

PERSONAL MEMOIRS

OF A

RESIDENCE OF THIRTY YEARS

WITH THE

INDIAN TRIBES

ON THE

AMERICAN FRONTIERS

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next season would afford me leisure, that the matter was put off, from time to time, till it was in a measure cast behind and out of sight, and not from a due appreciation of the offer.

*May 17th.* In the letter of appointment to me, of this date, from the Secretary of War, to treat with the Saginaws, it is stated: "You are authorized to offer them the proceeds which their lands may bring, deducting such expenses as may be necessary for its survey, sale, &c. You will take care that a sufficient fund is reserved to provide for their removal, and such arrangements made for the security and application of the residue as will be most beneficial to them." These instructions were carried out, in articles of a compact, in which the government furthermore agreed, in view of the lands not being immediately brought into market, to make a reasonable advance to these Indians. Yet the Senate rejected it, not, it would seem, for the liberality of the offer of the nett proceeds of the lands, but for the almost *per necessitate* offer of a moderate advance, to enable the people to turn themselves in straitened circumstances, which had been the prime motive for selling.

The advance was, in fact, as I have reason to believe, a mere bagatelle, but the chairman of the Indian Committee in the Senate was rather on the lookout for something, or anything, to embarrass or disoblige General Jackson and his agents, having fallen out with him, and being then, indeed, a candidate for President of the U. S. himself, at the coming election. If I had not heard the pointed expressions of Hon. Hugh L. White, on more than one occasion, in which my three treaties were before him, in relation to this matter of not affording the presidential incumbent new sources of patronage, &c., I should not deem it just to add the latter remark. He was a man of strong will and feelings, which often betrayed themselves when subjects of public policy were the topics. And, so far as he interfered with the principles of the treaties which I had negotiated with the Lake Indians in 1836, he evinced an utter ignorance of their history, character, and best interests. He violated, in some respects, the very principle on which alone two of the original cessions, namely, those of the Ottawas and Chippewas and of the Saginaws, were obtained; and introduced features of discord, which disturb the tribes, and some of which will long continue to be felt. And the result is a

severe caution against the Senate's ever putting private reasons in the place of public, and interfering with matters which they necessarily know but little about.

*16th.* Dr. Samuel George Morton, of Philadelphia, makes an appeal to gentlemen interested in the philosophical and historical questions connected with the Indians, to aid him in the collection of crania—to be used in the comprehensive work which he is preparing on the subject.

*26th.* Hon. J. B. Sutherland expresses the wish to see an Indian lexicography prepared under the auspices of the Indian Department, and urges me to undertake it.

*30th.* Mozojeed, or the Moose's Tail, an Ojibwa chief of Ottawa Lake, in the region at the source of Chippewa River of the Upper Mississippi, dictates a letter to me. The following is an extract:—

"My Father—I have a few remarks to make. Every *morning of the year* I wish to come and see you. As soon as I take up my paddle I fall sick. It is now two years since I began to be sick. Sometimes I am better—sometimes worse. I am pained in mind that I am not to see you this summer.

"Since you gave me the shonea nahbekawahgun (silver medal) I think I *have walked in your commands*. I have done all I could to have the Indians sit still. Those that are far off I could not sway, but those that are near have listened to me."

His influence to keep the Indians at peace, and the reasons which have hindered the influence in part, are thus, partly by symbolic figures, as well expressed as could be done by an educated mind. I have italicised two sentences for their peculiarity of thought.

*31st.* Mr. Featherstonehaugh expresses a wish to have me point out the best map extant of the eastern borders of the Upper Mississippi, above the point visited by him in his recent reconnaissance, in order "to avoid gross blunders—all I do not expect to avoid!" Why undertake to make a map of a part of the country which he did not see?

*31st.* Rev. Alvan Coe, of Vernon, O., expresses his interest in the provisions of the late treaty with the Ottawas and Chippewas, which regards their instruction.

*June 1st.* Mr. W. T. Boutwell, from Leech Lake, depicts the