

## THE INDIAN REVEALS HIS CHARACTER

BY DR. GEORGE H. DAUGHERTY, JR.

THE character of the North American Indian has long been the subject of controversy. The early Spanish explorers of America were in some doubt whether the natives were actually human. The Pope ruled that they were human and should be treated as such; but the explorers and their successors did not heed this injunction very well. By the eighteenth century, however, it was the style for romantic philosophers like Rousseau, most of whom had never even seen an Indian, to extol him as a noble savage, an undefiled, metaphysical super-man. These philosophers advised their contemporaries to lead the Indian's happy life, but none of the philosophical gentry ever tried the experiment themselves.

The colonists and hunters who actually came in contact with the Indian were nearly unanimous in the traditional opinion of the "pesky redskin," who was only good when dead.<sup>1</sup> Today this view seems to be gradually dying out in favor of the "noble savage" idea. There are many earnest people who still regard the Indian as a once-happy and undefiled son of nature, now soiled and ruined by disgusting civilization.

Which, if either, of these views is correct will be revealed by the following analyses of aboriginal compositions in which the Indian speaks for himself. It will be noticed that the selections chosen are all either songs or speeches. These types of composition, especially the former, were much more religiously guarded and handed down, orally of course, among the tribesmen, than were legends and tales. Each tribe carefully preserved its songs as a precious heritage which another tribe could not borrow. This feeling was partly due to the belief in magical properties of many songs, especially those inspired by dreams. Each individual tribesman also had his store of songs

<sup>1</sup> See Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail*, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. New York, 1901, pp. 292-293.

which he himself had composed and which no one else could sing without permission. Especially good songs were sometimes bought and sold. Thus there was a primitive copyright law. The result of this regard for songs is that many of them have descended almost unchanged for generations before being noted down by expert ethnologists. Such songs therefore reveal the true heart and soul of the red man better than would any amount of theorizing by white men.

Indian speeches are, of course, much harder to obtain than songs. Most of them were uttered on special occasions. Not being recorded in writing, they quickly were forgotten. Some few which were recorded by white men have been greatly changed by the transcribers who desired to improve them. The fact remains that the Indians were notable orators, as even their worst enemies testify. A few of their great speeches have come down in accurate form, and also serve as an index to the nature of those who uttered them.

One of the most disputed questions about the Indian's character is his reputation for being a ferocious and cruel fighter. Many people, some of whom should know better, maintain that in ancient America the inhabitants lived very much at peace; and that it was the villainous white man who taught the Indian how to fight and to practice all the other vices. Dr. Joseph K. Dixon even goes the length of saying: "There are many cogent reasons for the belief that before the coming of the white man there were no general or long continued wars among the Indians. There was no motive for war."<sup>2</sup> The falsity of such an assumption is manifest in some of the very speeches cited by Dr. Dixon. Statement by Chief Apache-John:

"The first thing I can remember is my father telling me about war. . . . We were then moving from place to place, and the old people were constantly talking about war. That was the school in which I was brought up—a war school."<sup>3</sup>

Statement by Chief Runs-the-Enemy: "After we had killed Custer and all his men I did not think very much about it. The soldiers fired into us first, and we returned the fire. Sitting Bull had asked

<sup>2</sup> *The Vanishing Race*, p. 23. Even if one lays aside the pessimistic but probably correct generalization that no group of human beings could exist together very long anywhere without finding numerous motives for war, the statement of Dr. Dixon is entirely erroneous. Dr. Dixon reasons that because weapons were crude, and fighting was often done hand to hand, quarrels must have been few, and casualties light. The absurdity of such reasoning needs no further comment. See also Parkman, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-4, and p. 265ff.

<sup>3</sup> *The Vanishing Race*, p. 46.

us and all the tribes to make a brave fight and we made it. When we had killed all the soldiers we felt that we had done our duty, and felt that it was a great battle and not a massacre."<sup>4</sup>

Fighting, to the Indian, was a keen enjoyment. The causes for wars between pre-Columbian tribes were exactly the same as those for wars between whites and Indians, and even between nations of Europeans—encroachment on hunting grounds and individual acts of aggression or revenge by members of either party.

