an early death might cut short the entertainment. The captive seldom escaped injury in such a trial, in spite of the precautions used, and death often followed, even when the blow was not premeditated. Needless to say, some fiery spirits would scarcely be expected to refrain from striking the fatal blow intentionally, when revenge was uppermost in their minds. The experiment was most often a display of skill in the use of the weapons, however,— the participants being anxious to exhibit their dexterity before their comrades. The chiefs were careful to stop such exercises before the ferocious passions of the tormentors were aroused.

It was a common practice for the women, especially the older ones, to throw the captive into a rage by their taunts and revilings, and then to turn him over suddenly to the men in a mental state little favorable to enduring bodily agony. Sometimes the body was pierced with burning splinters; in fact, all manner of barbarous practices were indulged in. Death by torture between saplings was perhaps the most cruel of all.

"Young trees that do not stand far apart are trimmed of their branches, and brought nearer to each other by bending their bodies; the victim is then attached to both trunks, sometimes by his extended arms, at others by his legs, or

by whatever part of the frame cruelty can suggest, when the saplings are released, and permitted to resume their natural positions. Of course, the sufferer is lifted from the earth, and hangs suspended by his limbs, with a strain on them that soon produces the most intense anguish."1

Before leaving the subject of torturing, the excellent summary and explanation by the author must be given. He says,

"There is scarcely a method of inflicting pain, that comes within the compass of their means, that the North American Indians have not essayed on their enemies. When the infernal ingenuity that is exercised on these occasions fails of its effect, the captives themselves have been heard to suggest other means of torturing that they have known, practised successfully by their own people. There is often a strange strife between the tormentors, and the tormented; the one to manifest skill in inflicting pain, the other to manifest fortitude in enduring it. As has been said, quite as much renown is often acquired by the warrior in setting all the devices of his conquerors at defiance, while subject to their hellish attempts, as in deeds of arms. It might be more true to say that such was the practice among Indians, than to say, at the present time, that such is; for it is certain that civilization in its approaches, while it has in many particulars even degraded the redman, has had a silent effect in changing and mitigating many of the fiercer customs,—this, perhaps, among the rest. It is probable that the more distant tribes still resort to all these ancient usages; but it is both hoped and believed that those nearer to the whites do not."2

Prisoners were not always subjected to torture, by any means. The policy of adoption has already been explained in connection with the chiefs in council. Moreover, a renowned warrior taken captive, was often invited to become the husband of one of the widows in the tribes; not infrequently he was offered the place of the man who had fallen by his own hands. A refusal of one of their women was considered an insult to the tribe, especially when the alternative was death. Women captives were also in-

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-389.
2. Ibid: p-388-9

vited to become squaws. It was not unusual for these offers of marriage to be extended to the whites.

Sometimes the release of prisoners was secured by means of bribes. A character in "Deerslayer" says:

> "I know of no means to release the prisoner, than by bribing the Iroquois. They are not proof against presents; and we might offer enough, perhaps, to make them shink it better to carry away what to them will be rich gifts than to carry away poor prisoners; if indeed they should carry them away at all!"1

Cooper brings out the point that while Indians care little for houses and riches in the ordinary sense of the term, they are great lovers of finery and ornaments. Such objects generally bring exclamations of delight from them, in spite of their training in self-command.

An amusing incident, tinged also with pathos at their appalling ignorance of values, is cited in "Deerslayer" in which two prisoners were exchanged for four or five ivory Chessmen in the shape of elephants with castles on their backs. The fact that these toys, for such they were, were exquisitely carved weighed heavily with the redmen, who were great admirers of skill. When the chiefs came to transact the negotiations the following conversation took place:

> "My brother, Hawkeye, has sent a message to the Hurons,.... and it has made their hearts very glad. They hear he has images of beasts with two tails! Will he show them to his friends?"
>
> "..... ....Here is one of the images; I toss it to you under faith of treaties. If it's not returned, the rifle will settle the p'int atween us."

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p 116

.....then followed a scene..... in which astonishment and delight got the mastery of Indian stoicism..... For a few minutes they apparently loss the consciousness of their situation in the intense scruting they bestowed on a material so fine, work so highly wrought, and an animal so extraordinary.....

> "Has my pale-face brother any more such beasts?" at last the senior of the Iroquois asked, in a sort of petitioning manner.
>
> "There's more where them came from, Mingo," was the answer; "One is enough, however, to buy off fifty scalps."[1]*

The Indian then proceeded to boast of the greatness of his prisoners in order to augment their value, and drive the best bargain he could. Deerslayer held the extra chessmen in reserve in order to smooth any difficulty that might arise. After much caviling and cunning on both sides, an agreement was reached, whereby the prisoners would be returned for four of the bits of carved ivory.

In "The Prairie", Mahtoree offered the squatter, Ishmael Bush, buffaloes, skins, and wives for sons, as well as one for himself, in the place of two pale-face women whom he desired to keep.[2]

Indians almost always reacted favorably to gifts, unless moved by some deep-seated passions. This, together with their ignorance of values, was often taken advantage of by the whites. The author relates that Captain Willoughby paid "rum, tobacco,

2. Cooper: The Prairie, p-328-9
* 1. Ibid: Deerslayer, p 260-1-2

blankets, wampum, and gunpowder" for more than "six thousand acres of capital land." The Indians made their marks on a bit of deerskin, thus extinguishing their title to the patent.[1] The wily Magna, in "The Last of the Mohicans," won his way into the hearts of the Delawares by bestowing upon them, with the most flattering compliments, gifts which consisted principally of trinkets of little value plundered from the slaughtered females of William Henry; but when gold, silver, powder, lead, everything, was offered him for the release of a young woman, he refused, so bent was he on taking revenge.

We have already noted how largely the Indians are given over to superstitions beliefs. Very frequently, if this element in their natures, was played upon skillfully enough by prisoners, release followed. Certain individuals are held sacred by Indians; among them are medicine-men, who are believed to possess magical power and control over evil spirits; and persons thought to be insane, or feebleminded.

Much space is devoted to the narration of an amusing incident in "Oak Openings" in which a white man assumes the role of a "great medicine" and contrives his escape from his captors. Later, because of the success of his deceptive art, his scalp is undesired. On at least three other occasions, similar ruses are played successfully upon in these novels.

Missionaries were a class of medicine-men who were generally unmolested by the savages. An Indian tells a white com-

1. Cooper: Wyandotte, p-9

panion, who was wondering about the safety of a missionary:

> "Dont hurt him,.....Know mean well---takl about Great Spirit.....Injun don't scalp such medicine-men---if don't mind what he say, no good take scalp."[1]

Apparently there were exceptions to this rule. The same missionary in question was put to death in connection with a project to kill all of the whites; but, even in this case, many doubted the wisdom of the plan, and the responsibility for carrying it into effect rested chiefly on the shoulders of one chief more malicious than the rest. Death was made as easy for the missionary as possible. As a mark of singular respect, his scalp was not taken.

In "Wyandotte" there is a division of opinion as to the sacredness of the person of missionaries among Indians. The divine, himself, stated that there was scarce a tribe in the colony but had some knowledge of the priest-hood. He had heard of no instance in which such persons had ever been mistreated. His opponent, playing on the name of the parson, remarked that they would care no more for "little Woods" than they did for the great woods through which they passed on their infernal errands.[2] This divine went among the group of warriors to find out what their mission was, and, if necessary, to convince them of the sin of attacking his innocent friends. The Indians thought him a madman, and compelled him to take the route to the settlements, instead of joining their

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-158
2. Wyandotte, p-276

enemies, since they were averse to harming him.

> ".....No Indian would harm a being whom the Great Spirit had disarmed, by depriving it of its strongest defence, reason. In this respect, nearly all unsophisticated nations resemble each other; appearing to offer spontaneously, by a feeling creditable to human nature, that protection by their own forbearance which has been withheld by the inscrutable wisdom of Providence." 1

Other examples of persons who were unharmed on account of their mental deficiencies were "Hetty" in "Deerslayer", and "David" in "The Last of the Mohicans." Their friends derived much benefit from their immunities. The recklessness and bravado of an old sailor in "The Pathfinder"[2] caused the Indians to suspect him of madness and consequently to cease their attack on the building on which he stood.

So much of the Indians' superstitions beliefs were connected with their religious doctrines that they had a natural awe of the God of the pale-faces. The seemingly miraculous behavior on the part of the inmates of the burning block in "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, was attributed by them to the power of the Deity of their victims, to whom they had been heard to pray. They appeared to expect some unequivocal manifestations of his power.

The reader will probably recall that these prisoners had found refuge in a well unknown to the Indians, who thought that they had been strangely infused with a sentiment of resignation and calmness by their Great Spirit. The ruins were regarded with awe, reverence, and fear.

1. Cooper: The Deerslayer, p-192
2. Ibid: "The Pathfinder, p-397

Later in the story, a young chief is sorely puzzled to find the very people "who died that night" still alive, and seriously warned his associate against harming them, saying:

> "Gray beards and boys were in that fire, and when the timbers fell nothing was left but coals. Yet do they who were in the blazing lodge, stand there!.....
>
> The Yengeese deal with unknown Gods; they are too cunning for an Indian!"1

Even the proud resolution and far-sighted wisdom of his companion were shaken by this testimony; yet it was with a leaning to incredulity. He had prevailed over many similar signs of supernatural agency that were exercised in favor of his enemies, but never had so imposing a case as this been presented by one so high in authority. It was finally agreed to question the prisoners on the subject and the truth was revealed.

In explanation of such superstitious beliefs Cooper says that with ignorance must of necessity go a certain degree of superstition. In fact, men of all degrees of learning are subject to it, for,

> "There is too much of the uncertain, of the conjectural, in our condition as human beings, to raise us altogether above the distrusts, doubts, wonders, and other weaknesses of our present condition.. ..... Let us not, then, deride these poor children of the forest, because that which was so entirely new to them should also appear inexplicable and supernatural."2

1. Cooper: Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p-315
2. Ibid: Oak Openings, p-303

The Warrior and Death

As intimated before an Indian warrior accepts death as something to be expected on the warpath, and meets it accordingly. In "The Last of the Mohicans" is a paragraph descriptive of the behavior of Chingachgook when he felt certain that his party was trapped hopelessly by his enemies, and preferred death to deserting it.

> "Chingachgook, placing himself in a dignified posture on another fragment of the rock, had already laid aside his knife and tomahawk, and was in the act of taking the eagles' plume from his head, and smoothing the solitary tuft of hair in readiness to perform its last and revolting office. His countenance was composed, though thoughtful, while his dark gleaming eyes were gradually losing the fierceness of the combat in an expression better suited to the change he expected momentarily to undergo."1

He then began the usual custom of boasting of his deeds—of bravery and successes against his enemy, ending by expressing the wish that his captors would come speedily to work their wills upon him. His actual death as pictured in "The Pioneers" is characterized by fortitude and an exhilarated happiness. The Leatherstocking interprets the old sagamore's feelings at that time to a companion as follows:

> ".....he knows his end is at hand as well as you or I; but, so far from thinking it a loss, he believes it to be a great gain. He is old and stiff,, and you have made the game so scarce and shy, that better shots than him find it hard to get a livelihood. Now he thinks he shall travel where it will always be good hunting; where no wicked or unjust Indian can go; and where he shall meet all of his tribe together agin. There's not much loss in that, to a

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-82

man whose hands are hardly fit for basket-making. Loss! if there be any loss, 'twill be for me. I'm sure after he's gone, there'll be but little left for me but to follow." 1

Mr. Grant, a minister, who had been attempting to convert Chingachgook to his christina way of thinking on religious questions, was grieved by the Indian's total indifference to his entreaties. The old scout explained:

> "He hasn't seen a Moravian priest sin' the war; and it's hard to keep them from going back to their native ways."
>
> ....
>
> "No-no- he trusts only to the Great Spirit of the savages, and to his own good deeds. He thinks like all his people, that he's to be young agin, and to hunt, and be happy to the end of etarnity. It's pretty much the same with all colors, parson. I could never bring myself to think that I shall meet with these hounds, or my piece, in another world; though the thought of leaving them forever sometimes brings hard feelings over me, and makes me cling to life with a greater craving than beseems three-score-and-ten."2

Mohegan's farewell to his companion gives further insight into their beliefs:

> "Hawkeye, my fathers call me to the happy hunting-grounds. The path is clear, and the eyes of Mohegan grow young. I look--but I see no white-skins; there are none to be seen but just and brave Indians. Farewell, Hawkeye--you shall go with the Fire-eater and the Young Eagle to the white man's heaven; but I go after my fathers. Let the bow, and tomahawk, and pipe, and the wampum of Mohegan be laid in his grave; for when he starts'twill be in the night, like a warrior on a war-party, and he can not stop to seek them."3.

