

ABORIGINAL HISTORY.

BY J. F. EVERHART, A. M., M. D.

INTRODUCTION.

The aboriginal history associated with Kosciusko County will be found specially interesting, presenting as it does, the nomadic people with whom the pioneers had to deal in settling "the Northwest Territory," and, as much as any other, showing the character of the Indian, and the peculiar relations sustained by our Government with their wards; clearly indicating the integrity, justice, generosity of the United States toward them. This history is compiled from National archives, Dillon's "History of Indiana," Burnett's "Notes on the Northwestern Territory," Knapp's "History of the Maumee Valley," and from tradition by responsible parties.

The pioneer history will be found unusually complete; in fact, the record is by their own authority, and though many have "gone to that bourne whence no traveler returns," their memory will be cherished as their deeds are remembered. In the heroic, honest pioneer we have a grand illustration of true manhood. He left the scenes of civilization, as if moved by an "over-ruling Providence," and with ax and gun wended his way along the bending rivers, deep into the forests, inhabited only by wild beasts and savage man. Prospecting on vale and hill, he moved onward, guided only by the familiar blaze of the surveyor's sash—through woods and openings, across fertile bottoms, until his eye fell on the spot of his choice. Here the cabin home was erected; hard by ran the rippling stream, ever telling Nature's mystic story:

"Sweet day, sw-et song! the golden hours
Grew long and bright and singing,
From twilight till the sun shone down
A clearer welcome bringing."

Upon that stream the mill was placed, and hither came the pioneer for grist, and as they journeyed to and fro over and anon heard the mellow tones of the forest breeze as it murmured through the oaks, walnut and other trees that were ere-long to be esteemed for the value of their wood; while beneath lay a rich, productive soil, inviting the husbandman's skillful labor to break and reap golden harvests.

The manufacturing interests will be found very interesting; they have done the community much good and are a source of just pride to the people.

The commercial character of Warsaw has not been individualized, but it is safe to say that the integrity and energy of her business men are known abroad, and have enabled her to put on the metropolitan appearance she wears so gracefully, and in which she is not surpassed by any other city of the same population. To the intelligent, energetic press, is largely due the high degree of prosperity that pervades not only Warsaw, but the county of Kosciusko.

This work, which has attracted so much attention from the people of Kosciusko, is largely the production of its best citizens, prominent among whom are: the editors of Warsaw; Thomas Woods, Clerk of Kosciusko Circuit Court; Ancil B. Ball, County Auditor; Metcalf Beck, the oldest living merchant, now Notary Public and Conveyancer; William C. Graves, the first law student in the county, now Cashier of the First National Bank; Joseph A. and William B. Funk, merchants, intimately acquainted with her written and oral history, to all of whom acknowledgments are made, for just the help that was needed. There are many others whose contributions would have been missed, however trivial they may have seemed, to whom thanks are extended. With conscious pride, therefore, do we submit our work to you, realizing that you were our co-laborers, and that you have a very creditable history.

ABORIGINAL HISTORY.

The mild and fertile region now included within the boundaries of the State of Indiana, was, at the time of its discovery by Europeans, claimed and possessed by the Miami Confederacy of Indians. According to the best traditional authorities, the dominion of the confederacy extended, for a long time, over that part of the State of Ohio, which lies west of the Scioto River; over the whole of Indiana, over the southern part of Michigan, and over the principal portion of that part of the State of Illinois which lies south and east of Fox River, and the river Illinois. The Miami have preserved no tradition of their migration, as a tribe, from one country to another; and yet, the great extent of the territory which was claimed by them may be regarded as evidence of the degree of national importance which they once maintained among the Indian tribes of North America.

In the year 1765, the Miami nation was composed of four tribes, whose total number of warriors was estimated at 1,050 men; of this number, 250 were Twight-wares and Kickapoos, were, at different periods, permitted to enter and reside at various places within the territory claimed by the Miami.

