INDIAN HISTORY.

BY JOHN A. GRAHAM.

THE most reliable Indian history, based, of course, on their traditions, differs so that the Miami Confederacy claimed dominion over all the territory bounded east by the Scioto, west by Fox River, south by the Ohio, and north by the lakes. This would embrace part of Ohio, all of Indiana, part of Illinois, and the southern part of Michigan. That the Miamis should give the name to such a confederacy shows that they were powerful among the tribes composing it. Me-sha-le-no-qua, or Little Turtle, the great Miami Chief, said to Gen. Wayne, at the treaty of Greenville: "You have joined out to us the boundary line between the Indians and the United States; but I now take the liberty to inform you that that line cuts off from the Indians a large portion of country which has been enjoyed by my forefathers from time immemorial, without molestation or dispute. * * It is well known by all my brothers present, that my forefather kindled the first fire at Detroit, from thence he extended his lines to the headwaters of the Scioto; thence to the mouth, down the Ohio, to the mouth of the Wabash; thence to Chicago, on Lake Michigan."

The Miamies were called Twightwees and were the most powerful branch of the confederacy. They held and occupied the eastern portion of the common territory as distinctively their own, and as they resisted before white settlement, that portion of it lying along the upper Wabash and entrenched within the limits of Miami and adjoining counties was the very last to which they yielded possession.

They dwelt in permanent villages, thus indicating a higher civilization than that of the nomadic tribes of the farther west. For this purpose they selected the most beautiful sites on the banks of rivers and small streams. While their principal sustenance was derived from hunting and fishing, their selections for village sites and their treaty reservations, whether of large or small tracts, are, proverbially, the very best lands for agricultural purposes.

The Miamis who resided within the area of this county numbered, in their most prosperous days, about 800 warriors. They were a proud and haughty people, holding the neighboring tribes in contempt, as an inferior race.

They were a warlike tribe and were allies of England in the wars between that country and this. Their chiefs were able leaders, the most conspicuous of whom, as a statesman and warrior, was Little Turtle.

Their prowess in the field is historical under the leadership of this celebrated chief, who, as commander of the allied Indian forces, defeated Gen. Harmer, October 19, 1790, and Gen. Sinclair, November 4, 1791—the most disastrous reverses suffered by the whites at the hands of the Indians.

And not less conspicuous is the warlike character they sustained in their defeat by Gen. Wayne, at the battle of Fort Wayne, August 20, 1794, by Gen. Harrison, at the battle of Tippecanoe, November 17, 1811, and by Col. Campbell, on the Mississinewa, about seven miles east of the southeast corner of this county, in December, 1812. Francis Godfroy, Lewis Godfroy, his brother, and Sharp-pa-ose-ah, or Deaf Man, residing in this immediate vicinity, were noted war chiefs, and participated in the battles referred to. Lewis Godfroy gave the signal for the Indians to attack at the battle of Tippecanoe, and he and his brother Francis and Deaf Man, were the Indian leaders in the battle with Col. Campbell, which was nearly a drawn fight.

The Indian villages in this county were: Wa-aw's, on the north bank of Eel River, below Denver, at the mouth of We-aw Creek; Flowers' Village, on the south side, opposite Chili; and Squirrel's Village, on the north side, near Rochdale. The Indians living at Flowers' Village were Wea, subsequently designated on the pay-rolls as Eel Rivers; at We-aw's, Pottawatomies; and at Squirrel's or Nine-mile's, Miamis. Miamis intermarried, to some extent, with the Weas and Pottawatomies, and, in the course of time, Indians of these tribes were recognized as Miamis, signing treaties and participating in annuities with them.

The most important village in this county was the Osage, on the west bank of the Mississinewa, one mile above its mouth, and two miles above Peru. This was, doubtless, the largest Miami village belonging to the tribe. It took its name from that of Osage, its first chief. It was a beautiful site for a village, but is now cut over. She-pa-con-ah, or Deaf Man, was a war chief of this village. He married Peter Hanna, the Indian captive, and established what was called Deaf Man's village, farther up the river, in the edge of Wabash County. There were other small villages at different points.

