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THE EARLY HISTORY OF IOWA.

BY CHARLES NEGUS.

The Great Indian Confederation.

(Continued from Vol. 9, p. 652.)

ABOUT the time of acquiring the Louisiana purchase there were in the northwest two very noted Indian characters, Tecumseh, and Fensk-wau-ta-wa (the prophet). They were Shawnees, a tribe of Indians who once lived in Georgia, but moved north; and in 1786 the United States allotted that tribe lands in the territory which was afterward embraced in the boundaries of Ohio and Indiana. Their father was a Shawnee and their mother a Creek. Tecumseh, from his childhood, manifested a disposition for war; he was an orator, and had a peculiar faculty to gain the respect and control those around him. Fensk-wau-ta-wa was of a very different turn of mind; instead of being warlike or commanding, he was persuasive, and religiously inclined. About the year 1805 it happened that an old Shawnee, who was a man of great influence, and acted the part of a prophet among his people, died. (Drake's Life of Tecumseh, 86.) Fensk-wau-ta-wa, who had witnessed the old man's influence with the Indians, caught up the mantle of the departed

prophet and assumed his sacred calling. He affected great sanctity; did not engage in the secular duties of war or hunting; was seldom seen in public; pretended to see into futurity and foretell events, and announced himself to be the mouth-piece of God (Schoolcraft, vol. 6, p. 353); and with such adroitness did he manage his religious career that within a few years his influence was felt by the remote tribes of the upper lakes, on the extensive prairies beyond the Mississippi, and among the tribes of the sunny south. Early in the year 1805 the Shawnees, having settled in small villages in different parts of their country, re-assembled their scattered people, and established themselves at Greenville, Indiana, notwithstanding this country had been ceded to the United States by the treaty of 1805.

The fame of the Prophet had by this time become extensively known, and he had made a great reform in the dissolute habits of the Indians. While the Prophet was disseminating his religious doctrines, Tecumseh, seeing the grasping disposition of the government, to get their lands, traveled from tribe to tribe through the west, north, and south, for the purpose of effecting a combination of the several nations to protect themselves against the encroachments of the whites. Through the year 1806 Tecumseh and the Prophet were visited by large numbers of delegates from the different tribes, and many embraced their cause. The Prophet had by some means got knowledge of the coming of the great eclipse in 1806, and proclaimed that on a certain day he would bring darkness over the sun. At the appointed time he had a large assembly around him, and when darkness came over the earth he arose in their midst and exclaimed, "Did I not prophesy truly? Behold, darkness has shrouded the sun!" This event made a deep impression upon the Indians, and greatly increased their belief in his sacred character as a prophet.

In the fore part of April, 1807, Tecumseh and the Prophet had with them about four hundred Indians at one time; and by the 1st of May it was estimated that not less than

fifteen hundred visited the Prophet, and many of them were from the distant parts of the Indian country; and in the month of August there were assembled in the immediate vicinity of Greenville, between seven and eight hundred, supposed to be under the influence of the Prophet, most of whom were armed with new guns. It was insisted by the government that the Indians should remove on to their own lands, and in the spring of 1808 they left Greenville and located their village on Tippecanoe, one of the branches of the Wabash river. Here, as before, large numbers visited the Prophet, to listen to his teachings, while Tecumseh often visited the various tribes. (Drake's Life of Tecumseh, pp. 96, 107.) These demonstrations alarmed the whites, and William H. Harrison, then governor of Ohio, was urged to seize the Prophet and hold him as a prisoner. The Prophet, learning this, immediately visited the Governor, and succeeded in convincing him that his intentions were only to better the condition of his race, and Harrison was rather inclined to sustain, than weaken, his influence. On the 30th of September, 1809, by the instructions of the government, Harrison held a treaty with some of the Potawattamies, Miamies, and Delawares, and obtained from them a large cession of land east of the Wabash. The Shawnees claimed an interest in these lands, but did not attend the council or sign the treaty. (U. S. Laws, vol. 7, pp. 113, 115.)