The Twightwares resided principally on the Wabash, Missisnewa, Eel River, and the head of White River. The Pottawatomies resided on the Tippecanoe, Kankakee, Iroquois, Yellow River, St. Joseph of Lake Michigan, the Elkhar, Miami of the Lake, the St. Joseph Creator, but had no idea of His will being communicated to man, except as it appears in the creation. Their belief in a future state—a removal from the present state—to one more happy, with similar appetites and enjoyments. Many have a vague idea of a bad Spirit, but no apprehension of being troubled by it in the future.

That portion of Indian history which reveals the animus of the red man toward the white man and the reverse, will occupy our attention for a brief period. The events which tend to show this may begin with what is known as Pontiac's war. If the favor of friendship, the disposition of Pontiac was soon changed. The feelings of implacable hatred with which he began to regard the English and allies of his tribe (peace was not then concluded between France and England); to the sullen and domineering temper also of the English themselves. In the course of the year 1762, while the Indians seemed satisfied with the subjugation of that French, the British traders were beginning to traffic among the tribes that dwell between the Lakes and the Ohio. Pontiac and his partisans betook themselves to organize a Confederacy, with the intention to crush at a single blow the English power in the West. This revealed the true interpretation of their acts of apparent friendship, namely, to disseminate their hostility to the encroaches of the white man on their native domain. Reports were circulated among the different tribes of a design on the part of the English to extinguish the Indians; and, early in the spring of 1759, the Ottawaes, Chippewas, Pottawatomies, Sacs, Foxes, Menomines, Miami (Twightwares), Shawnees, Wyandots, and branches of some other tribes, were ready to make a simultaneous attack on all the British forts and trading posts in the country northwest of the Alleghany Mountains. The attack was made in the month of May, 1763, and the Indians without much opposition took possession of the forts of Michilimackinac, Green Bay, St. Joseph, Ouisatonon, Miami, Sandusky, Treeque Isle, Le Boef and Venango. With the exception of Michilimackinac, the fortifications of these places were slight, being trading-posts and not properly military establishments. A small number of English traders about these posts were killed, some escaped, and others were taken prisoners, and remained in captivity until ransomed or released on the return of peace. The Post of St. Joseph, where there was a garrison of fourteen men, commanded by Lieutenant Schlosser, was surprised and captured by a party of Pottawatomie Indians on the 27th of May; the small garrison of Ouisatonon surrendered to the Indians on the 1st of June, and the French traders, who lived in the vicinity, received the English prisoners into their houses. The British garrisons at Detroit and Fort Pitt successfully resisted the attacks of the enemy, but the confederacy of hostile Indians made head for these failures by spreading death along the Western frontiers. This attests the animus of the Indian at that day. At an earlier period (1768),

Christian Frederick Post, a Moravian, journeyed to the Big Beaver Creek, and won the Delawares to peace; and, in 1761, thinking the true Faith might be planted among those Western tribes, he journeyed to the Muskingum, and, on the banks of that stream, about a mile from Beaver's Town, built himself a house. (Heckewelder's Narrative, p. 59.) In the spring of 1762, he crossed the mountains in company with Heckewelder, who went as his assistant, the Indians having consented to his living among them and teaching their children to read and write. Post prepared to clear a few acres whereon to raise corn. The chiefs hearing of this called him to them, and said they feared he had changed his mind; for, instead of teaching their children, he was clearing land, which, if he did, others might do, and then a fort be built to protect them, and then the land claimed, and they driven off, as had always, they said, been the case. Post replied that a teacher must live, and as he did not wish to be a burden to them, he proposed to raise his own food. This reply the Indians considered, and told him that, as he claimed to be a minister of God, it was probable that the Great Spirit would take care of him, if he wished him to be His minister; so they could only give him a garden-spot. This, Capt. Pipe stepped off for him, and, with this, he had to shift as well as he could.

These proceedings show the perfect perception the Indians had of their dangers, and of the English tactics. Post continued to till his little garden-spot, and teach the Beaver to Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, where a fruitless treaty with the whites was concluded; returning from this treaty in October, he met Heckewelder, who had been warned by his red friends to leave the country before the war came. To trace the Indian on "the war-path," however interesting, would be to swell this narrative beyond the limits intended, and we pass to the consideration of topics in point.