Francis Godfroy, son of Jodes Jacques, or James Godfroy, a French trader among the Indians, succeeded Deaf Man as war chief. He and his brother Lewis were distinguished men in the tribe from early manhood, and took a leading part in its important affairs. They were prominent in the battles of Fort Wayne, Tippecanoe and the Mississinewa. Their high position in the tribe is evidenced by the fact that, in the treaty of St. Mary's, made in 1818, between Jonathan Jennings, Benjamin Park and Lewis Cass, Commissioners of the United States on the one part, and the Miami tribe of Indians on the other, Francis was granted a reservation of six sections of land on the Salamonie, at La Fetch Prairie, and Lewis six sections on the St. Mary's, above the reservation of Anthony Shaw. The affection of the brothers for each other is shown by an article of agreement, now before the writer, made on the 2d day of December, 1824, witnessed by Gen. Tipton and Joseph Barron, in which they agree to exchange one section of these reservations, and bind themselves not to sell or otherwise dispose of the same, unless by mutual consent—the sole object and purpose of the exchange being that "the brothers may live near each other."

The wife of Chief Godfroy, and her sister, the wife of White Wolf, were the daughters of a white man named Cole, who had been captured by the Indians, in Kentucky, when he was a child.

Francis Godfroy contracted for the building of a two-story log house on the Mississinewa, in 1822, as elsewhere stated. This became his homestead and trading-post, and was located some distance above the mouth of the Mississinewa, on the Wabash. He did not remove from the Salamonie until about 1827; but for several years previous to his removal, alternated his residence between the two places, spending a few months each year on the Wabash.

By the treaty of 1826, he was granted a reserve of a section of land which extends one mile up the Wabash on its north bank, from a north and south line a little east of Treadway, including within its area the east half of Peru; and by the treaty of 1840, he was granted two sections between the Mississinewa and Wabash, where he lived.

He was a man of splendid physical development, being six feet high and weighing about three hundred pounds. He was genial, generous and dignified; sincere in his friendship, paternal in his rule, and princely in his hospitality. He was known and esteemed by the most distinguished men of his day, and among those those against whom he fought in battle. On this point may be introduced a letter from Col. Richard M. Johnson, as the first it was written Vice President of the United States, which will explain itself:

"SENATE CHAMBER, 13 January, 1829.

"SIR: I have this day received the elegant tomahawk from your hands, as a present from my friend and brother, the brave Miami Chief, Pe-ton-se-ah, and I now return my thanks to that brave and generous chief and warrior, and let him know that I shall ever keep it as a token of his friendship.

"In addition to this, I send by you a brace of pistols, which you will please present to that brave chief and warrior as evidence of regard. With sentiments of great respect,

"Your friend and obedient servant,

"Col. A. C. Pepper, Supt." "RI. M. JOHNSON.

Pe-ton-se-ah, as he is called in the letter, was the Indian way of pronouncing the French name Francois, or Francis.

Before the French, the whites had become quite numerous, and in all his business intercourse with them, which was varied and extensive, he sustained his reputation of honor and strict integrity. He had a lively sense of what was due to and expected from a man of his position, and was ever prompt to second his white friends in any enterprise looking to the general good.

He built a store-room on his own section, just adjoining the eastern boundary of the original plat of Osaic street, and, with L. B. Berthold, under the firm of Godfroy & Berthold, kept a store for trade with the Indians and whites, up to 1828. About 1830, he bought from J. W. Pondleton the frame house between the canal and river, at the end of the bridge, which, after his death, was bought of his estate, by G. L. Dare.

He was a prompt and liberal contributor on all public calls for money; was gracious and hospitable to white visitors, and, like one of the old barons, always kept about his "Mount Pleasant" home a large retinue of his own people.