1. Cooper: The Pioneers, p-409
2. Ibid: p-410-11
3. Ibid: p-410

According to an Indian's belief in the virtue of a warrior's betraying no physical weakness, an Indian wishes to die in a manner to win applause among his fellowmen. In "Deerslayer" and Indian secretly regrets "that none of his tribe were present to witness his stoicism, under extreme bodily suffering, and the firmness with which he met his end." He attempted to express his appreciation to Deerslayer for the consideration shown him, and especially for sparing his scalp. The scout says,

> "No, no---warrior, hand of mine shall never molest your scalp, and so your soul may rest in peace on the p'int of making a decent appearance, when the body comes to join it in your own land of the spirits."
>
> "..... ...Then he placed the body of the dead man in a sitting posture, with its back against the little rock, taking the necessary care to prevent it from falling or in any way settling into an attitude that might be thought unseemly by the sensitive, though mild notions of the Indian."1

The custom of assuming a sitting posture at death seems to have been a common one among the Indians.

We are given one example of funeral obsequies---those for Uncas and Cora, two characters in "The Last of the Mohicans." They continued from early dawn till twilight, throughout which time the Delaware nation maintained a breathing stillness that was only broken by an occasional stiffled sob, and the ceremonies in connection with the dead. All eyes were centered on the objects of their grief, and great deference was shown the chief mourners.

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-130-1

"Seated, as in life, with his form and limbs arranged in grave and decent composure, Uncas appeared arrayed in the most gorgeous ornaments that the wealth of the tribe could furnish. Rich plumes nodded above his head; wampum, gorgets, bracelets, and medals, adorned his person in profusion; though his dull eye and vacant lineaments too strongly contradicted the idle tale of pride they would convey.

"Directly in front of the corpse Chingachgook was placed, without arms, paint, or adorment of any sort, except the bright-blue blazonry of his race, that was indeliby impressed on his naked bosom. During the long period that the tribe had been thus collected, the Mohican warrior had kept a steady, anxious look on the cold and senseless countenance of his son. So riveted and intense had been that gaze, and so changeless his attitude, that a stranger might not have told the living from the dead, but for the occasional gleamings of a troubled spirit that shot athwart the dark visage of one, and the death-like calm that had forever settled on the lineaments of the other."1

A temporary grave was made for the young chief, "for it was proper that, at some future day, his bones should rest among those of his own people."

.....

"The body was deposited in an attitude of repose, facing the rising sun, with the implements of war and of the chase at hand, in readiness for the final journey. An opening was left in the shell, by which it was protected from the soil, for the spirit to communicate with its earthly tenement, when necessary; and the whole was concealed from the instinct and protected from the ravages of beast of prey, with an ingenuity peculiar to the natives."2

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-379-80
2. Ibid: p-389-90

The girls strewed sweet-scented herbs and forest flowers on the bier of Cora. Her body was deposited in a shell ingeniously and not inelegantly fabricated of birchbark. Her grave was also concealed by leaves and other natural and customary objects. The ceremony, which consisted chiefly of song will be described in the section under that name.

When Hard-Heart, a young Pawnee Chief in "The Prairie" was contemplating death; he requested that his colt be slain on his grave saying:

> "Hard-Heart will ride his horse to the blessed prairies, and will come before the Master of Life like a chief!"1

A chief in "Oak Openings", after telling the ill-fated missionary that his soldier friend would go along with him on his death journey, added:

> "It will be convenient to my brother to have a hunter with him; the path is so long, he will be hungry before he gets to the end. The warrior knows how to use a musket and we shall put his arms with him in his grave."2

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-311
2. Ibid: Oak Openings, p-375-6

His Religious Beliefs

The religious beliefs of the Indian are so thoroughly interwoven with all of their practices that previous discussions have already revealed many of them. Their idea that after death, the good warriors do nothing but fish and hunt over the most agreeable hunting-grounds and among game that is never out of season, and which is just active and instinctive enough to give a pleasure to death is explained by Leatherstocking in "Deerslayer".[1] Wicked Indians are obliged "to carry amunition, and to look on without sharing in the sport, and to cook, and to light the fires, and do everything that isn't manful." Or, in the words of the Delaware, ".....unjust Indians and cowards, will have to sneak in with the dogs and the wolves, to get their venison for their lodges."[2]

Different nations called their "Great Spirit" by different names. Among the Delaware, he was the Manitto; among the Sioux Wahcondah. The evil spirit of the latter was Wahconshecheh. In "Redskins" we read,

> "The Great Spirit of the Indian and the Great Spirit of the white man are alike; so are the wicked spirits. There is no difference in this." 3

In "The Last of the Mohicans" Leatherstocking goes further in this comparison of Christian and Indian beliefs:

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-476-7
2. Ibid: p-496
3. Ibid: Redskins, p-484

"Even the Mingo adores but the true and living God. 'Tis a wicked fabrication of the whites, and I say it to the shame of my color, that would make the warrior bow down before images of his own creation. It is true they endeavor to make truces with the wicked one--as who would not with an ememy he cannot conquer?--but they look up with favor and assistance to the Great and Good Spirit only."1

The idea apparently conveyed in the last paragraph, that the Indians believed in a one all-powerful Diety is not substantiated by present day facts on the subject. One hesitates to say, however, how much Cooper is allowing for the influence of the missionaries among the Indians. In another section, a chief who had started on the warpath with his companions, because of a serious offense committed against his tribe, was not in too great a hurry to stop and address the animals from which his "totem" the symbol of his tribe, bore its name. The author says:

"There would have been a species of profanity in the omission, had this man passed so powerful a community of his fancied kindred without bestowing some evidence of his regard. Accordingly he passed, and spoke in words as kind and friendly as if he were addressing more intelligent beings. He called the animals his cousins, and reminded them that his protecting influence was the reason they remained unharmed, while so many avaricious traders were prompting the Indians to take their lives. He promised a continuance of his favors and admonished them to be grateful. After which he spoke of the expedition in which he was himself engaged, and intimated, though with sufficient delicacy and circumlocution, the expediency of bestowing on their relative a portion of that wisdom for which they were so renowned."2

The animals addressed in this instance were beavers. A

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-252
2. Ibid: The Last of the Mohicans, p-317

footnote explains that these harangues with beasts were frequent among the Indians; that they often addressed their victims in this way reproaching them for cowardice, or commending their resolution, as they may happen to exhibit fortitude or the reverse in suffering.

The Indians, as we have seen, also believed in magic power, hence their fear of one class of medicine-men, whom they believed possessed power over wicked spirits. The author says,

> "Among the native tribes of the forest there were always two kinds of leeches to be met with. The one placed its whole dependence on the exercise of a supernatural power, and was held in greater veneration than their practice could at all justify; but the other was really endowed with great skill in the ordinary complaints of the human body....."1

Mention is made in several novels of the Indians' actual knowledge of healing with herbs, roots, bark, and the like; particularly of his ability to dress wounds, and such knowlegde of first-aid as one would naturally learn through experience.

In "The Last of the Mohicans," a person disguised as a medicine-man was asked if he could drive the evil spirit out of a young woman, who was then very ill. Consistent with his character, he attempted to perform all manner of

1. Cooper: The Pioneers, p-83

weird practices, uncouth rites, and incantations, under which the Indian conjurers are accustomed to conceal their ignorance and impotency. One is not surprised that among so much superstition such customs would thrive. The incident as related is ludicrous, if not pathetic in part.

Deerslayer says that the reason the redskins honored and respected them who fall short of their proper share of reason was because they knew that the Evil Spirit delighted more to dwell in an artful body, than in one that has no cunning to work upon.

The whole life of the Indian was a perpetual struggle to win the favor of the good spirit and to appease the evil one.

Like other people, they believed the Great Spirit was like themselves in color. Their Manitou did not talk and walk with them, but only spoke through thunder. He was always appealed to before every undertaking. In the next section, we shall see the ceremony that preceded the formal going on the war-path.

The natural piety of the Indians in matters religious is clearly shown in these novels, but several references are made to the difficulty of converting the Indian to Christianity. Apparently it was not as difficult to make them understand some of the principles of faith, as it was

to reconcile them with the fact that the white man preached one thing and actually practiced another. An Indian makes the following comments on what a missionary had told him:

> "We do not expect that all the Great Spirit does can be clear to us Injins..... ..We know very little; he knows everything. Why should we think to know all that he knows. We do not. .....Indians can believe without seeing. They are not squaws that wish to look behind every bush....."1

The following conversation between a white man and an Indian is self-explanatory:

> "I wish I could persuade you to throw away that disgusting thing at your belt. Remember, Chippewa, you are now among Christians and ought to do as Christians wish."
>
> "What Christians do, eh?" returned the Indian, with a sneer. Get drunk like whiskey Centre, dere? Cheat poor redman; den get down on knee and look up at Manitou? Dat what Christian do, eh?"
>
> "They who do such things are Christians but in name; you must think better of such as are Christians in fact."
>
> "Ebberybody call himself Christian, tell you—all pale-face Christian, dey say. Now, listen to Chippewa. Once talk long wit' missionary—tell about Christian—what Christian do—what Christian say--how he eat, how he sleep, how he drink! ——all good—wish Pigeonswing (himself) Christian—den 'member so 'ger at garrison—no eat, no sleep, no drink Christian fashion--- do ebberyt'ing so' ger fashion—swear, fight, cheat, get drunk—wus dan Injun—dat Christian, eh?"

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-379

"No, that is not acting like a Christian; and I fear very few of us who call ourselves by that name act as if we were Christians, in truth," said Le Bourdon, conscious of the justice of the Chippewa's accusation.

"Just dat--now I get him--ask missionary, one day, where all Christians go to, so that Injun can't find him--none in woods--none on prairie--none in garrison--none at Mack' naw--none at Detroit--when all go to, den, so Injun can't find him, on'y in Missionary talk?"

"I am curious to know what answer your missionary made to that question".

"Well, tell you: say, on 'y one in ten t'ousant raal Christian 'mong pale-face, dough all call himself Christian! Dat, what Injun t'ink queer, eh?"1

One other example will suffice to substantiate this point. Indian John is talking to a young woman in "The Pioneers."

"John was young when his tribe gave away the country, in council, from where the blue mountain stands above the water, to where the Susquehanna is hid by the trees. All this, and all that grew in it, and all that walked over it, they gave to the Fire-eater, for they loved him. He was strong, and they were women, and he helped them. No Delaware would kill a deer that ran in his woods, nor stop a bird that flew over his land; for it was his. Has John lived in peace? Daughter, since John was young, he has been the white man from Frontiac come down on his white brothers at Albany and fight. Did they fear God? He has seen his English and his American fathers burying their tomahawks in each other's

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p-108-9

brains, for this very land. Did they fear, God and live in peace? He has seen the land pass away from the Fire-eater, and his children, and the child of his child, and a new chief set over the country. Did they live in peace who did this? did they fear God?"

"Such is the custom of the whites, John. Do not the Delawares fight, and exchange their land for powder, and blankets, and merchandise?"

"The Indian turned his dark eyes on his companion and kept them there with a scrutiny that alarmed her a little.