The American Colonists, it will be remembered, were not without their part in these troubles; accordingly, we find an effort on the part of Congress for the management of "Indian Affairs," dated July 12, 1775, creating three departments for this purpose. The Northern Department included the Six Nations and all Indians who resided north of that confederacy. The Southern Department included the Cherokees, and all tribes who dwelt in the country south of them, and the Middle Department included the Miami, Delawares, Pottawatomies, and all Indians who lived in the region lying between the Northern and Southern Departments. On the 13th of July, 1775, Benjamin Franklin and James Wilson, of Pennsylvania, and Patrick Henry, of Virginia, were elected Commissioners of Indian Affairs for the Middle Department, and, on the 10th of April, 1776, Col. George Morgan, a native of Pennsylvania, who had resided as a trader at Kaskaskia, for a few years after the British troops took possession of that place, was elected Indian Agent for the same Department. His residence was at Pittsburgh, and the instructions he received from Congress required him to hold councils with the Western tribes; to endeavor to inspire the Indians with feelings of friendship for the people of the United States; to present encroachments of the whites on Indian lands; to treat all peaceable Indians with kindness and hospitality, and to encourage them to engage in agricultural and mechanical pursuits.

During July, August and September of 1792, a great number of the Miami, Pottawatomie, Delaware, Shawnee, Chippewa, Ottawa and Wyandot tribes, met at the rapids of the Maumee, for the purpose of holding a grand council. About this time, several chiefs of the Six Nations, at the request of the Secretary of War, visited the councils of the Northwestern tribes, and made some efforts to induce the hostile Indians to establish a treaty of peace with the United States. The Indians in council, however, determined that they would make no treaty that would confirm or acknowledge the claims of the United States to any portion of the territory northwest of the Ohio River. The grand council broke up about the 10th of October. Here we see that the Pottawatomies (who were located on the Tippecanoe River) preserved their relations with the other tribes, concerning the rights that all claimed, viz., the right to the country of their nativity, notwithstanding they manifested friendship for Americans.

Little Turtle, in council at Greenville July 22, 1795, spoke as follows: "I wish to inform you that where you will pay attention to what I now say to you. I am now at the Potawatomies of St. Joseph's, together with the Wabash Indians, you have pointed out to us the boundary line that line cuts off from the Indians a large portion of country which has been enjoyed by my forefathers, time immemorial, without molestation or dispute. The print of my ancestors' houses are everywhere to be seen in this portion. I was a little astonished at hearing you and my brothers, who are now present, telling each other what business you had transacted together heretofore at Muskingum, concerning this country. It is well known by all my brothers present, that my father kindled the first fire at Detroit; from thence he extended his lines to the headwaters of Scioto; from thence to its mouth, and from thence to Chicago, on Lake Michigan. At this place, I first saw my elder brother, the Shawnees. I have now informed you of the boundaries of the Miami Nation, where the Great Spirit placed my forefather, a long time ago, and charged him not to sell or part with his lands, but preserve them for his posterity. This charge has been handed down to me. I was much surprised to find that my other brothers differed so much from me on this subject, for their conduct would tend to suppose that the Great Spirit and their forefathers had not given them the same charge that was given to me, but, on the contrary, had directed them to sell their lands to any white man who were a *had*, as soon as he should ask it of them. Now, elder brother, your younger brothers, the Miami, have pointed out to you their country, and also to other brothers present. When I hear your remarks and proposals on this subject, I will be ready to give you an answer. I came with an expectation of hearing you say good things; but I have not yet heard what I expected."