Any authentic tribal history is likely to be a very blood-stained chronicle.<sup>5</sup> A particularly notable military organization was the great offensive and defensive league of the Iroquois. These politic savages solemnly, perhaps sincerely, stated that they went to war "in order to end war." It was said of them that their career "was simply terrific. They were the scourge of God upon the aborigines of the continent."<sup>6</sup> Even among the sedentary and comparatively peaceable pueblo tribes in the southwest a proof of continuous warfare is seen in the cliff dwellings. These were designed to resist attacks by the more nomadic tribes.<sup>7</sup>

In connection with the Indians' general leanings toward warfare it may be added that among them there were degrees of bellicosity. Some of the Delawares appear to have had more peaceful dispositions.<sup>8</sup> Certainly they held a curiously anomalous position of "peace makers," or inter-tribal arbiters during the great days of the Iro-

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>5</sup> See accounts of any tribe in the *Reports of the Bureau of Ethnology*. For those who like that sort of thing, Warren's "History of the Ojibway," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. V is to be highly recommended. It is quite the goriest book I recall ever to have read, and one of the most interesting of Indian histories.

William Warren, born 1825, was the son of a three-quarter Ojibway woman and a white trader. He received a good education, served in the Minnesota Legislature, died in 1853. He spoke Ojibway fluently; and though young achieved fame as a writer and authority on Indian culture.

See J. Fletcher Williams, "Memoir of William Warren," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, Vol. V, pp. 11-19.

<sup>6</sup> L. H. Morgan, *Ancient Society*, p. 70, quoting General F. A. Walker, in the *North American Review*, April, 1873, p. 370, note 1. See also Horatio Hale, *The Iroquois Book of Rites*, Philadelphia, 1883, pp. 88ff.

<sup>7</sup> A. F. Bandelier, *Final Report of Investigations Among the Indians of the Southwestern United States, Carried on Mainly in the Years from 1880-1885*, Part II, Cambridge, 1892, pp. 17-18. The same author (*Ibid.*, pp. 21, 24) remarks instances of pueblos abandoned on account of enemy attacks.

<sup>8</sup> "Hodge's Handbook of the American Indians," Bulletin 30, *Bureau of American Ethnology*, Vol. II, "Algonquin Family," p. 43.

quois league. This position carried no honor; it was forced on them by the ferocious Iroquois who scornfully dubbed them "the woman tribe," and heaped other insults on them.<sup>9</sup>

The ferocious side of the Indian's character, his thirst for vengeance, as well as his savage sense of justice are all startlingly expressed in the famous speech of Logan. This speech has been described as "perhaps the finest outburst of savage eloquence of which we have any authentic record."<sup>10</sup> It has been so widely celebrated and quoted that the attending circumstances are well worth repeating. Logan was an Iroquois chief who figured prominently in the Indian wars before and after the American Revolution. He was celebrated for his splendid appearance and noble qualities, as well as for his loyal friendship for the whites. This friendship was turned to bitter hatred by a terrible and ghastly piece of villainy. During the campaign known as "Lord Dunmore's War," in 1774, a party of frontiersmen under one Greathouse, of infamous memory, murdered all of Logan's kinsfolk. These Indians, believing Greathouse to be friendly had come to his camp to trade. "The whole party (of Indians) were plied with liquor, and became helplessly drunk, in which condition Greathouse and his associated criminals fell on and massacred them, nine souls in all."<sup>11</sup> This abominable deed was inspired by previous Indian outrages; it was, perhaps, no worse than many another perpetrated by both sides, before and afterwards. Nevertheless, it was especially instrumental in stirring the Indians to fury. The succeeding war was bloody, and was signalized by several brutal massacres committed by Logan. When peace was finally made, Logan refused to come to the council. Lord Dunmore, the governor of Virginia, "was obliged to communicate with him through a messenger, a frontier veteran named John Gibson, who had long lived among the Indians and knew thoroughly both their speech and their manners. To this messenger Logan was willing to talk. Taking him aside, he suddenly addressed him in a speech. . . . The messenger took it down in writing, translating it literally, and, returning to camp, gave it to Lord Dunmore. . . . The speech when read proved to be no message of peace, nor an acknowledgement of defeat, but instead, a strangely pathetic recital

<sup>9</sup> Beauchamp, "A History of the New York Iroquois," *New York State Museum, Bulletin* 78, pp. 281-2.

<sup>10</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West*, Vol. I, New York, 1897, p. 237.