In the Spring of 1840, he was taken sick and, after a lingering illness, died on the 6th of May of that year. A numerous concourse of white citizens, as well as his own people, manifested their respect for the chief by attending his funeral, which took place at his own house, his grave being but a short distance from it on the rising ground to the south. Wap-pa-pin-sha, called, also, Black Raccoon, a Chief and noted orator, delivered a funeral discourse on the occasion, which was translated at the time, as follows:

"BROTHERS: The Great Spirit has taken to himself another of our once powerful and happy, but now rapidly declining nation. The time has been when these forests were densely populated by the red man; but the same hand whose blighting touch withered the majestic frame before us, and caused the noble spirit by which it was animated to seek another home, has dealt in a like manner with his and our fathers; in like manner will it deal with us. Death, scarcely visible, is at our side. But when the brave, the generous and the patriotic has started by it, then it is that the tears of sorrow freely flow.

"Such is now the case; our brother who has just left us was brave, generous and patriotic, and as a tribute to his merit, and a reward for goodness, we assembled to witness the funeral rites, freely flow.

"As this scene the poor of his people weep, because at his table they were sure to feast and rejoice. The weak mourn his death, because his authority was directed to their protection. But he has left the earth, the place of vexation and contention, and is now participating with Pondexter and Logan in those joys prepared by the Great Spirit for such as well and faithfully discharge their duties here. Brothers, let us emulate his example and practice his virtues."

His sons, Gabriel, and William, own and cultivate their farms on the Mississinewa, the latter being part of their father's reservation of five sections. Gabriel has a splendid farm, which he cultivates largely, and a fine brick residence, where he lives with his family surrounded by all the comforts due to industry and good management.

The settlement of the Pottawattomies at Wesaw's Village, and of the Weas at Flower's Village, took place in 1826 or 1827, while Gen. Tipton was Indian Agent, or Superintendent, for all the tribes in Indiana. The Miamis did not like the new neighborhood, and regarded these people as trespassers. This ill-will manifested itself in conflicts which sometimes resulted in the death of one or more of the parties engaged. One occurred of the kind at Mississinewa in 1828. Three Indians of the Flowers' party were going from into the reserve, south of the Wabash, to hunt. They went by Miamisport, as that was a crossing-place, and perhaps to get whisky. They got into a fight with some Miamis there, and two of the Flowers party were killed, and the other so badly wounded that he died some time afterwards. The dead were buried on the bank of the river in the town, and for years afterwards, until the dirt taken out in digging the canal, covered their graves, a white flag on a pole was kept flowing over them.

After the Eel River reservations were disposed of by treaty, the Flowers and Squirrel parties abandoned their villages on that river and established others on the north bank of the Wabash, while the Pottawattomies due did not go West moved up into Michigan. The Weas settled on Deer Creek and the Squirrel party on Pipe Creek, about 1838.

From 1826 until their removal West, the Miamis, as a people, grew utterly reckless and dissipated. They placed no value on property and squandered it with lavish indifference. Their dissipation led to frequent quarrels and homicides, so that their number decreased rapidly in the few years preceding their removal.

Some of the cases in which they killed each other attracted the notice of the whites more than others, among them the following:

Shoo-co-wah, a half brother of Ni-con-ah (Squirrel), was a bad Indian, quarrelsome and treacherous—what would be called among the whites a desperado. He had killed several and wounded, abused and threatened many others, and he was generally feared.