Gen. Wayne's reply to this and other speeches was as follows: "Younger Brothers—I will inform you who it was gave us these lands in the first instance. It was your fathers, the British, who did not discover that care for your interest which you ought to have experienced. This is the treaty of peace, made between the United States of America and Great Britain, twelve years ago, at the end of a long and bloody war, when the French and Americans proved too powerful for the British. On these terms they obtained peace. [Here part of the the treaty of 1783 was read.] Here you perceive that all the country south of the great lakes has been given up to Americans; but the United States never intended to take that advantage of you which the British placed in their hands; they wish you to enjoy your just rights without interruption, and to promote your happiness. The British stipulated to surrender to us all the posts on their side of the boundary agreed on. I told you some days ago that the treaties should ever be sacredly fulfilled by those who made them, but the British, on their part, did not find it convenient to relinquish those posts as soon as they should have done. However, they now find it so, and a precise period is accordingly fixed for their delivery. I have now in my hand a copy of a treaty, made eight months since, between them and us of which I will read you a little. [Here he read the first and second articles of Mr. Jay's treaty.] By this solemn agreement, they promise to retire from Michilimackinac, Ft. St. Clair, Detroit, Niagara, and all other places on this side of the lakes, in ten moons from this period, and leave the same to the full and quiet possession of the United States. Brothers—all nations present—now listen to me: Having now explained these matters to you, and informed you of all things [Judged necessary for your information, we have nothing to do but bury the hatchet, and draw a veil over past misfortunes. As you have buried our dead with the concern of brothers, so now I collect the bones of your slain warriors, put them into a deep pit which I have dug, and cover them carefully over with this large belt, there to remain undisturbed. I also dry the tears from your eyes and wipe the blood from your bodies with this soft, white linen. No bloody trophies will ever lead to the graves of your departed heroes; with this I wipe all such entirely away. I deliver it to you

uncle, the Wyandot, who will send it round among you. [A large belt with a strong arm, thrown it into the center of the great ocean, where no mortal can ever find it; and now I deliver to you the wide and straight path to the fifteen fires, to be used by you and your posterity forever. So long as you continue to follow this road, so long you will continue to be a happy people. You see it is straight and wide, and they will be blind indeed who deviate from it. I place it also in your uncle's hands that he may preserve it for you. [A large road belt.] I will, the day after to-morrow, show you the sessions you have made to the United States, and point out to you the lines which may, for the future, divide your lands from theirs; and, as you will have to-morrow to rest, I will order you a double allowance of drink, because you have now buried the hatchet and performed every necessary ceremony to render propitious our renovated friendship." [See Proceedings of the Treaty of Greenville.]

In council with the Indians, Monday, July 27, 1795, Gen. Wayne read the several articles of the proposed treaty, and, in explanation of the third article, spoke as follows:

"Younger Brothers—I wish you clearly to understand the object of these reservations. They are not intended to annoy or impose the smallest degree of restraint on you in the quiet enjoyment and full possession of your lands, but to connect the settlements of the people of the United States by rendering a passage from one to the other more practicable and convenient, and to supply the necessary wants of those who shall reside at them. They are intended, at the same time, to prove convenient and advantageous to the different tribes of Indians residing and hunting in their vicinity, as trading posts will be established at them, to the end that you may be furnished with goods in exchange for your skins and furs at a reasonable rate.

"You will consider that the principal part of the now proposed reservations were made and ceded by the Indians, at an early period, to the French. The French, by the treaty of peace of 1763, ceded them to the British, who, by the treaty of 1783, ceded all the posts and possessions they then held or to which they had any claim, south of the great lakes, to the United States of America. They treaty of Muskingum embraced almost all these reservations, and has been recognized by the representatives of all the nations now present, during the course of last winter, as the basis upon which this treaty should be founded."