"Where are the blankets and merchandise that bought the right of the Fire-eater?" he replied more animated in voice; "are they with him in his wigwam? Did they say to him, Brother, sell us your land, and take this gold, this silver, these blankets, these rifles, or even this rum? No; they tore it from him, as a scalp is torn from an enemy: and they that did it looked not behind them, to see whether he lived or died. Do such men live in peace and fear the Great Spirit?"1

We have already told how Indian John, or Chingachgook refused Christian services at his death. The young chief Conanchet, who had been subject to Christian influences, did the same.[2]

One chief's conversion began with the moment that he actually saw and heard a missionary, who was about to be put to death, pray for his enemies. Another Indian, who lived for a long period of years with a chaplin away from the settlements was also converted in his old age. Susquesus in

1. Cooper: The Pioneers, p-390-1
2. Ibid: The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, chap. 31

"Redskins" lived with the Littlepages through three generations, but could never be reconciled to the white man's saying one thing and doing another.

Indian Language

It is only natural that the language used by the Indian should attract attention. In this study we have had abundant examples of translations from his own language and of his stilted, broken English. The latter is naturally not that of his own tongue as spoken among themselves.

Perhaps the most striking quality of his language is the abundant use of metaphors and comparisons. He forms a mental picture of what he wishes to say and talks about this image rather than the thing itself. The listener must be able to understand the image. As might be expected, he draws practically all of his figures from nature, that is so close to his existence, and expresses his wonder and love of it in his comparisons. Such language would naturally tend to be poetic. It also has the song-like quality of rhythm, which is no doubt due to the fact that songs and chants are so intimately interwoven in his activities.

A cold logic, keen sarcasm and irony, clever manipulation of words are other noticeable characteristics of his use of language. Nevertheless his words are simple and sentences void of complexity. Repetition is used effectively, and short, sententious sentences are interspersed. Cooper was the first to express and fix the figure of the American Indian. The attributes he gives it are in accord with the

findings of modern research on the subject.

Indian personal names are significant inasmuch as they are invariably indicative of the traits of the bearer. The Leatherstocking says that an Indian is generally what his name signifies. Names of warriors are usually won by their personal prowess, or the lack of it. The Leatherstocking was called Pathfinder, Deerslayer, Hawkeye as he became proficient in the abilities suggested by each. The names given to girls are more poetic; for example, Drooping Lily, Wild Rose, Dew-of-June. It has been discovered that the equivalent of the name Wish-ton-Wish in the Indian language is prairie-dog and not whip-poor-will as the author supposed. This, however, is a minor point.

Cooper explains that the meaning of Indian words is much governed by emphasis and tones. The voice of the red-man, as we have seen, is very flexible and expressive. The adjectives mild, musical, and guttural are generally used in describing his speaking voice.

Song and Dance

Song is a part of the religious worship of the Indian. We have quoted Mohegan's death song to the Manitto. In the elaborate ceremony that precedes the formal going on the warpath, song and dance form the chief part. Such a ceremony is vividly described in "The Last of the Mohicans." It was performed around the trunk of a tree that had been ceremoniously stripped of its bark and branches and colored with stripes of dark red paint, indicative of the hostile designs of the chiefs. After this had been done, Uncas, their acknowledged leader, appeared, dressed in his scouty war attire, and with one-half of his features hid under a cloud of threatening black.

> "Uncas moved with a slow and dignified tread toward the post, which he immediately commenced encircling with a measured step, not unlike an ancient dance, raising his voice, at the same time, in the wild and irregular chant of his war-song. the notes were in the extremes of human sounds; being sometimes melancholy and exquisitively plaintive, even rivaling the melody of birds---and then, by sudden and startling transitions, causing the auditors to tremble by their depth and energy. The words were few and oft repeated, proceeding gradually from a sort of invocation or hymn to the Diety, to an intimation of the warrior's object, and terminating, as they commenced, with an acknowledgment of his own dependence on the Great Spirit. If it were possible to translate the comprehensive and melodious language in which he spoke, the ode might read something like the following:

"Manitto! Manitto! Manitto!
Thou are great, thou are good, thou art wise
Manitto! Manitto!
Thou are just

"In the heavens, in the clouds, oh! I see
Many spots--many dark, many red.
In the heavens, oh! I see
Many clouds

"In the woods, in the air, oh! I hear
The whoop, the long yell, and the cry.
In the woods, oh! I hear
The loud whoop!

"Manitto! Manitto! Manitto!
I am weak, thou art strong; I am slow--
Manitto! Manitto!
Give me aid."

"At the end of what might be called each verse he made a pause by raising a note louder and longer than common, that was peculiarly suited to the sentiment just expressed. The first close was solemn, and intended to convey the idea of veneration; the sceond descriptive, bordering on the alarming; and the third was the well-known and terrific war-whoop which burst from the lips of the young warrior like a combination of all the frightful sounds of battle. The last was like the first, humble and imploring. Three times did he repeat this song, and as often did he encircle the post in his dance."1

At the close of the first turn, the renowned warriors began enlisting singly in the song and dance until all were numbered in its mazes. The spectacle was now wildly terrific; the visages of the warriors fierce-looking and menacing; their tones deep and gutteral. Uncas announced his leadership of the party by striking his tomahawk deep into the

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-355-6

post and shouting his battle-cry.

> "It was a signal which awakened all the slumbering passions of the nation. A hundred youths, who had hitherto been restrained by the diffidence of years, rushed in a frantic body on the fancied emblem of their enemy, and severed it asunder, splinter by splinter, until nothing remained of the trunk but its roots in the earth. During this moment of tumult the most ruthless deeds of war were performed on the fragments of the tree, with as much apparent ferocity as if they were the living victims of their cruelty. Some were scalped, and some received the keen and trembling axe, and others suffered by thrusts from the fatal knife. In short, the manifestations of zeal and fierce delight were so great and unequivocal that the expedition was declared to be a war of the nation."[1]

In "The Prairie", a group of old hags in order to incite themselves to a state necessary for their murderous intent, chant "a low monotomous song that recalled the losses of their people in various conflicts with the whites, and which extolled the pleasures and glory of revenge."[2]

They were given knives to slay some prisoners as the best means of getting rid of them, while the men were engaged in defending the encampment.

> "Each of the crones, as she received the weapon, commenced a slow and measured, but ungainly step, around the savage, (who distributed the weapons) until the whole were circling him in a sort of magic dance. The movements were timed in some degree by the words of their songs, as were the gestures by the ideas. When

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-356-7
2. Ibid: The Prairie, p-363

> they spoke of their losses they tossed their long, straight locks of gray into the air, or suffered them to fall in confusion upon their withered necks; but, as the sweetness of returning blow for blow was touched upon by them, it was answered by a common howl as well as by gestures that were sufficiently expressive of the manner in which they were exciting themselves to the necessary state of fury."1

The ceremony at the last rites over Cora and Uncas was chiefly in chants "thrillingly soft and wailing" by the young women of the nation.

> "The words were connected by no regular continuation, but as one ceased another took up the eulogy or lamentation, whichever it might be called, and gave vent to her emotions in such language as was suggested by her feelings and the occasion." 2

Their chant varied in tone and pitch with each change of subject.

> ".....nothing was audible but the murmurs of the music--relieved, as it was, by those occasional bursts of grief which might be called its choruses." 3

The entire assembly save Chingachgook seemed charmed by the tones of voices so sweet. The wildest nor the most pathetic parts of the lamentations did not divert his gaze from the lineaments of his beloved son. Speeches of adulation were sung or spoken by all of the gifted men of the tribe.

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-363
2. Ibid: The Last of the Mohicans, p-381
3. Ibid: p-383

"Then a low, deep sound was heard, like the suppressed accompaniment of distant music, rising just high enough on the air to be audible, and yet so indistinctly as to leave its character and the place whence it proceeded alike matters of conjecture. It was, however, succeeded by another and another strain, each in a higher key, until they grew on the ear, first in long-drawn and oft-repeated interjections, and finally in words. The lips of Chingachgook had so far parted as to announce that it was the monody of the father.. ....The strains rose just so loud as to become intelligible, and then grew fainter and more trembling, until they finally sunk on the ear, as if borne away by a passing breath of wind."1

All ears were directed to the grief-stricken father, and realizing the depth of his suffering, they relaxed in their attention to his son, and delicately turned to the obsequies of Cora.

Song and dance were used on all festive occasions. When the warriors returned triumphant from battle, songs of triumph formed a part of their reward.

On several occasions reference is made in these novels to the effects of song on the Indian and his love for it. When David sang on the battlefield the savages apparently forgot their mission and stopped to listen. They openly expressed their astonishment, admiration and satisfaction

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-385

"at the firmness with which the white warrior sang his death-song."[1]

At another time when the young man sang, "The Indians riveted their eyes on a rock and listened with an attention that seemed to turn them into stone."[2]

An Indian in "The Chainbear" also declares his love for song.

It is difficult to reconcile the following statement found in "Redskins" with the above:

> "I took a hurdy-gurdy, and began to play a lively air.....No visible effect was produced on Susquesus, (an Indian) unless a slight shade of contempt was visible on his dark features.
>
> .....
>
> There was nothing surprising in this, the indifference of the Indian to melody being almost as marked as the Negro's sensitiveness to its power."3

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p-196
2. Ibid: p-61
3. Ibid: The Redskins, p-130

The Indian Woman

We are not given a very romantic picture of the life of the average Indian woman in these pages. While several love affairs are recorded, when her position is contrasted with that of her fortunate pale-face sister, as the author does, one is likely to regard her with compassion.

We shall first consider the encampment, which, for her, was home.

Her Home

We are given several glimpses of encampments in these novels. These differ according to the nature of the tribes inhabiting them. One, of a Huron tribe, consisted of some fifty or sixty lodges, rudely fabricated of logs, brush and earth intermingled, and arranged with very little attention to neatness or beauty. As usual, it was unguarded, the natives depending more on the secrecy of their position than on sentinels. Scouts were generally on the look-out at a distance from the settlement, and if the stranger succeeded in eluding these, he was not likely to meet with guards nearer home. The Indians also placed great confidence in their knowledge of the signs of the forest, and of the long and difficult path that separated them from those whom they had most cause to fear.

A more detailed description is given of the temporary encampment of a horde of wandering Sioux, who had been hunting under the direction of their chief on those grounds which separated the stationary abodes of his people from those of

the Pawnee tribes. It consisted of about a hundred lodges arranged without the least attention to order, on the edge of a table-land that overlooked a river. It was not military now in the slightest degree protected from surprise by its position or defenses. It bore the appearance of having been inhabited longer than its occupants had originally intended, but it was not lacking in signs of readiness for a hasty, or even a compelled, departure.

> "The lodges were tents of skin, high, conical, and of the most simple and primitive construction. The shield, the quiver, the lance, and the bow of its master, were to be seen suspended from a light post before the opening or door of each habitation. The different domestic implements of his one, two, or three wives, as the braves was of greater or lesser renown, were carelessly thrown at its side, and here and there the round, full, patient countenance of an infant might be found peeping from its comfortless wrappers of bark, as, suspended by a deer-skin from the same post, it rocked in the passing air. Children of a larger growth were tumbling over each other in piles, the males, even at that early age, making themselves distinguished for that species of domination, which in after-life was to mark the vast distinction between the sexes. Youths were in the bottom, essaying their juvenile powers in curbing the wild steeds of their fathers, while here and there a truant girl was to be seen stealing from her labors to admire their fierce and impatient daring." 1

The following paragraph refers especially to the tent of their chief, Mahtoree, who has been introduced earlier in these pages. It was

> "-----vividly emblazoned with the history of one of his own boldest and most commended exploits, and ---- stood a little apart from the rest, as if to denote it was the residence of some privileged individual of the band. The shield and quiver at its entrance were richer than common, and the high distinction of a fusee attested the importance of its proprietor. In every other particular it was rather

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p. 300 — /

> distinguished by signs of poverty than of wealth. The domestic utensils were fewer in number and simpler in their forms than those to be seen about the openings of the meanest lodges, nor was there a single one of those highly prized articles of civilized life, which were occasionally bought of the traders, in bargains that bore so hard on the ignorant natives. All these had been bestowed, as they had been acquired, by the generous chief, on his subordinates, to purchase an influence that might render him the master of their lives and persons; a species of wealth that was certainly more noble in itself, and far dearer to his ambition. "

In the discussion of the chiefs, we have seen how influential this Teton was. From this account of his tent some of the means he used for preserving his authority are revealed. The interior of the lodge is next described.