Old Mother Tap-pe, who had several daughters, and Ah-tin-de-o-quah, who had two daughters, and a son named We-a-co-mah, lived on what is now the David Hahn farm, in Butler Township. Their cabins were close together, and the Indians resorted there. At the time of the occurrence related it was raining, several Weas, among them the brothers Sharp-pan-de-o-ah, and Qua-con-ah-ont-wah, and Shoo-cut-wah, Ni-con-ah, Shoo-conwah and Me-a-quah, of the Ni-con-ah or Squirrel party of Miamis, were there drinking. They had spent the night in their entrance in his house of which Shoo-cut-wah caught Mother Tappe by the hair and struck her in the face with his fist, bruising it and causing the blood to flow freely. This made the old woman mad for revenge, and she told her daughters to lend her a pistol secretly, for she was going to kill Shoo-cut-wah. They loaded the pistol and gave it to her. This was the next morning after the night's debauch and the Indians were outside the house, sitting and standing, and Shoo-cut-wah was in a half recumbent position resting on his elbow. The old woman came to him and pointing the pistol at him, told him she was going to kill him, but just as she was about to pull the trigger, Wap-pa-pin-she, who was generally called Black Raccoon, a man of rank and distinguished as an orator among the Indians, came round the house, caught her hand and inquired what she was going to do. She told him how she had been abused, showed her bruised and bloody face, and said she was going to kill Shoo-co-wah. Wap-pin-sha took the pistol and told Shoo-co-wah that he was a bad Indian, that he was an ass, but a coward, to abuse an old woman in that way, and he must die. Shoo-co-wah did not move from his position, and Wap-pa-pin-she, standing above him, fired downward, the ball passing between the collar bone and throat. After being shot, Shoo-cut-wah, rubbing blood, got up and walked toward Wap-pa-pin-she, who had moved away from where Shoo-cut-wah had been lying. As Shoo-cut-wah passed the Indians, they thought he wanted a weapon, and Sharp-pan-de-o-ah said to Wap-pa-pin-she, who was paralyzed in one arm and unarmed, "He will kill you; take this," handing him a large Bowie knife. Wap-pa-pin-sha took the knife, upon seeing which Shoo-cut-wah began to plead, saying to Wap-pa-pin-sha, "Don't kill me, my friend; you have done enough; I am your friend." To which Wap-pa-pin-sha answered, "No, you are not my friend; you are nobody's friend; you abuse the Indians and you must die," and he plunged the knife into Shoo-cut-wah's heart. He drew it out of the breast of Shoo-cut-wah, a stream of blood spouting down the wound, and, after wiping it on the grass, handed it back to Sharp-pan-de-o-ah.

The Squirrel party, to which Shoo-co-wah belonged, threatened revenge, and the whites, who thought substantial justice had been done by Wap-pa-pinsha, brought him to town and protected him from his enemies.

Another case, which was regarded by the whites in a different light, and aroused their horror and indignation, was the killing, by Pesahwa, a Pottawattomie, of two men and a woman of the Flowers or Wea party. He had lived at Weasaw Village, and had two wives of the Flowers party. After the removal of the Weas from Eel River to the Reserve, south of the Wabash, he and his wives and the two half-breeds of one of them were settled on Pipe Creek, near where the Strawtown road crosses the same. Their names were Ah-ish-ton-ah and Shap-pan-de-o-ah, and were married and had houses at the same place. Shap-pan-de-o-ah's wife was named Kil-so-quah, and Ah-ish-ton-ah's, Me-she-co-ta-quah. These two Weas and their wives went on a boat some six miles southwest of where they lived, on Little Deer Creek, and camped. The men went hunting and the women remained in camp. The poor of Me-she-co-ta-quah got loose at the camp and started back toward home. She followed, and did not catch it until it had nearly reached there. When she returned near to the camp she approached it Indian-like, cautiously, and seeing Kil-so-quah sitting very quietly and in a curious position, her fears of something being very wrong were aroused, and she crept quietly up to the camp. She found her sister-in-law, whom she had left but few hours before well, sitting in a half-reclining position, dead, with a wild turkey she had been picking, in her lap. She retreated in terror, got on her pony and went with all haste to the Wea Village, on Deer Creek, to give the alarm. A party at once started for the camp. They soon came upon the trail of the hostiles in a swampy thicket. They followed it but a short distance when they found the body of one of the Indians, shot from behind through the back of the head, and his pony shot; following the trail still further, they found the other, shot through the body.

The Indians were furious and the whites turned out with them to hunt the murderer, but the search was fruitless. It was considered a cruel murder, and if Pesahwa had been found, the whites would have accorded the Indians in taking summary vengeance.