On the 28th of July, the Ottawaes, Chippewas and Pottawatomies said that they were united in opinion, and that they fully agreed to the articles of the treaty proposed by Gen. Wayne. The Sun, a Pottawatomie chief, said to Wayne: "I shall now dispose of this belt (a war belt). I live too far from the lakes, and my arm is not long enough to throw it into the center of any of them; neither have I strength sufficient to tear up a big tree, and bury it beneath its roots; but I will put it from me as effectually by surrendering it into your hands, as by doing with it anything else. You may burn it if you please, or transform it into a necklace for some handsome squaw, and thus change its original design and appearance, and prevent forever its future recognition. It has caused us much misery, and I am happy in parting with it." At this meeting, Little Turtle (the principal chief of the Miami's) again spoke, and assured Gen. Wayne that they were well pleased with his words, except that the line of the reservation cut off too much of their hunting grounds; and then told Wayne where they wanted the lines run, and corrected him concerning the building of a fort on the Great Miami, which Gen. Wayne had discovered traces of, and supposed had been built by the French. Little Turtle said: "It was not a French fort, brothers, it was a fort built by me. You perceived another at Leromies. It is true, a Frenchman once lived there a year or two. The Miami villages were occupied as you remarked, but it was unknown to your younger brothers until you told them that we had sold land there to the French or English. I was much surprised to hear you say that it was my forefathers had set the example to the other Indians in selling their lands. I will inform you in what manner the French and English occupied those places, elder brother. These people were seen by our forefathers first at Detroit; afterward we saw them at the Miami village, that glorious gate which your younger brothers had the happiness to own; and through which all the good words of our chief had to pass from the north to the south, and from the east to the west. Brothers, these people never told us they wished to purchase our lands from us." And, finally, Gen. Wayne said: "Brothers, all you nations now present, listen! You now have had the proposed articles of treaty read and explained to you. It is now time for the negotiation to draw to a conclusion. I shall, therefore, ask each nation individually if they approve of and are prepared to sign those articles in their present form, that they may be immediately engrossed for the purpose. I shall begin with the Chippewas, who, with the others who appropriate the measure, will signify their assent. You, Chippewas, do you approve these articles of treaty, and are you prepared to sign them? (A unanimous answer—yes.) You, Ottawaes, do you agree? (A unanimous answer—yes.) You, Pottawatomies? (A unanimous answer—yes.) You, Delawares? (A unanimous answer—yes.) You, Wyandots, do you agree? (A unanimous answer—yes.) You, Shawnees? (A unanimous answer—yes.) You, Miami, do you agree? (A unanimous answer—yes.) You, Kickapoos, do you agree? (A unanimous answer—yes.) And you, Kickapoos, do you agree? (A unanimous answer—yes.) We shall now meet on the 2d of August, on parchment, we will now part to meet on the 2d of August. In the interim, we will eat, drink and rejoice, and thank the Great Spirit for the happy stage this good work has arrived at." On the 3d of August, 1795, the treaty was signed by the sachems, band chiefs and principal men of the Indian nations who inhabited the territory of the United States northwest of the river Ohio; and to each nation respectively a copy of the treaty on paper, was delivered. A large quantity of goods, and many small ornaments, were then distributed among the Indians. On the 10th of August, in council, Gen. Wayne, at the close of a short speech, said: "I now fervently pray to the Great Spirit that the peace now established may be permanent, and that it may hold us together in bonds of friendship until time shall be no more. I also pray that the Great Spirit may enlighten your minds and open your eyes to your true happiness; that your children may learn to cultivate the earth, and enjoy the fruits of peace and industry. As it is probable, my children, that we shall not soon meet again in public council, I take this opportunity of bidding you all an affectionate farewell, and of wishing you a safe and happy return to your respective homes and families."

Thus, the treaty at Greenville was concluded, in a manner which was satisfactory to the Government of the United States, and acceptable to the Indian tribes who inhabited the territory of the United States, northwest of the river Ohio.

On the 18th of June, 1812, the United States, by act of Congress, made formal declaration of war against Great Britain. Soon after this event, Tecumseh, a Shawnee chief, went to Malden and attached himself to the British service. The Miami and Delawares continued to make declarations of their friendship for the United States, but expressed a wish to preserve a state of neutrality during the war.

From the month of May until the close of August, 1812, the frontier settlements of the Indian territory were not materially disturbed by the acts of hostile Indians.

On the 14th of October, 1813, called Gen. Harrison, on the part of the United States, and "the tribes of Indians called Miami, Pottawatomies, Wyandots, Weas, Eel River Miami, Ottawaes and Chippewas," an armistice was entered into, as follows:

"Article I.—There shall be a suspension of hostilities between the United States and said tribes, from this day until the pleasure of the Government of the former shall be known. In the meantime, said tribes may retire to their hunting grounds, and there remain unmolested, provided they behave themselves.

"Article II.—In the event of any murder, or other depredation, being committed upon any citizen of the United States, by any of the other tribes or Indians, those who are parties to these presents shall immediately unite their exertions to punish the offenders.