> "The appearance of the interior of the lodge corresponded with its exterior. It was larger than most of the others, more finished in its form, and finer in its materials; but there its superiority ceased. Nothing could be more simple and republican than the form of living that the ambitious and powerful Teton chose to exhibit to the eyes of his people. A choice collection of weapons for the chase, and three or four medals, bestowed by the traders and political agents of the Canadas as a homage to, or rather an acknowledgment of, his rank, with a few of the most indispensable articles of personal accommodation, composed its furniture. It abounded in neither venison nor the wild beef of the prairies; its crafty owner having well understood that the liberality of a single individual would be abundantly rewarded by the daily contributions of a band. Although as pre-eminent in the chase as in war, a deer or buffalo was never seen to enter whole into his lodge. In return, an animal was rarely brought into the encampment, that did not contribute to support the family of Mahtoree. But the policy of the chief seldom permitted more to remain than sufficed for the wants of the day, perfectly sure that all must suffer before hunger, the bane of savage life, could lay its fell fangs on so important a victim.
>
> "Immediately beneath the favorite bow of the chief, and encircled in a sort of magical ring of spears, shields, lances, and arrows, all of which had in their time done good service, was suspended

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p-314

> the mysterious and sacred medicine bag. It was highly wrought in wampum, and profusely ornamented with beads and procupines' quills, after the most cunning devices of Indian ingenuity." 1

The attention lavished on this emblem of supernatural agency, by the chief, was in order that he "might be seen of men"; for we have already intimated the freedom of his religious beliefs.

Additional information is given in connection with another Huron encampment that consisted of some fifteen or twenty huts constructed somewhat similarly to those already described. In the centre of the huts a fire had been kindled against the roots of a living oak that sufficed for the whole party, the weather being too mild to require it for any purpose than cooking.

> "Of furniture, they had next to none. Cooking utensils of the simplest sort were lying near the fire; a few articles of clothing were to be seen in or around the huts; rifles, horns, and pouches leaned against the trees, or were suspended from the lower branches; and the carcasses of two or three deer were stretched to view on the same natural shambles.
>
> "As the encampment was in the midst of a dense wood, the eye could not take in its "tout ensemble" at a glance; but hut after hut started out of the gloomy picture, as one gazed about him in quest of objects. There was no centre unless the fire could be so considered - no open area where the possessors of this rude village might congregate; but all was dark, covert, and cunning, like its owners. A few children strayed from hut to hut, giving the spot a little the air of domestic life; and the suppressed laugh and low voices of the women occasionally broke in upon the deep stillness of the sombre forest. As for the men, they either ate, slept, or examined their arms. They conversed but little, and then usually apart, or in groups withdrawn from the females; whilst an air of untiring watchfulness and apprehension of danger seemed to be blended with their slumbers." 2

Relaxation and general indolence usually followed the hearty meal at the close of the day's labor. While the men

1. Cooper: The Prairie, p.316.
2. Cooper: The Deerslayer, p.196-7.

kept their arms near them, the women kept their children. The laughter and chatter of the younger women was in a rebuked and quiet manner, yet they seemed light-hearted and happy. Reference is made to their soft and melodious voices. The chiefs generally assigned the aged women the duty of guarding captive females.

Her Young

Many intimations are given of the love which an Indian woman bears her child, but very little space is devoted to the child in these novels. Reference has been made to their play, to their interest in the activities of their elders, and to their early acquirement of the pertinent traits of Indian character. As soon as the boys are of the age to go to the hunt, and on the warpath, they forsake the women and associate with men, - such sharp distinctions are drawn between the sexes.

It is the ambition of every lad to go on the warpath. A lad in "The Last of the Mohicans" felt honored that he was given a dangerous mission to perform. Although wounded as a consequence, he would not mention it when questioned, but suffered patiently and proudly. He later stalked among the fellows of his own age, an object of general admiration and envy.

Two rather full-length portraits are given of Indian youths who were old enough to follow the hunt, or to go on the warpath. One is Uncas in "The Last of the Mohicans"; the other, Conanchet, in "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish." Both of these lads were young chiefs. We shall first consider Uncas.

The beauty of his stature resembled that of a young god: Moreover, he was brave, courteous, and highly skilled in wood-craft. In common with other Indian youths, he always showed great deference to his elders, and accepted censure

graciously. While his bearing was dignified, he was also modest and unassuming. In spite of the fact that he frequently made discoveries before his older companions, he did not reveal them until requested to do so, and then with the greatest diffidence.

When moments of leisure and privacy presented themselves on the warpath, the father and son were affectionate and natural. The text reads:

> "Left now in a measure to themselves, the Mohicans, whose time had been so much devoted to the interests of others, seized the moment to devote some attention to themselves. Casting off, at once, the grave and austere demeanor of an Indian chief, Chingachgook commenced speaking to his son in the soft and playful tones of affection. Uncas gladly met the familiar air of his father; and, ----- a complete change was effected in the manner of his (the scout's) associates.
>
> "It is impossible to describe the music of their language (while thus engaged in laughter and endearments) in such a way as to render it intelligible to those whose ears have never listened to its melody. The compass of their voices, particularly that of the youth, was wonderful -- extending from the deepest bass to tones that were even feminine in softness. The eyes of the father followed the plastic and ingenius movements of his son with open delight, and he never failed to smile in reply to the other's contagious but low laughter. While under the influence of these gentle and natural feelings, no trace of ferocity was to be seen in the softened features of the sagamore. His figured panoply of death looked more like a disguise assumed in mockery than a fierce annunciation of a desire to carry destruction and desolation in his footsteps.
>
> "After an hour passed in the indulgence of their better feelings, Chingachgook abruptly announced his desire to sleep, by wrapping his head in his blanket and stretching his form on the naked earth. The merriment of Uncas instantly ceased; and carefully raking the coals in such a manner that they would

> impart their warmth to his father's feet, the youth sought his own pillow among the ruins of the place." 1

The writer has not hesitated to quote the entire of such an unsual picture of Indian life. One can easily imagine the tenderness of the mother when the father reacted in this manner. On another occasion similar to this one, Chingachgook related to his son, in his own language, and with the pride of a conqueror, the brief history of a skirmish that had been fought on the spot they happened to be.

Conanchet

Conanchet was made a prisoner by a devout Puritan family while he was out scouting around their premises. At that time he looked to be a lad of about fifteen years of age. He was not questioned immediately because it was considered useless, his captors knowing that it was folly to attempt to make an Indian talk when he didn't choose to do so. He made no immediate attempts to escapė, but refused to be fettered, showing his disdain of such treatment by a look of scorn and haughtiness. Cooper describes him as follows:

> "In height, form, and attitudes, he was a model of active, natural, and graceful boyhood. But while his limbs were so fair in their proportions, they were scarcely muscular; still every movement exhibited a freedom and ease which announced the grace of childhood, without the smallest evidence of that restraint which creeps into our air as the factitious feelings of later life begin to assert their influence." 2

When he was questioned he did not betray by gesture or sound the purpose of his visit, his own name, or that of his

1. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p. 228-3
2. Cooper: The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p.60.

tribe. He would not play with the children of the household, but spent his time gazing wistfully in the direction of the forest where he first drew breath. He would not wear clothes that were made with an eye of especially appealing to his Indian tastes, but persisted in his painted waistcoat and leggings even in cold weather. All attempts to allure him into civilized habits were completely unsuccessful. He was usually a silent and apparently uninterested observer of the happenings which went on around him; but he met the scrutiny of his person or condition with pride, haughtiness, and stern defiance. Already he bore himself with the dignity and self-control of a warrior.

It was with extraordinary care that he was kept in captivity. One day, however, out of sympathy for his loneliness and pent-up desires, he was permitted to go on a hunting party as a kind of sacred trust. Although he did not return with the others he came in later in his usual noiseless manner. That very same night Indians made an attack on the Puritan's dwelling. To the credit of the youth, it must be said, however, that out of the love which he bore the young mistress of the household for the tenderness shown him, he loyally protected her children from being massacred. All of the occupants were thought to have been lost save the little daughter who was taken to his own tribe where she later became his highly cherished and devoted wife.

The Crones

We have already noted the part that the crones among the women took in the torture of captives. On one occasion some old hags were given knives to slay some captives as the easiest way of getting rid of them, while the men were busy in a skirmish with the enemy. They were often more eager for the torture than the men, and delighted in such entertainments, the author says, as the Roman matron did in the fights of the gladiators. It seems that their interest in the councils was to help bring to pass the most dire vengeance on their victims. Lives of hardship and bitterness had apparently wrought such changes in these old women as to make them seem scarcely a counterpart of their younger sisters.

When Deerslayer was taken prisoner by the Hurons, the old women showed by their scowling looks and angry gestures, that they would have him tortured; but a group of Indian girls cast stolen glances of pity and regret at him. When he refused to take the old Sumach, whose husband and brother he had killed, for a wife, the aged women were loud in their expressions of disgust, and the Sumach showed her wrath by insisting that he be subjected to the most severe torture. It was her right to decide what manner of revenge she would have.

She was prevailed upon, however, to make an appeal to the prisoner's sense of justice, before the last measure was resorted to. The author explains:

> "As the duties of a mother were thought to be paramount to all other considerations the widow felt

> none of the embarrassment in preferring her claims, to which even a female fortune-hunter among ourselves might be liable." 1

Besides, there was some attraction in becoming the wife of so renowned a hunter, among the females of the tribe. Leading her children by the hand, she presented her case. She offered to forget the deaths of her husband and brother and enter with her children into his lodge and say:

> "See; these are your children - they are also mine; feed us, and we will live with you."2

She explained that her boy had no one to teach him how to kill the deer, or to take scalps, and that her girl would be handicapped in matrimony by not having a father in her lodge. But her plea was in vain. The effect of the prisoner's down right refusal of her offer was most disastrous on the woman. We are told:

> "If there was anything like tenderness in her bosom, - and no woman was, probably, ever entirely without that feminine quality, - it all disappeared at this plain announcement. Fury, rage, mortified pride, and a volcano of wrath, burst out at one explosion, converting her into a sort of maniac as it might be at the touch of a magician's wand. Without deigning a reply in words, she made the arches of the forest ring with screams, and then flew at her victim, seizing him by the hair, which she appeared resolute to draw out by the roots. It was some time before her grasp could be loosened. Fortunately for the prisoner, (who was bound) her rage was blind, since his total helplessness left him entirely at her mercy; had it been better directed, it might have proved fatal before any relief could have been offered. As it was, she did succeed in wrenching out two or three handfuls of hair, before the young men could tear her away from her victim." 3

Cooper explains that the Indian females, when girls, are usually mild and submissive, with musical tones, pleasant

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1. Cooper: The Deerslayer, p. 537.
2. Ibid.: p.538.
3. Ibic.: p.539.

voices, and merry laughs; but toil and suffering generally deprive them of most of these advantages by the time they have reached an age which the Sumach had long since passed. The latter had so recently been deemed handsome in tribe as not to have yet realized the great influence that time and exposure had produced on her.

How the Men Regarded Her:

Her status - duties - marriage

Much of the information in these novels regarding the Indian woman comes through opinions of them expressed by Indian men and the Leatherstocking. In "Deerslayer", the accurate interpretation of the character of a woman by some Indians led a white man to remark:

> "After all, what schoolmaster is a match for an Indian, in looking into natur'? Some people think they are only good on a trail or the war-path, but I say that they are philosephers, and understand a man as well as they understand a beaver, and a woman as well as they understand either."1

Deerslayer tells us that an Indian is always tender, touching a young woman's good name.

In "The Last of the Mohicans" a companion of the scout's expresses great anxiety about the treatment that some young women would receive at the hands of their Indian captors. The Leatherstocking replies:

> "----I know your thoughts and shame be it to our color that you have reason for them; but he who thinks that even a Mingo would ill treat a woman, unless it be to tomahawk her, knows nothin' of Indian natur' or the laws of the woods.-----"2

In "Oak Openings" the Chippewa expresses himself very freely on the subject of woman to a pale-face friend, in the presence of a girl whom the latter admired. His idea of a proposal is:

> "You ask; she hab - know squaw well - always like warrior to ask him fuss; den say, yes." 3

When told that it takes a pale-face girl some time to know a youth he replied:

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1. Cooper: The Deerslayer, p.23.
2. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p.239.
3. Ibid: Oak Openings, p-151

"Juss so wid redskin - sometime don't know till too late! See plenty dat, in wigwam."