<sup>11</sup> Roosevelt, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

of his wrongs, and a fierce and exultant justification of the vengeance he had taken. It ran as follows:

"I appeal to any white man to say if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry and he gave him not meat; if ever he came cold and naked and he clothed him not? During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his camp, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites that my countrymen pointed as I passed and said, 'Logan is the friend of the white man.' I had even thought to have lived with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many. I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country I rejoice at the beams of peace; but do not harbor a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one."<sup>12</sup>

Similar in tone is a letter by Logan, previously dictated to a white prisoner who wrote it out. On his (Logan's) next (war) expedition this note, tied to a war club, was left in the house of a settler, whose entire family was murdered. It was a short document, written with ferocious directness, as a kind of public challenge or taunt to the man whom he wrongly deemed to be the author of his misfortunes. It ran as follows:

"Captain Cresap:

"What did you kill my people on Yellow Creek for? The white people killed my kin at Conestoga, a great while ago, and I thought nothing of that. But you killed my kin again on Yellow Creek, and

<sup>12</sup> Roosevelt, *op. cit.*, Chapter IX, pp. 217ff. and especially pp. 236-7-8.

The authenticity of Logan's speech was for a time the subject of controversy. I have followed Roosevelt's account because he goes into the matter fully, giving unquestionable proofs of Logan's authorship (see *Ibid.*, Appendix F, pp. 347ff.). It is noteworthy that Logan mistook the real murderer. Col. Cresap was a celebrated frontiersman who had led a massacre of Indians just previous to the outrage against Logan. He was therefore blamed by the latter and other Indians, for both attacks. Attempts to discredit Logan's authorship are mainly directed toward vindicating Cresap. Roosevelt proves that Logan could hardly have known that Cresap was not concerned. He also adduces evidence that the speech was given almost literally as Logan spoke it. See *Ibid.*, p. 237, note 2, and Appendix F, pp. 352. "Logan's speech can unhesitatingly be pronounced authentic."

took my cousin prisoner. Then I thought I must kill too; and I have been three times to war since; but the Indians are not angry, only myself.

"July 21, 1774.

Captain John Logan."<sup>13</sup>

Some of the reasons for the Indian's love of fighting are plain to see in the above documents. Further justification or condemnation of his unquestioned cruelty, his more than occasional treachery need not be detailed here. The present discussion is limited to the effect of a war-like environment on Indian utterances. The following selections, not so fiercely poignant as the preceding, still carry echoes of the war whoop.

"On the mountain tops was a yellow spider magician, upon whom I cried for help. He went to the enemy, darkened their hands and their bows, and made them grow weak as women. Then he pushed us on to destroy the enemy. We rushed upon the Apaches and killed them without difficulty. With gladness in my heart I gathered the evidences of my victory and returned home."<sup>14</sup>

"I make him bite the dust,  
The Wapeton Sioux  
When I see him."<sup>15</sup>

"The Sioux women pass to and fro wailing,

As they gather up their wounded men the voice of their weeping  
comes back to us."<sup>16</sup>

But the Indian, even on the war path, did not always continue in this strain. Occasionally even the bravest fighter grew weary of the hard campaign. The following is an echo of nearly any soldier's thoughts on outpost duty at night:

"Well  
a wolf

<sup>13</sup> Roosevelt, *op. cit.*, Chapter IX, pp. 217ff.

<sup>14</sup> Part of an ancient traditional war speech of the Pima tribe. Quoted by Frank Russel, "The Pima Indians," *Twenty-sixth Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, pp. 364-5.

<sup>15</sup> Ojibway war song. Quoted by Frances Densmore, "Chippewa Music" II, *Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin* 53, p. 70.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

I considered myself.  
 And yet  
 I have eaten nothing  
 and  
 I can scarcely stand."<sup>17</sup>

He also grew homesick, and heartily wished himself out of the war and back safe with the girls of the village.

"The women have gone to gather wood  
 And are having a joyous time chatting around the trees,  
 While here, very miserable am I, walking."<sup>18</sup>

When "the boys" struck up this mournful strain the leader of the war party tried to cheer them up with songs supposed to reflect the sentiments of the Indian maidens.

"*Ena!* The one I wish to marry has gone to war.  
*Ena!* The one I hate has not gone forth, but remains here."

"The one I was going to marry  
 is gone again (on the war path)  
 it was I whom she meant by saying this."<sup>19</sup>

Slackers who stayed at home were properly derided by the hardy warriors:

"Although Jinguabe (man's name)  
 A man considers himself  
 his wife certainly takes all his attention."<sup>20</sup>

After his campaigns were over, the old brave manifested a spirit which shows him blood brother to all soldiers, past and present:

"A warrior I have been.  
 Now it is all over,  
 A hard time I have."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Densmore, "Teton Sioux Music," *Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin* 61, p. 345.