It is but justice, perhaps, to give Pesahwa's statement. He was an Indian of great physical power, cool, and of dauntless courage. After the killing of the Indians, he coolly loaded up the deer they had killed and brought them home to his own cabin, as that the meat should not be lost. He said secreted near his own cabin, the Indians and white men around it hunting him. He was well-armed, and it is very doubtful whether all the force in the party could have captured him—certainly not without his killing several of them, which he had fully determined to do. The second night after the killing, he left Pipe Creek, crossed the Wabash above town, went round the head of the prairie, and reached the house of Ephraim Bourne, on the top of the high ground north of the prairie, a little north of John Hiner's house. Here he was concealed in the corn-crib through which the Marion pike runs, for two days, the whites, as well as Indians, hunting him in all directions. The third night, he started north, and it is only recently he died at his home near South Bend. B. S. Bourne and his brother Ephraim were his friends, and it is from the former the relation of Pesahwa's version is obtained. Pesahwa told Bourne the killing was done in self-defense; that Kil-so-quah was always making disturbance, and that these two men had arranged to kill him, and that he had only anticipated them. During his stay at Ephraim Bourne's he was not in the least excited or disturbed, and seemed to have entire confidence in his own ability to take care of himself against any odds. In after years he went among the Miamis, but they seemed willing to forget the past. There is a mournful sequel to his killing of these people, in perfect consistence, however, with Indian custom:

At his home, on Pipe Creek, he left two children, by a former wife, a Pottawattomie woman. They were kept under strict surveillance by the Weas, as hostages, and it was understood that if Pesahwa was not caught they would be sacrificed. The boy was got away, and, like his father, found refuge at Ephraim Bourne's; but the girl remained, and shortly afterward disappeared, and the legend is—and it is believed by Pin-ay-oh-con-ah, a Miami, now living in this neighborhood, to be true—that the brother of the Flowers party killed the girl by the most cruel method of cutting her to pieces. This she, no doubt, regarded as a sacred duty, to avenge the killing of her own people by the child's father.

The date of the foregoing murders is not remembered exactly, but it is somewhere about 1841 or 1842.

Among other cases of killing, the following may be mentioned:

Wah-pash-co-se-ah was killed by Wia-paw-ah, in 1846. Sharp-pan-de-ah's wife, a Pottawattomie woman, killed Mah-qua-se-con-gah, in 1846, at the Osage Village. Pung-ah-shin-gah killed Mas-co-ah, or Muscle, as he was called by the whites, in 1846. Kes-ah-con-e-ka-ah, who died but a few years ago, at his home, near the Mississinewa—a peaceable, manly Indian, and remarkable for his great weight, some four hundred pounds—killed Shoo-co-con-wah, under almost ludicrous circumstances. They had been in town, drinking, and on their way home, somewhere near the old lime-kiln, on the road between Peru and the Mississinewa, Shoo-co-conwah, who was quarrelsome, wanted to fight. Kes-ah-con-e-ka-ah said he did not want to fight, that he was not mad, and had nothing to fight about. The other insisted, at least to fight white Indian fist, with their fists. So, to gratify his friend, Kes-ah-con-e-ka-ah consented, and they got off their horses. They were both under the influence of liquor, and, before commencing, Shoo-co-con-wah took out his bottle, took a drink, and handed it to Kes-ah-con-e-ka-ah, inviting him to drink. While the latter had the bottle to his mouth, the other struck at him with a knife, cutting through his coat and inflicting a severe wound in his breast. Kes-ah-con-e-ka-ah seized him by the throat, crushed him to the ground, held him there with one hand, while with the other he reached into his vest-pocket, got out a sheep dirk-knife, opened the blade with his teeth, and then struck it into the breast of his treacherous friend. He repeated his blows with the knife until he effectually served the pugilistic Miami of all further disposition to fight white-man fashion.

Kes-ah-con-e-ka-ah, for years before his death, had been falling away in flesh, until, at the occurrence of that event, he did not weigh more than, perhaps, a hundred pounds. Once, years ago, when he was at his greatest weight, he was arrested in town for being drunk, and perhaps fifty men and boys were engaged in taking him before the Mayor. His great strength enabled him to throw them off as though they were children; but, about the time they got him to the office, he was exhausted, and gave up, exclaiming, "Oh, too many—can't." The entrance to the Mayor's office was by an outside stairway. The Mayor looked out of the window, and, seeing the elephantine proportions of the prisoner, dismissed the case for want of sufficient stairs.

Pin-ay-oh-con-ah, son of Old Squirrel, had killed an Indian, and was arraigned for murder, at the March term of the Circuit Court, 1843. It was the first and only time an Indian had been thus brought to an account for such an act. Judge John M. Wright was on the bench. There was