"Then it is very much in the wigwams as it is in the houses. I have heard this before."

"Why not same? - skin make no difference - pale-face spile squaw, too - make too much of her."

"That can never be! exclaimed Le Bourdon, earnestly.-------"

"Easy 'nough spile squaw," rejoined the Chippewa. "What she good for, don't make her work? Can't go on war-path - can't take scalp - can't shoot deer - can't hunt - can't kill warrior - so muss work. Dat what squaw good for."

"That may do among redmen, but we pale-faces find squaws good for something else - we love them and take care of them ----; and try to make them as comfortable and happy as we can."

"Dat good talk for young squaw's ear," returned the Chippewa, a little contemptuously as to manner; though his real respect for the bee-hunter, ----- kept him a little within bounds - "but it bess not take nobody in. What Injin say to squaw, he do - what pale-face say, he no do."

"I shall be honest, and own that there may be some truth in "that" - for the Injun promises nothing, or next to nothing, and it is easy to square accounts in such cases. That white men undertake more than they can perform, is quite likely to be the fact. The Injun gets his advantage in this matter, by not even thinking of treating his wife as a woman should be treated."

"How should treat woman?" put in Pegeonswing with warmth. "When warrior eat venison, gib her rest, eh? Dot no good - what you call good, den? If good hunter hustand, she get 'nough - if ain't good hunter, she don't get 'nough. Just so wid Injun - sometime hungry, sometime full. Dat way to live!"

"Ay, that may be your redman's ways, but it is not the manner in which we wish to treat our wives. Ask pretty Margery, here, if she would be

> satisfied to wait until her husband had eaten his dinner, and then come for the scraps. No- no- Pigeonswing: we feed our women and children first, and come in last ourselves.
>
> "Dat good for papoose - he little; want venison - squaw tough; use to wait. Do her good." 1

It was Pigeonswing's idea that women were made to "work for warrior and cook his dinner"; to care for pappooses, hoe corn, and tend gardens.

Magua in "The Last of the Mohicans", in commenting on the fact that a pause was made in the journey for some women to dine, says,

> "The pale-faces makes themselves dogs to their women, --- and when they want to eat, their warriors must lay aside the tomahawk to feed their laziness." 2

The comprehensive comments of the author on this point are both interesting and enlightening. He says:

> "At all times the Indian warrior is apt to maintain the dignified and courteous bearing that has so often been marked in his race, but it is very seldom that he goes out of his way to manifest attention to squaws. Doubtless these men have the feelings of humanity, and love their wives and offspring like others; but it is so essential a part of their training to suppress the exhibition of such emotions, that it is seldom that mere looker-on has occasion to note them." 3
>
> "The reader is not to suppose, however, because the Indian pays but little attention to the squaws that he is without natural feeling or manliness of character. In some respects his chivalrous devotion to the sex is, perhaps, in no degree inferior to that class which makes a parade of sentiments, and this quite as much from convention and ostentation as from any other motive." 4

1. Cooper: Oak Openings, p.151-2-3.
2. Cooper: The Last of the Mohicans, p.42.
3. Cooper: Oak Openings: p.202-3.
4. Ibid.: p.211.

A chief in "Oak Openings" makes the following comments to his young pale-face friend, on how to get along with her husband, when she asks him:

> "I hope you think I shall have a good husband, Peter?"
>
> "Hope so, too- nebber know till time come. All good for little while - Injin good, squaw good. Juss like weadder. Sometime rain - simetime storm - sometime sunshine. Juss so wid Injun, juss so wid pale-face. No difference. All same. You see dat cloud? - he little now; but let wind blow, he grow big, and you see nuttin' but cloud. Let him have plenty of sunshine, and he go away; den all clear over head. Dat bess way to live wid husband." 1

On the subject of marriage, the Indian says:

> "Open wigwam door, and she come in. Dat 'nough. If she don't wish to come in, can't make her. Squaw go to warrior she likes; warrior aske squaw he likes. ---" 2

Deerslayer says that Indian weddings have no priests, and not much religion. Cooper substantiates these remarks by saying that the savage American is little given to abusing his power over female captives, and seldom takes into his lodge an unwilling squaw. The Indian often betrays his admiration for female captives of his own race and of the pale-faces as well. The author further explains that while rhapsody, and gallant speeches, and sonnets, form no part of Indian courtship, the language of admiration is so universal, through the eyes, that it is sufficiently easy of comprehension.

The Bee Hunter in "Oak Openings" was jealous of, and anxious about the attention a chief bestowed on the girl he loved, and urged her to marry him immediately as the wisest

1. Oak Openings, p.359
2. Ibid.: p.324.

and safest plan. In connection with this incident the author says that while it was not usual to do much violence to a female's inclinations on such occasions, it was not common to offer much opposition to those of a powerful warrior. The marriage tie, if it could be said to exist at all, however, was much respected; and it was far less likely that a married woman would be appropriated than one unmarried.

> "It is true, cases of an unscrupulous exercise of power are to be found among Indians, as well as among civilized men but they are rare, and usually much condemned." 1

An example of such an unscrupulous exercise of power is found in "The Prairie". Chief Mahtoree, who has been frequently mentioned in these pages, became enamored of a young pale-face woman, who was later taken captive by him. He knew very well that she was loved by a man who was made prisoner with her, although we are not told that he was aware of the fact that they were bride and groom. He apparently made no investigations on this point, however, and showed in no unmistakable manner his admiration of her. He first attempted to ride on the same horse with her, but when her husband objected, he diplomatically gave way.

When she was made captive, she was sent directly to the lodge of his favorite wife. The author tells us that it was his purpose to have this pale-face woman supplant this gifted young wife, and to get rid of the husband, who was made a prisoner with her, by recommending strongly to the council that he be put to death. Meanwhile he began wooing the young pale-face. No impression is given that he intended to use any

1. Oak Openings, p.331-2.

manner of coercion with her. We shall see that he considered his proposal an honor, since it came from the chief of a mighty tribe.

One's sympathy goes out to his young Indian wife in this matter. She had previously exerted the most powerful influence on her husband, but now the graces, the attachment, and the fidelity, of the young Indian no longer pleased her chief. She was, of all the Sioux girls, the lightest-hearted, and the most envied. She was called Tachechana or the fawn, being named for her playful and joyous nature. Her aged father was distinguished for his many deeds of bravery on the warpath, and her brothers had all sacrificed their lived for their tribe.

> "Numberless were the warriors who had sent presents to the lodge of her parents, but none of them were listened to until a messenger from the great Mahtoree had come. She was his third wife, it is true, but she was confessedly the most favored of them all. Their union had existed but two short seasons and its fruits now lay sleeping at her feet, wrapped in the customary ligatures of skin and bark, which form the swaddlings of an Indian infant." 1

Mahtoree had just returned from an expedition and had sent the two captive pale-face women, the one in whom he was interested and her friend, directly to his own lodge. The young squaw was seated on a low stool admiring the loveliness, and wondering at the strangeness of those beautiful captives; while at the same time awaiting the return of the successful Mahtoree, who had not been ashame to show towards her the tender feelings of a father and a husband in his moments of inaction.

1. The Prairie, p.318.

In spite of the presence of these strangers, he entered the lodge of his favorite wife with the tread and mien of a master. The rattling of his bracelets, and of the silver ornaments of his leggings betrayed his presence rather than his light tread. He ignored the faint expression of pleasure that burst from the lips of his youthful and secretly rejoicing wife upon seeing him, and directed all of his attentions to the captives, before whom he placed himself in the haughty upright attitude of an Indian chief.

Mahtoree was surprised that the strangers should consider his unannounced visit an intrusion or that they should ask why he had come. The old trapper was acting as interpretor and explained to the young women, that Indians think such fashions and courtesies so light that they would blow away.

The chief then assumed a posture of condescension and repeated the following proposal to be interpreted to his captives.

> "Sing in the ears of the dark-eye. Tell her the lodge of Mahtoree is very large, and that it is not full. She shall find room in it, and none shall be greater than she. Tell the light-hair that she too may stop in the lodge of a brave, and eat of his venison. Mahtoree is a great chief. His hand is never shut." 1

The scout attmpeted to explain to him how unconventional such a message was to women of his race, and how they were accustomed to being wooed. He was naturally astonished that a warrior should humble himself before a woman, but graciously acknowledged his error and proceeded to address her in this manner:

1. The Prairie, p.321.

"I am a redskin, but my eyes are dark. They have been open since many snows. They have seen many things - they know a brave from a coward. When a boy I saw nothing but the bison and the deer. I went to the hunts, and I saw the cougar and the bear. This made Mahtoree a man. He talked with his mother no more. His ears were open to the wisdom of the old men. They told him everything - they told him of the Big Knives. He went on the war-path. He was then the last-now he is the first. What Dacotah dare say he will go before Mahtoree to the hunting-grounds of the Pawnees? The chiefs met him at their doors, and they said, My son is without a home, They gave him their lodges, they gave him their riches, and they gave him their daughters. Then Mahtoree became a chief, as his fathers had been. He struck the warriors of all the nations, and he could have chosen wives from the Pawnees, the Omahaws, and the Honzas; but he looked at the hunting-grounds, and not at his village. He thought a horse was pleasanter than a Decotah girl. But he found a flower on the prairies, and he plucked it and brought it into his lodge.-----" 1

From this brief lauditory autobiography of himself, we gleam many ideas of what he considered the most commendable pursuits of one destined to become great, and of how his greatness was rewarded in his tribe. When he had finished this extraordinary address, he seemed to have no doubts of his success; for, who in his mind, would refuse one so distinguished as himself. The girls were left to consider his proposition. It was never concluded, however, for the mighty chief fell in battle shortly afterwards.

A word remains to be said about his deserted young wife, who was a silent observer of all that had happened. In a similar manner she had been wooed from the lodge of her father.

When the Teton turned to leave, he was confronted with the humble and shrinking form of this Indian girl, holding

1. The Prairie p. 322-3.

their infant in her arms. With marble-like indifference, he signed for her to give place.

> "Is not Tachechana the daughter of a chief?" demanded a subdued voice in which pride struggled with anguish;"were not her brothers, braves?"
>
> "Go, the men are calling their partisan. He has no ears for a woman."
>
> "No," replied the suppliant: "it is not the voice of Tachechana that you hear but this boy speaking with the tongue of his mother. He is the son of a chief and his words will go up to his father's ears. Listen to what he says. When was Mahtoree hungry, and Tachechana had not food for him? When did he go on the path of the Pawnees and find it empty, that my mother did not weep? When did he come back with the marks of their blows, that she did not sing? What Sioux girl has given a brave son like me? Look at me well that you may know me. My eyes are the eagle's. I look at the sun and laugh. In a little time the Dacotahs will follow me to the hunts and on the warpath. Why does my father turn his eyes from the woman who gives me milk? Why has he so soon forgotten the daughter of a mighty Sioux?" 1

For a single instant, the father seemed moved by this apostrohe, in which he had been reminded how faithfully Tachechana had performed the duties of an Indian wife; but, "shaking off the grateful sentiment", he graphically presented to her the contrast between her own dark beauty and the pale-face's loveliness. Then, wrapping his robe about him, and notioning the trapper to follow, he stalked haughtily from the lodge, muttering sentences about his own greatness and wisdom.

Tachechana was almost paralyzed with humility. It was evident that a bitter struggle was going on in her breast,

1. The Prairie p.324.

but soon the convulsions in her features disappeared, "and her countenance became cold and rigid, like chiselled stone," though a single expression of subdued anguish remained throughout the vicissitudes of her "suffering, female, savage life."

She stripped her person of all the rude, but highly prized ornaments, which her faithless husband had lavished on her and meekly tendered them to the woman of his choice.