<sup>18</sup> Alice C. Fletcher, "The Omaha Tribe," *Twenty-seventh Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, Part I, p. 119.

<sup>19</sup> Densmore, "Teton Sioux Music," p. 373.

<sup>20</sup> Densmore, "Chippewa Music" II, p. 90.

<sup>21</sup> Densmore, "Teton Sioux Music," p. 459.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 459ff.

"Mighty, mighty, great in war  
 So was I honored:  
 Now behold me, old and wretched."<sup>22</sup>

To their real friends the Indians were neither stolid, secretive nor treacherous. Within the tribe and towards honored strangers they maintained a curious code of etiquette. Even trifling affairs were conducted, not with stolidity but with much pomp and ceremony. Almost any sort of action involving several individuals was preceded by the inevitable council with its code of harangues and songs.<sup>23</sup> Methods of greeting, especially if the visitor came on business, were formal and preceded by a portentous silence. Elders were accorded respect, and were the officials to receive delegations. Women were in some cases accorded ceremonious deference, especially among the Iroquois. Even the postures assumed by individuals, if the occasion was a formal one, were prescribed by custom.<sup>24</sup> The reason for this ceremonialism in matters large and small is to be found in love of display and personal aggrandizement. "Among some tribes every movement and gesture and expression of the male seems to have been affected or controlled with the view to impressing spectators."<sup>25</sup> Selections illustrating grand councils and rituals are reserved for Chapter VI. Minor instances of ceremoniousness are somewhat hard to find. A short quotation from the proceedings of an Iroquois council illustrates some of the assertions made above.

"Hail, hail, hail! I come again to greet and thank the kindred!  
 Hail, hail, hail! I come again to greet and thank the women!  
 Hail, hail, hail! I come again to greet and thank the warriors!  
 Hail, hail, hail! I come again to greet and thank the League!  
 My forefathers—what they established—  
 Harken to them—my forefathers."<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps a better instance is the quotation, given by Beauchamp, of the procedure of an Iroquois council with certain Frenchmen. ". . . The reply of the Iroquois to the French was prefaced by six

<sup>23</sup> McGee reports that among the Sioux an elaborate and strict code of social minutiae was rigorously observed. "Siouan Indians," *Fifteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, p. 169ff. See also Horatio Hale, *The Iroquois Book of Rites*.

<sup>24</sup> W. H. Miner, *The American Indians*, Cambridge, 1917, pp. 31ff.

<sup>25</sup> W. J. McGee, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>26</sup> Beauchamp, "Civil, Religious, and Mourning Councils," p. 401.

airs or chants, which had nothing savage and which expressed very naively (sic), by the diversity of tones, the different passions they wished to represent. The first song said thus: *O, the beautiful land, the beautiful land, which is to be inhabited by the French. . . .*

In the second chant the chief intoned these words: *Good news! very good news!* The others repeated them in the very same tone. Then the chief continued, *It is all good, my brothers, it is every way good that we speak together; it is wholly good that we have a heavenly speech.*

The third song had a grace given it by a very melodious refrain, and said: *My brother, I salute thee; my brother, thou art welcome. Ai, ai, ai, hi. O, the beautiful voice! O, the beautiful voice that thou hast! Ai, ai, ai, hi. O, the beautiful voice, O, the beautiful voice that I also have! Ai, ai, ai, hi.*

The fourth song had another grace by the cadence which these musicians kept, striking with their feet, their hands, and their pipes against the mat, but with such good accord that this noise so well regulated made a harmony sweet to hear; these are its words: *My brother, I salute thee: it is all good; unfeignedly I accept the heaven which thou hast made me see; yes, I agree to it, I accept it.*

They sang for the fifth time, saying, *Adieu to war, adieu to the ax; up to the present time we have been insane, but henceforth we will be brothers; yes, indeed, we will be brothers.*

The last song had the words: *To-day the great peace is made. Adieu to war, adieu to arms: for the whole affair is beautiful throughout; thou dost uphold our cabins when thou comest with us.*

These songs were followed by four beautiful presents.<sup>27</sup>

It was this same love of display, amounting to braggadocio which inspired the stoical or defiant attitude of warriors in the face of privation, suffering, and death.