> "The bracelets were forced from her wrists, the complicated mazes of beads from her leggings, and the broad silver band from her brow. Then she paused long and painfully. ---------- ------- The boy himself was next laid at the feet of her supposed rival----------[1]

In a low, soft voice, she entreated her rival to deal gently with him, and to teach him how to become a man, and not a girl; for the life of a woman is very sad. She would have him taught how to strike them that do wrong, and never forget to return blow for blow. Nor would she have him forget that the skin of his mother was red, and that she was once the Fawn of the Dacotahs. In her opinion, what had happened to her, was the will of the Wahcondah, and a Sioux girl should not complain.

Pressing a kiss on the lips of her son, she withdrew to the farther side of the lodge, and, throwing her light calico robe over her head, she took her seat on the ground in token of her humility. All efforts to engage her attention were in vain. Occasionally her voice rose in a sort of wailing song, from beneath her trembling mantle, but it never reached the wildness of savage music.

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1. The Prairie, p.325.

But the happenings that were then taking place on the outside of the lodge were destined to change the fortune of this stricken girl. She later became the wife of the chief of a tribe that conquered her own.

The Sioux seems to have had more absolute control over their wives than most tribes; but everywhere Cooper does not fail to stress the hard lot of the Indian woman, and the uncertainty of her position as a wife among a people who practiced polygamy, and who entertained no lofty ideals concerning her.

Conanchet and Narra-Mattah

One of the most beautiful scenes in the novels is that in which Conanchet, in "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish", sends for his pale-face wife to come back to her own village, which she had completely forgotten. She had been taken into his tribe when a little girl, and her thoughts,feelings and actions had become wholly Indian.

As she arrived, her glance was quick and searching; the half-alarmed and yet understanding manner in which she took in the situation that confronted her, "was like the half-instinctive knowledge of one accustomed to the constant and keenest exercise of her faculties."1 In a low, sweet voice she asked, in the Indian tongue:

> "Why has Conanchet sent for his woman from the woods?" 2

Conanchet who was talking to another chief, made no reply. He scarcely appeared conscious of the speaker's presence, but continued in maintaining the lofty reserve of a chief engaged in affairs of importance. For an instant only, a glance of kindness was cast towards the timid and attentive girl, after which he remained unchanged in feature, and rigid in limb.

When their interview was over, she repeated her question. In the conversation which followed the young wife expressed her great pleasure in being the wife of so renowned a chief, her hatred of the ursurping race, and mentioned how much richer and more fortunate she was than the other women of her

1. Cooper: The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p.322-3.
2. Ibid., : p.323.

tribe. "Her mind was his mind", and, that she desired to comply with his every wish, is very apparent. Conanchet's reaction is commendable:

> "The eye of the warrior, as he looked upon the ingenuous and confiding face of the speaker, was kind to fondness. The firmness had passed away, and in its place was left the winning softness of affection, which, as it belongs to nature, is seen, at times, in the expression of an Indian's eye, as strongly as it is ever known to sweeten the intercourse of a more polished condition of existence." 1

When the young wife was reunited with her mother, who had been looking for her ever since her departure, the chief, folding his arms on his naked breast, "appeared to summon his energy, lest, in the scene that he knew must follow, his manhood might be betrayed into some act unworthy of his name." 2 When they finally recognized each other, his lofty-minded spirit was shaken; and, turning aside that none might see the weakness of so great a warrior, he wept.

Later, he was doomed to die, but asked for a parole that he might take leave of his wife and babe. He showed tenderness and sadness at leaving her; but when she suggested that he live among the pale-faces rather than meet his impending fate, he answered with a severity and cold displeasure that she had never experienced before:

> "Woman, I am a sachem, and a warrior among my people!" 3

1. Cooper: The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p.326.
2. Ibid.: p.329
3. Ibid.: p.397.

His manner was that of a warrior to his woman, rather than that of manly softness which he had been accustomed to use in connection with his pale-face wife. She was naturally grieved at having incurred his displeasure; he evidently considered his reputation as a chief beyond every other obligation. His parting words to her were in his usual tender strain:

> "Narra-Mattah, thy people speak strange traditions. They say that one just man died for all colors. I know not. Conanchet is a child among the cunning, and a man with the warriors. If this be true, he will look for his woman and his boy in the happy hunting-grounds, and they will come to him. There is no hunter of the Nengeese that can kill so many deer. Let Narra-Mattah forget her chief till that time, and then, when she calls him by name, let her speak strong; for he will be very glad to hear her voice again. Go! A sagamore is about to start on a long journey. He takes leave of his wife with a heavy spirit. She will put a little flower of two colors before her eyes and be happy in its growth. Now let her go. A sagamore is about to die."1

Narra-Mattah had lived too long in the kindness of this chief to sustain such a shock and change in her mode of living. She, too, died of a broken heart, almost immediately.

1. Cooper: The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish, p.402-3.

Deerslayer's Observations on Love

Deerslayer's comments on women in love and in all seriousness, but they are likely to strike the reader as being humorous. He says:

> "Though no way given to marrying myself, I've been a looker on among the Delawares, and this is a matter on which paleface and redskin gifts are all the same. When the feelin' begins, the young woman is thoughtful, and has no eyes or ears onless for the warrior that has taken her fancy; then follows melancholy and singing, and such sort of actions; after which, especially if matters don't come to plain discourse, she often flies round.to back-biting and fault-finding, blaming the youth for the very things she likes-best in him." 1

When the vain and beauty-loving Judith offered to give her clothes for the rescue of a friend, Deerslayer says:

> "The same feelin's is to be found among the young women of the Delawares. I've known 'em, often and often, sacrifice their vanity to their hearts. 'Tis as it should be ----- I suppose, in both colors. Woman was created for feelin's, and is pretty much ruled by feelin'!" 2

The scout explained more his philosophy and observations of love on an occasion when Chingachgook confessed that he was able to detect the laugh of his betrothed from that of the women of the Iroquois:

> "Ay, trust to a lovyer's ear for that;and a Delaware's ears for all sounds that are ever heard in the woods.------ when they get to have kind feelin's toward each other, its wonderful how pleasant they laugh, or the speech becomes to the other person. I've seen grim warriors listening to the chattering and the laughing of young gals as if it was church music.----" 3

Most of his statements are borne out in the discussions which follow.

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p.237.
2. Ibid., : p.165-6.
3. Ibid., : p.166-7.

Indian Women Characters in the Novels

We are given two clearly delineated characters of young Indian women in these novels: Dew-of-June, the youthful wife of a Tuscarora warrior, Arrowhead; and Wah-ta!-Wah, the betrothed of Chingachgook. A study of their characters reveals how closely an Indian woman is attached to her husband and tribe through ties of loyalty, and sympathy with their undertakings. Their reaction to young women not of their group, is as equally interesting.

Wah-ta!-Wah

Wah-ta!-Wah rendered in English means Hist-oh!-Hist. She was called Hist by her white friends for short. When she met the half-witted Hetty proceeding to the camp of the Hurons, where she, herself, was held a captive, her concern is clearly manifested in the following speech:

> "Where go? said a soft female voice, speaking hurriedly, and in concern. Indian - red man - savage - wicked warrior - that-a-way."[1]

A description of the maiden is given next. Her smile was sunny, her voice was melody itself, and her "accents and manner had all the rebuked gentleness that characterizes the sex among a people who habitually treat their women as the attendant servitors of warriors."

> "Beauty among the women of the aboriginal Americans, before they have become exposed to the hardships of wives and mothers, is by no means uncommon. In this particular, the original owners of the country were not unlike their more civilized successors; nature appearing to have bestowed that delicacy of mien and outline that forms so great a charm in the youghful female, but of which they are so early deprived; and that too, as much by the habits of domestic life, as from any other cause.

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-185

> "The girl who had so suddenly arrested the steps of Hetty, was dressed in a calico mantle, that effectually protected all the upper part of her person, while a short petticoat of blue cloth edged with gold lace, that fell no lower than her knees, leggings of the same, and moccasins of deer-skin, completed her attire. Her hair fell in long dark braids down her shoulders and back, and was parted above a low smooth forehead, in a way to soften the expression of eyes that were full of archness and natural feeling. Her face was oval, with delicate features; the teeth were even and white; while the mouth expressed a melancholy tenderness, as if it wore this peculiar meaning in intuitive perception of the fate of a being who was doomed from birth to endure a woman's sufferings, relieved by a woman's affections. Her voice, as has been intimated was soft as the sighing of the night air, a characteristic of the females of the race, but which was so conspicuous in herself as to have procured for her the name of Wahta!-Wah------"[1]

Because of her apparent trustworthiness, she had been allowed to wander around the encampment by the Hurons, who knew that her trail could be followed in the event of flight, but who did not know that her lover was near. Of the two girls, she was the most willing to speak, and far readier in foreseeing consequences, and in devising means to avert them. She spoke the English tongue in the usual abbreviated manner of an Indian, but fluently, and without the ordinary reluctance of her people.

After telling her new acquaintance that she belonged to the "good Delaware" tribe that was friendly to the Yengeese, and who only took scalps for honor rather than for blood, as the Hurons did, she led the simple girl to a place of concealment. The conversation which followed is marked by sincerity and mutual interest on the part of both. Hist believed that it was "wicked t'ing for pale-face to scalp" because the good Deerslayer had always said so. Her impulsive nature is shown by her warm defense of the

1. Cooper: The Deerslayer, p. 185-6.

custom of scalping by red warriors. She declared that the Maniton smiled and was pleased "when he see young warrior come back from the warpath, with two, ten, hundred scalp on a pole!"[1]

When Hetty revealed that Chingachgook was in her father's cabin, the tell-tale blood deepened the rich color that nature had bestowed on fair Indian girl, and her blush gave new animation and intelligence to her jet-black eyes. She sighed out his harsh name in sounds so soft and gutteral as to cause it to reach the ear in melody.

Hetty's winsomeness, simplicity and utter lack of guile attracted the young Indian girl so strongly that she threw her arms around her saying:

> "You good", -----; "you good, I know; it's so long since Wah-ta!-Wah have a friend - a sister - anybody to speak her heart to! you Hist friend; don't I say trut'!"
>
> ---
>
> "Deerslayer and Chingachgook great friend, and no the same color; Hist and - what your name, pretty paleface?"
>
> "I am called Hetty, though when they spell the name in the Bible, they always call it Esther."
>
> "What that make? - no good, no harm. No need to spell name at all. Moravian try to make Wah-ta! -Wah spell, but no won't let him. No good for Delaware girl to know too much - know more than warrior some time; that great shame. -----" [2]

It was natural that, being betrothed, Hist should turn the conversation on love. Accordingly she inquired of Hetty's love affair. When the latter confided an attachment for a young man, but declared she would die if he knew it, Histreplied with a warmth that showed just how indignantly she felt such a disregard of her sex's most valued privilege.

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1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p. 188
2. Ibid.: p. 190

"Why he no ask you, himself? Brave - looking - why not bold-speaking? Young warrior ought to ask young girl; no make young girl speak first. Mingo girls too shame for that." 1

Later she says that a young warrior must tell young girl when he want to make wife, else never can live in his wigwam.

When Hetty frankly explained that she was half-witted, pity, reverence, and tenderness seemed to be struggling together in the bosom of the young Indian. She now willingly led her to the camp of the Hurons, for she knew that "in many tribes the mentally imbecile and mad were held in a species of religious reverence."2

Her request that Hetty should not reveal the secret of her lover's presence in the vicinity was made in the following naive manner:

"Now you love Hist, I know, Hetty, and so, among Injuns, when love hardest never talk most."

"That's not the way among white people who talk most about them they love best."

"That what Deerslayer call gift. One gift to talk; t'udder gift to hold tongue. ----------
------Good girl never tell secret of friend." 3

All during Hetty's visit, Hist was her devoted and faithful friend. Without intruding the opinion of her sex and years on the men and warriors of the tribe, by tact and ingenuity, she incited them to question her about the girl when she explained the sacredness of her character. She next set about the preparation of a meal for her new friend, keeping, at the same time, a constant watchfulness on the reaction of the chiefs towards the stranger.