"You emulated me, and now you are weeping, *He ya tha tho e.*

Among the surrounding tribes I only am the brave. *Ha ha!*

You tried to be like me; behold you weep your dead. *Ha ha!*

Where do I send them when I come?

Where do I send them when I come?

To their graves!

I send them, *ah, hae, thae he thae he thae!*"<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Beauchamp, "Civil, Religious, and Mourning Councils," pp. 435-6, quoting *Jesuit Relations 1611-1672*, Quebec, 1858, *Relations of 1656*.

<sup>28</sup> Fletcher, "Omaha Music," p. 254.

"My friends, do not flee.  
I am strong hearted."<sup>29</sup>

"The Crow Indians  
rushing to fight  
I a Mewatani  
took courage."<sup>30</sup>

There were numerous times when the grandiose brave relaxed. The stolid and gloomy warrior whom the white man met at the council fire was quite a different individual at odd hours with his fellow braves. Nearly every village had a lodge or club house where the warriors gathered to smoke and have a social time in the evening. According to those few white men ever privileged to visit the soldier's lodge all taciturnity and formality was abolished. The noble red men amused themselves just like any group of jolly bachelors, or married men on a holiday. They spent their time chiefly in gambling, drinking, smoking, and especially in the telling of risqué stories and jests. It is said that not a woman in the tribe could escape ribald comment.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, the white auditors at these sessions have not seen fit to record the material they heard.

Humor is, of course, a very fragile thing. The jokes of one people or age appear dull, flat, and boring to another. Even individuals differ on this score. We are assured that the Indians had a sense of humor, but our search for evidence of it is likely to be in vain. One infers that their jokes were somewhat elementary. Major General Howard reports: "The Nez Percés laughed among themselves at the queer ways and looks of the white visitor. They made merry over the white man's odd whisker's, and compared his forehead to the peculiar front of some bird, or pig, or sheep. A bald head was full of suggestions to them. It seemed to mean deception, untruthfulness, or signified what they called a 'piked tongue.' These conclusions were derived from their experiences with bald-headed men whom they had met in council, and whose promises were never fulfilled. They laughed heartily as children do, at small accidents which occurred in their games and sports. I noticed everywhere

<sup>29</sup> Densmore, "Chippewa Music," II, p. 109.

<sup>30</sup> Densmore, "Teton Sioux Music," p. 395.

<sup>31</sup> J. Owen Dorsey, "Siouan Sociology," *Fifteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, p. 225. Major General O. O. Howard, *My Life and Experiences Among Our Hostile Indians*, Hartford, Conn., 1907, pp. 556ff. Natalie Curtis, *The Indian's Book*, pp. 7-8.

among the Nez Percés a *badinage* as frequent, as hearty, and as amusing as that among college students. . . .<sup>32</sup> Many times I have seen Apache chiefs laugh out at sudden surprises until they could hardly breathe; I have seen them roll on the ground and bend themselves double in the excess of their merriment."<sup>33</sup>

This is the sort of thing they laughed at. "Pranks are usually played upon a boy on his first war excursion. The first night (of the narrator's first war expedition) one of the warriors said, 'take this pail and run down that path for water, it is far.' I set out briskly only to step in a deep pool of ill-smelling mud. About this I was teased, and all manner of jokers were made. Of course, the warriors knew the pool was there. They joked about my new paint, my new way of deceiving an enemy, my new perfume (love medicine), and so on. Finally one man in a very solemn manner conferred a new name upon me—Stinking-legs. From that time on, all of them called me by that name."<sup>34</sup> The narrator of the above incident achieved in turn a great reputation as the wag of his tribe. His jokes were decidedly Chaucerian.

"A favorite trick of mine was often played upon visiting strangers, especially upon dignified old men. I would invite the guest to my tepee to feast with a few of my friends. Then I would pretend to quarrel with my woman and we would fall to fighting. The others would try to separate us and so all begin to struggle, taking care to fall upon and thoroughly mess up the puzzled visitor."

At other times, this jovial medicine-man would disguise himself as a member of an enemy tribe, and run off with some one's horse. After leading the pursuing party a dismal chase he would sneak back to camp and tie the horse up as before. When the discomfited search party came back, "then there was great uproar and jesting."<sup>35</sup>

Another Indian joke was to sing incongruous words such as:

"I suppose I'll get drunk if I take one drink;  
If I get drunk, take care of me."

<sup>32</sup> Hardly a strong recommendation. D.