The fact that Hist was called to act as interpreter in the conversation between Hetty and the chiefs not only gave the

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p. 191
2. Ibid.: p.193
3. Ibid.: p.194

girl an excuse to be with her friend, but also the opportunity to practice every artifice that her Indian education offered, to keep concealed the presence of her lover. The author explains:

> "One unpractised in the expedients and opinions of savage life, would not have suspected the readiness of invention, the wariness of action, the high resolution, the noble impulses, the deep self-devotion, and the feminine disregard of self, where the affections were concerned, that lay concealed beneath the demure looks, the mild eyes, and the sunny smiles of this young Indian beauty." 1

Hetty had come secretly to the Huron camp to try to effect the release of her father and a friend who had, on the previous night, attempted to steal into the encampment in order to take scalps to sell to the Canadian governor, or to the provinces for gold. Knowing that nothing would be gained by equivocation or unmanly dread of Indian wrath, the men admitted to the chiefs the true object of their quest. This frank avowal of their purpose brought no censure upon them, the Indians seeming rather to express satisfaction that the prisoners were worthy subjects of their revenge; besides, they did not censure in others what they deemed meritorious when committed by themselves.

When the opportunity presented itself, Hist entered readily into the plan to effect the escape of the prisoners, saying

> "Listen; ----- Wah-ta!-Wah no Iroquois - all over Delaware - got Delaware heart - Delaware feeling. She prisoner, too. One prisoner help t'udder prisoner. No good to talk more, now. Darter stay with fader - Wah-ta!-Wah come and see friend - all look right - <u>then</u> tell what he do." 2

1. Cooper: Deerllayer, p.202.
2. Ibid., : p.212.

Meanwhile, Hetty returned to her home. Chingachgook, who was there with Deerslayer, did not conceal his desire to know about his "little wren". With a gentleness of tone and manner that one would have scarcely have thought possible, but with an eagerness that almost frightened the simple reporter, he asked,

> "What she sing most - how she look - often she laugh?" 1

After satisfying his desire on these points, Hetty proceeded to tell Chingachgoodk that he must treat Hist more as pale-faces do their wives when she become his wife. The Indian replied:

> "Wah-ta!-Wah no pale-face - got redskin; red heart, red feelin's. All red; no pale-face. Must carry papoose." 2

Hetty did not object to this but insisted on his being gentle and good to her. Chingachgoodk gravely bowed, but welcomed the interruption that followed.

The Delaware had come to rescue his fiancee from the Hurons, and, in Deerslayer's opinion, his passionate love for her had reacted disastrously on his reason. The indiscreet suggestion he made, to effect her rescue, was proof that he was not using his usual cunning and wisdom. The old scout was present, however, to steady him, and after the first indiscretion of this kind, he was afterwards more calculating and cautious.

Hist was rescued in true form, but Deerslayer was made captive in the venture. The reaction of the younger women of the tribe to her escape is interesting. The author says:

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1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p.251.
2. Ibid.: p.251.

> "Their female sympathies were with the lovers, while their pride was bound up in the success of their tribe. It is possible, too, that the superior personal advantages of Hist rendered her dangerous to some of the younger part of the group, and they were not sorry to find she was no longer in the way of their own ascendency. On the whole, however, the better feeling was most prevalent; for neither the wild condition in which they lived, the clannish prejudices of the tribes, nor their hard fortunes as Indian women, could entirely conquer the inextinguishable leaning of other sex to the affections. One of the girls even laughed at the disconsolate look of the swain who might fancy himself deserted -----." 1

A most delightful scene is given at the opening of chapter twenty-five, in "Deerslayer", of the meeting of the lovers. Hist, fresh from her morning toilet, appeared in all of her youth and beauty. Her coal-black hair was arranged in a single knot; her calico dress was belted tight to her slender waist; and her little feet were concealed in gaudily ornamented moccasins.

> "The meeting between the lovers was simple but affectionate. The chief showed a manly kindness, equally removed from boyish weakness and haste; while the girl betrayed in her smile and half-averted looks, the bashful tenderness of her sex. Neither spoke unless it were with the eyes, though each understood the other as fully as if a vocabulary of words and protestations had been poured out." 2

The chief noted every detail of her dress, particularly some effective ornaments that her pale-face friends had bestowed upon her. He seated himself and made a gesture for her to take another by his side.

> "This done, he continued thoughtful and silent for a minute, maintaining the reflecting dignity of one born to take his seat at the council-fire, while Hist was furtively watching the expression of his face, patient and submissive, as became a woman of her people." 3

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p.322.
2. Ibid.,: p.464.
3. Ibid.,: p.465.

He then pointed out to her the beauties of the lake, and addressing her as "Honeysuckle of the Hills" spoke of the fear that they would travel alone to their tribe. She understood that the reference was made to the captivity of Deerslayer. The fate of the latter was then openly broached and lamented. Afterwards,

> "A long thoughtful pause succeeded, during which Hist stealthily took the hand of the chief, as if seeking his support, though she scarce ventured to raise her eyes to a countenance that was now literally becoming terrible; under the conflicting passions and stern resolution that were struggling in the breast of the owner.
>
> "What will the son of Uncas do?" the girl at length timidly asked. "He is a chief and is already celebrated in council, though so young; what does his heart tell him is wisest? does the head, too, speak the same words as the heart?"
>
> "What does Wah-ta!-Wah say, at a moment when my dearest friend is in danger. The smallest birds sing the sweetest; it is always pleasant to hearken to their songs. I wish I could hear the Wren of the Woods in my difficulty; its note would reach deeper than the ear."1

It is easy to imagine the profound gratification and pleasure the young woman experienced on being requested by her future husband, in such endearing terms to express her ideas and sentiments on the matter. Pressing the hand she held between her own, she answered:

> "Wah-ta!-Wah says that neither she nor the Great Serpent could ever laugh again, or ever sleep without dreaming of the Hurons, should the Deerslayer die under a Mingo tomahawk, and they do nothing to save him. She would rather go back, and start on her long path alone, then let such a dark cloud pass before her happiness."
>
> "Good! The husband and the wife will have but one heart; they will see with the same eyes, and feel with the same feelings."2

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, -p-466
2. Ibid: p-467

Later, when Chingachgook told Deerslayer that he had no idea of deserting him, the latter objected, saying that he now had Hist to think of. The Indian replied:

> "Hist is a daughter of the Mohicians: she knows how to obey her husband. Where he goes she will follow. Both will be with the Great Hunter of the Delawares ---- tomorrow." 1

The speech which this Indian girl makes in reply to a request from the Hurons that she return, and aid in effecting a peaceable settlement, not only illustrates her tribal loyalty but is also an example of the beautiful language Cooper permits her to use.

> "Tell the Hurons, Deerslayer," she said, that they are as ignorant as moles; they don't know the wolf from the dog. Among my people the rose dies on the stem where it budded; the tears of the child fall on the graves of its parents; the corn grows where the seed has been planted. The Delaware girls are not messengers, to be sent, like belts of wampum, from tribe to tribe. They are honeysuckles that are sweetest in their own woods; their own young men carry them away in their bosoms, because they are fragrant;----- Even the robin and the marten come back, year after year, to their old nests; shall a woman be less true-hearted than a bird? Set the pine in the clay and it will turn yellow; the willow will not flourish on the hill; the tamarack is healthiest in the swamp; the tribes of the sea love best to hear the winds that blow over the salt water. As for a Huron youth, what is he to a maiden of the Lenni Lenape? He may sing a sweet song for the girls of Canada, but there is no music for Wah, but in the tongue she has listened to from childhood-----"2

The Hurons had intimated that she had taken away with her the affections of one of their young men, hence she closed her speech by expressing her entire devotion to the young pine of the family of Uncas, her betrothed.

1. Cooper: Deerslayer, p-470
2. Ibid: p-429

Dew-of-June

Dew-of-June was a patient and submissive little wife, who seldom turned her full, rich black eye on her husband but to express equally her respect, her dread, and her love. He was in disgrace with his own people, and was acting temporarily with the Iroquois on the side of the French, though at present he was feigning friendship with the English in order to carry out his plans. He had a wigwam but was seldom in it, so his wife travelled with him on his many migrations since most of the distances were passed over in canoes. She was accustomed to solitude and the gloom of the forest, and felt no apprehension when left alone in it. When introduced in the story, the husband and wife are making a trip with a white girl and her uncle. The party was later joined by Pathfinder and a young sailor.

The story of Dew-of-June is that of her friendship for this pale-face girl, Mabel Dunham, and of her loyalty to her own people.

> "During the time she had travelled in company with this woman, Mabel had been won by the gentleness of manner, the meek simplicity, and the mingled awe and affection with which she regarded her husband. Once or twice in the course of the journey, she fancied the Tuscarora had manifested toward herself an unpleasant degree of attention; and on those occasions it had struck her that his wife exhibited sorrow and mortification. As Mabel, however, had more than compensated by any pain she might, in this way, unintentionally have caused her companion, by her own kindness of manner and attentions, the woman had shown much attachment to her, and they had parted with a deep convintion on the mind of our heroine (Mabel) that in the Dew-of-June she had lost a friend." 1

1. Cooper: The Pathfinder, p.315-16.

When the Indians, led by her husband, were planning an attack on the whites, she came at a great risk to herself to warn her friend of her danger. After a tender and affectionate greeting between them, June confided that if Arrowhead knew of her visit he would bury a tomahawk in her head. On being assured that he would never know, she advised the girl to stay in the block-house during the raid for safety. She knew the exact state of affairs on the island for she had been sent to it previously as a spy by her husband. She had also penetrated the secret love affair of Mabel's for the young sailor. When asked if her husband were near, she replied, laying her hand on her heart:

"Husband always near wife, here." 1

She answered all of Mabel's anxious inquiries as directly as the knowledge of the language permitted, but she was too true to her husband and tribe to reveal more than the occasion required. Mabel naturally wished to warn her companions of the coming attack but the girl protested saying:

> "Arrowhead know - see everything, and June be kill - June come to tell young pale-face friend not to tell men. Every warrior watch his own scalp. June squaw, and tell squaw; no tell men." 2

Mabel was greatly disturbed at this declaration from her friend and hesitated a moment in an effort to get a mental grasp of the situation. June, noting her indecision, gravely prepared to take her leave; but, after all she had hazarded for her sake, Mabel could not suffer the girl to go without giving

1. Cooper: The Pathfinder, p.322.
2. Ibid.: p.326

her the definite assurance that she would abide by the arrangement. June showed her native readiness and ingenuity in connection with the signal to be used as the approach of danger, and in the manner in which she glided noiselessly away from the island.

When the siege began she stole back to be with Mabel in the block-house. The latter's delight on seeing her, at this time of peril, knew no bounds, and June was equally as happy that her advice had been followed. When Mabel told her that Arrowhead had killed the wife of one of the men, she replied;

> "June know - June see, very bad, Arrowhead no feel for any wife - no feel for his own."
>
> "Ah! June; your life, at least is safe!"
>
> "Don't know - Arrowhead kill me if he knew all."
>
> "God bless and protect you, June - he will bless and protect you for your humanity.---"
>
> ---
>
> "Your attack was awfully sudden, June!"
>
> "Tuscarora!" returned the other, smiling with exultation at the dexterity of her husband. "Arrowhead great warrior." 1

Later when the warriors worked all manner of artifices with the dead bodies, June said, in a way to show that she rather approved of them condemned the practices:

> "Tuscarora very cunning. Do soldier no harm now; do Iroquois good; got the scalp, first; now make bodies work. By and by, burn em." 2

She understood the method of warfare of her people, and explained, in answer to a question from Mabel, that the block-house would not be burned because the Indians expected others to arrive on the island, and wished to lure them into an ambush. Nothing must be done to betray their presence. Moreover, the

1. Cooper: The Pathfinder, p.344.
2. Ibid., : p.362

building would not burn easily since the logs, out of which it was constructed, were green and wet.

On one occasion when some of the warriors approached the block as if to attack it, June thrust the muzzle of a rifle through an opening and fired in order to frighten them away. Supposing men to be in the block-house, they quickly sought cover, while the young wife laughed at her expedient.