<sup>33</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 553-555.

<sup>34</sup> Clark Wissler, "Smoking Star, a Blackfoot Shaman," *American Indian Life*, p. 50-51.

<sup>35</sup> Wissler, *op. cit.*, p. 59. One would think this rather a hazardous type of humor, likely to be rewarded by an arrow in the back, if the pursuing party ever came within shooting distance of the joker.

to a very touching melody of the love-song type.<sup>36</sup>

“With all the things that come with old age  
I look like a sea parrot with white patches  
on the sides of my head.  
Try to grow old as quickly as possible,  
I look so handsome.”<sup>37</sup>

Another sign by which we recognize the Indian as a very human brother is his habit of making love songs. These are not particularly varied; most of them celebrate the lover's anxious vigil while waiting for his sweetheart, or his loneliness while she is away.

“I go around weeping for my love.”<sup>38</sup>

“Throughout the night I keep awake  
Throughout the night I keep awake  
Upon a river I keep awake.”

This song is worth quoting on account of the appended Indian explanation: “I keep awake all night long on the river. Only one reason. I got to find my sweet heart. The word is not there, but we understand it. . . . Perhaps her family has gone away. Perhaps mebbe she said she would meet me and something happened so she couldn't. I don't know; but we know; but we know that the man who made this song was looking for his sweetheart, and we do not need the word there. Now you see—Why does a man keep awake all night when he wants to sleep?”<sup>39</sup>

A few other phases of Indian romance are also revealed in these songs—some of them almost significant enough to be ballads:

“You desire vainly that I seek you,  
The reason is,  
I come to see your younger sister.”<sup>40</sup>  
“Well, when I was courting,  
'Horses you have none,' to me was said  
therefore,  
all over the land I roam.”<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Burton, *American Primitive Music*, p. 166.

<sup>37</sup> Densmore, “Conscious Effort Toward Physical Perfection Among the Makah Indians,” *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XXV, N. S., Oct.-Dec., 1923, p. 564.

<sup>38</sup> Densmore, “Chippewa Music,” II, p. 221.

<sup>39</sup> Burton, *American Primitive Music*, pp. 150-151.

<sup>40</sup> Densmore, “Chippewa Music,” II, p. 218.

<sup>41</sup> Densmore, “Teton Sioux Music,” p. 396.

The lady's point of view is also given. Sometimes she, too, mourns for her absent lover. According to a Siouan story one young woman grieved excessively over her lover, killed while on a war party. "Sometime afterward in the course of tribal wanderings a camp was made at the place where, according to the report of the war party, the young man had been killed. Dressing herself in her best attire, the maiden went to the edge of a cliff, and after singing the following song and giving the shrill 'woman's tremolo,' jumped into the river below:

"He is gone to war  
you said.  
I love him  
I am sad."<sup>42</sup>

In other songs the lover is rejected with scorn:

"I will not, I will not have him,  
Because he is too old.  
His head and shoulders are good looking,  
But I will not have him anyway.  
Because he is too old."<sup>43</sup>

At the marriage there was celebration and rejoicing. The following really beautiful epithalamium was composed by the Taensa, a tribe of the lower Mississippi:

"Tikaens, thou buildest a house,  
Thou bringest thy wife to live in it.  
Thou art married, Tikaens, thou art married.  
Thou wilt become famous;  
Thy children will name thee among the elders.  
Think of Tikaens as an old man!  
By what name is thy bride known?  
Is she beautiful?  
Are her eyes soft as the light of the moon?  
Is she a strong woman?  
Dids't thou understand her signs during the dance?  
I know not whether thou lovest her, Tikaens.  
What said the old man, her father,

<sup>42</sup> Densmore, "Teton Sioux Music," pp. 494-495.

<sup>43</sup> Densmore, "Conscious Effort Toward Physical Perfection Among the Makak Indians," p. 565.

When thou askedst for his pretty daughter?  
What betrothal presents did'st thou give?  
Rejoice, Tikaens! be glad, be happy!  
Build thyself a happy home.  
This is the song of its building!"<sup>44</sup>

Many other phases of Indian character are revealed in these songs. Those of the women alone should be made the subject of a volume. The songs of children might easily occupy another. The above selections will, it is hoped, illustrate the human side of the Indian, and reveal how intimately he spoke and sang of the joys and sorrows of his daily life.

<sup>44</sup> Brinton, *Aboriginal American Authors*, p. 49.