Arrowhead was in the approaching party and Mabel, who thought the girl was firing with the intention to kill, objected to her taking a shot against her own husband. June wanted to know later why she was so much afraid Arrowhead would be killed. Mabel innocently and frankly expressed how horrible it would have appeared to her to have seen a wife destroy her own husband.

> "Very sure, dat all!"
> "That was all, June, as God is my judge - and surely that was enough.----- What other motive can you suspect?"
>
> "Don't know. Poor Tuscarora gal very foolish. Arrowhead great chief, and look all around him. Talk of pale-face beauty in his sleep. Great chief like many wives."
>
> "Can a chief possess more than one wife, June, among your people?"
>
> "Have as many as he can keep - great hunter marry often. Arrowhead got only June now, but he look too much - see too much - talk too much of pale-face gal!" 1

As intimated above, Mabel's consciousness of Arrowhead's attentions during their journey had given her no little distress. She now wondered what effect the knowledge of the situation would have on June's behavior, but a glance at the honest face of the

1. Cooper: The Pathfinder, p.347.

girl revealed no signs of treachery or hatred.

> "You will not betray me, June," Mabel said, pressing the other's hand, and yielding to an impulse of generous confidence. "You will not give up one of your own sex to the tomahawk?"
>
> "No tomahawk touch you - Arrowhead no let 'em. If June must have sister-wife, love to have you."
>
> "No, June; my religion, my feelings, both forbid it; and, if I could be the wife of an Indian at all, I would never take the place that is yours, in a wigwam." 1

June did not reply but she looked gratified, even grateful. Even though her husband might marry a dozen wives, she knew of no Indian girl, of his acquaintance, whose personal attractions could compare with her own, or whose influence she need dread. This was not true in the case of Mabel, but the latter's winning manners, kindness, and gentleness had offset the dreadful pangs of jealousy.

> "In a words, June, with a wife's keenness of perception had detected Arrowhead's admiration of Mabel; and instead of feeling that harrowing jealousy that might have rendered her rival hateful, as would have been apt to be the case with a woman unaccustomed to defer to the superior rights of the lordly sex, she had studied the looks and character of the pale-face beauty, until, meeting with nothing to repel her own feelings, but everything to encourage them, she had got to entertain an admiration and love for her, which, though certainly very different, was scarcely less strong than that of her husband. Arrowhead himself had sent her to warn Mabel of the coming danger, though he was ignorant that she had stolen upon the island in the rear of the assailants, and was now intrenched in the citadel along with the object of their joint care." 2

Mabel's father was a member of the party expected on the island, and for which the Indians were lying in ambush. The knowledge of this almost drove the poor girl frantic, but, in

1. Cooper: The Pathfinder, p.347-8.
2. Ibid.: p.348.

spite of June's gentleness and womanly feeling, she showed her coolness and decision by not letting Mabel interfere. She archly asked Mabel if she would run and tell the French that her father was coming to gain victory, and explained that the cause of her husband and her tribe was her own.

The drunken condition of the warriors around the building reminded June of ann incident in connection with her mother, which she told Mabel, prefacing it with the remarks that Mabel did not have the heart to do the same; and, even if she did, she would not permit her.

> "June's moder prisoner once and warriors got drunk; moder tomahawked 'em all. Such the way redskin women do, when people in danger and want scalp." 1

When Mabel earnestly expressed her intentions of getting a canoe and attempting to notify her father of what had happened on the island June threatened to call her husband.

> "June! you could not betray me - you would not give me up, after all you have done for me?"
>
> "Just so," returned June, making a backward gesture with her hand, and speaking with a warmth and earnestness Mabel had never witnessed in her before. "Call Arrowhead in a loud voice. One call from wife, make a warrior up. June no let Lily help enemy - no let Injun hurt Lily." 2

Mabel could not help but appreciate June's position concerning her people, for it was so similar to her own. Between themselves there was perfect confidence and affection, but towards their respective people, entire fidelity.

In connection with this conflict, Arrowhead lost his life. The inconsolate grief of the young wife at this irreparable loss is heart-rending.

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1. Cooper: The Pathfinder, p.357.
2. Ibid.: p.357-8.

"June had suffered her hair to fall about her face, had taken a seat on a stone that had been dug from the excavation made by the grave, and was hanging over the spot that contained the body of Arrowhead, unconscious of the presence of any other. She believed, indeed, that all had left the island but herself, and the tread of the guide's moccasined foot was to noiseless rudely to undeceive her.

"Dew-of-June," he said solemnly but with an earnestness that denoted the strength of his sympathy - "you are not alone in your sorrow. Turn, and let your eyes look upon a friend."

"June has no longer any friend! the woman answered; "Arrowhead has gone to the happy hungting-grounds, and there is no one left to care for June. The Tuscaroras would chase her from their wigwams; the Iroquois are hateful in her eyes, and she could not look at them. No! - leave June to starve over the grave of her husband."

"This will never do - this will never do. 'Tis agin' reason and right. You believe in the Maniton, June?"

"He has hid his face from June, because he is angry. He has left her alone to die."

Pathfinder tried to explain that the Maniton of the pale-faces strikes the heart with grief in order to bring about self-reflection and better behavior; that the Great Spirit had meant well to her in taking away Arrowhead, less she be led astry by his wily tongue and bad companions. Disregarding this knowledge of her husband's treacherous actions, she replied with pride that Arrowhead was a great chief.

June absolutely refused to abandon his grave for a month, during which time the scout provided her with food. Occasionally they held short conversations. June slept in security in one of the abandoned huts.

Around the end of the month Chingachgook came with news of a pressing engagement for himself and the scout. June saw

that her guardian was distressed and tried to console him. He told her that they would have to leave on the morrow and that she would go with them, since she had now become reasonable, and the season was already late enough to render the nights uncomfortable with so little protection.

> "June assented in the meek manner of an Indian woman, and she withdrew to pass the remainder of her time near the grave of Arrowhead. Regardless of the hour and the season, the young widow did not pillow her head during the whole of that autumnal night. She sat near the spot that held the remains of her husband, and prayed in the manner of her people, for his success on the endless path on which he had so lately gone, and for their reunion in the land of the just. Humble and degraded as she would have seemed in the eyes of the sophisticated and unreflecting, the image of God was on her soul, and it vindicated its divine origin by aspirations and feelings that would have surprised those who, feigning more, feel less." 1

She passed the remainder of her short life in the cottage of Mabel on the lake-shore, and was buried on the island by the side of Arrowhead. The double loss tribe and husband had borne too heavily upon her, thus bringing about her early death.

1. Cooper: The Pathfinder, p.463.

Summary and Conclusion

Cooper has differentiated between the individual tribes of his Indians in such particulars as dress, the construction of the wigwam, and in certain habits and customs; but most of his characterizations, and practically all of his general comments, relate to the race as a whole. For example, the western tribes engage in buffalo hunting and use horses; the Iroquois are especially warlike; the Delawares are more friendly with the whites; but all possess certain fundamental traits, of both a good and bad nature, and follow certain practices in common.

Their government is more democratic than despotic. The chiefs exercise the highest authority and preside over the councils in which the business of the tribe is transacted. At these councils their high and courteous bearing is especially evident.

Indians place great emphasis on physical fitness and personal prowess. Each warrior strives to obtain a name for himself by his deeds of daring and bravery. He will endure hardships and all kinds of torture, when it is unavoidable, with this end in view.

The warrior has a proud and haughty bearing, and a very exalted opinion of the dignity of his position. He generally conceals his emotions and wears a face of inscrutibility, especially in the presence of strangers. When at home, he spends his time in eating and sleeping, except when following some pleasure. Paind and ornaments are used on special occasions. The use of the former in warfare, is to intimidate the

the enemy.

What might be called a double standard of morals is followed by the Indian. It is epitomized in the expression: "Never forgive an enemy; never forget a friend." Revenge is regarded as a virtue, and towards the enemy, all manner of deceit, cunning, and treachery is practiced, but the friend is dealt with honestly. It is not unusual to sacrifice one's life for a friend, while that of the enemy is eagerly sought. Only individuals in the white race are considered as friends; for there is a general feeling of hatred and distrust towards "pale-faces", for the simple reason that they were usurping the redman's hunting-grounds.

Ambush and surprise form two of the most important features of their warfare. It is necessarily conducted with great caution and wariness, as a result of past experiences and because of their primitive methods and implements. They frequently accept defeat rather than hazard more than results will justify. Honor and success with most tribes, are in proportion to the number of scalps taken. Some Indians are naturally more brutal than others; but all possess strong passions, and when aroused in warfare, they frequently commit indiscribable horrors. At such times, it requires a powerful chief to hold them in check.

Unhurt prisoners are not ordinarily scalped. Those who do not escape are adopted into the tribe, ransomed, or tortured. They are often bribed by mere baubles. Medicine-men,

the mentally deficient, and, usually, missionaries, are regarded as sacred characters and are therefore unmolested.

Song and dance form a part of their religious practices. They believe in good and evil spirits, in magic, and supernatural powers. According to Cooper, they have a rather definite conception of a single all-powerful Deity, which is called by different names in different tribes. The name "Great Spirit" is common to all. Their religious beliefs have been influenced by the teachings of the missionaries. The good and just Indian enjoys an ideal life after death in the Happy Hunting-grounds, where the spirit unites again with the body; but the bad Indian occupies a menial position there. For both types it is a long voyabe, and for that reason food, implements of war, and all necessary articles are placed beside the dead body.

Indians have a high respect for law and justice as they conceive of them. Property rights are respected within the tribe, and between friendly tribes; lying and theft are only permissible with the enemy. A high premium is placed on tribal loyalty; cowardice and treason being punishable by death. Boasting, on certain occasions, is considered a virtue. Their traditions are surprisingly accurate.

All actual work is done by the squaws. In the opinion of the Indian, this is right; since work, in the ordinary sense of the word is considered degrading to the dignity of the warrior, and women are their servitors. The status of women is consequently, very low, and their lives are filled with hardships and uncertainties. They are, as a matter of

course, meek, loyal, and submissive to their husbands. When young they possess much beauty and musical voices. The old crones are frequently more bloodthirsty than the men.

Polygamy is practiced by the more affluent, though not more than three wives are mentioned in connection with any one chief. The consent of the woman is necessary for the marriage contract, forced marriages being censured, and therefore of infrequent occurrence.

Indians respect the chastity of a woman; they also manifest great respect for age. Ordinarily their bearing is marked by an unusually high sense of courtesy. Sacred rites of hospitality are extended to the stranger.

Their language is smooth, graphic and epigrammatic.

The author makes several references to their Oriental origin.

Their credulity and inferiority to the whites, in customs, and adaptations in general, are always evident; even in their own realm of experience. They show great respect for the white man's opinion. Whether Mohican or Huron, the redman is represented as a people who cannot share the white man's ideals and is therefore doomed.

In spite of the romantic qualities of these novels, it is surprising how well-grounded in facts the basic traits and customs of these Indians are. One or two instances might be cited of defective woodcraft, but these are mere trifles when compared with the innumerable examples of their sensitiveness to, and knowledge of, all that pertains to the forest. As

has been stated, Cooper seems to credit them with more comprehensive ideas concerning the Diety than is warranted by present-day research; he also seems to place too much emphasis on the truth of their traditions; but, in other essentials, he has not fallen far short of the mark. One must always bear in mind that the Indian, as he is today, is a very different individual from what he was in Cooper's time; but even with the author, he is a creature of passion, and an avenger of his wrongs; yet, withal, he is possessed of the basic feelings of humanity. The following poem which is illustrative of the author's attitude towards the Indian is placed at the beginning of one of the chapters.

" We call them savage--Oh, be just!
Their outraged feelings scan;
A voice comes forth, 'tis from the dust--
The savage was a man! "1

Sprague

It is thus that Cooper has treated him and succeeded in portraying a distinct and coherent racial character. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that --giving prominence to certain of their virtues, he has not neglected to depict, in the most uncompromising colors, their savage traits. In fact, his good Indians are the exception, rather than the rule, and are generally accounted for in some manner. No doubt, it is the truth of these portraitures that account very largely for their immortality and the author's increasing popularity.

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