This purchase embraced a part of the land allotted to them by the treaty of 1786, and whatever arrangements there might have been among the Indians themselves about their hunting grounds, it does not appear that the United States had ever purchased these lands from the Shawnees. (U. S. Laws, vol. 7, p. 87.) The conveyance of lands was against the policy of Tecumseh and his brother, and was what they had been endeavoring to prevent. They claimed that the village chiefs, who attended the council, had no right to sell lands, and especially without the consent of the Shawnee nation; and this act on the part of government

stimulated Tecumseh and the Prophet to renewed efforts to unite the various tribes in one confederacy. Delegations from a long distance were constantly visiting the Prophet, and in May it was estimated that there were more than six hundred warriors encamped in the vicinity of Tippecanoe, well equipped with arms; and early in July Harrison received information "that the Sacs and Foxes had taken up the hatchet, and declared themselves ready to act with the Prophet whenever it should be required, and that the Shawnees had received large presents from the British authorities.

These demonstrations produced great alarm on the frontiers, and to come to an understanding with the Indians arrangements were made for holding a council at Vincennes. The 15th of August, the day for holding the council, came. The Governor had made arrangements for holding the council in the portico of his own residence, and had fitted it up with seats. At the appointed hour Tecumseh, with about forty of the principal men of his party, was seen approaching the house, while about four hundred of his warriors were encamped near by. When the bold, daring chief had got within about thirty yards of the house, he stopped, and in silence took a gaze about the premises. He was requested to come forward and take a seat; he refused, and pointed to a grove, near by, as the most suitable place for the meeting. He was told there were no seats there; he replied, "that constituted no objection to the grove; the earth is the most suitable place for the Indian, who loves to repose on the bosom of his mother." (Drake's Life of Tecumseh, p. 126.)

The parties then removed to the grove, when Tecumseh opened the council with a speech, stating his objections to the treaty made the previous year. He disclaimed all intention of making war, but "declared it to be his unalterable resolution to take a stand and oppose the further encroachment of the whites upon the Indians." The Governor replied, and in relation to the treaty at Vincennes said,

“the Indians were not one nation, owning a common property in lands;” and “he contended the Miamies were the real owners of the tract on the Wabash, ceded by the late treaty, and that the Shawnees had no right to interfere in the case.”

When this was interpreted to Tecumseh he sprang to his feet and “began to speak with the greatest vehemence of manner, declaring that all the Governor said was false.” Here followed an exciting scene. The Governor noticed a friendly chief lying on the grass before him quietly renewing the priming of his pistol. His ear was next saluted by a remark from Gen. Gibson, “these fellows mean mischief, you had better bring up the guards.”

At this moment the Indians raised their tomahawks and war clubs, and sprang upon their feet, their eyes fiercely turned upon the Governor. The Governor sprang from his chair, and drew his sword, Captain Floyd drew his dirk, the friendly chief cocked his pistol, the citizens present gathered clubs and brick-bats, the Rev. Winans ran to the house, seized a gun, and posted himself at the entrance of the house to defend the family. The guard came running up with presented arms. Thus far in the scene not a word had been said, and the ominous silence was broken by a command of the Governor to the guards not to fire. When the excitement had subsided, the Governor told Tecumseh he was a bad man, and he would have no further intercourse with him.

The Indian leader having reflected over his conduct, doubtless thought he had committed an error, and the next morning asked to make an explanation. The request was granted, and at this interview Tecumseh's deportment was dignified, and that of a wise diplomatist, and after this apology an audience was held with the Indians. At the council, chiefs of the several tribes spoke, “and distinctly avowed that they had entered into the Shawnee confederacy, and were determined to support the principles laid down by their leader.” (Drake's Life of Tecumseh, 128). The In-

dians were given to understand that the government would not give up their purchase of lands, and this closed the council. Here was a momentous period in the annals of destiny. A time when almost the weight of a feather would have turned the scales between love and hate. The next day the Governor visited the hero in his tent. He was kindly and politely received; a long conversation ensued; the chief in his tent declaring the same sentiments as in the council, and his determination to carry them into effect. He stated to the Governor that he would be "reluctantly drawn into a war with the United States; that if he would induce the President to give up the lands lately purchased, and agree never to make another purchase without the consent of all the tribes, he would be their faithful ally, and assist in the war which he knew was about to take place with England. But if he did not comply, he would be compelled to unite with the British." The Governor assured him he would make known his wishes to the President. "Well, said Tecumseh, as the great chief is to decide this matter, I hope the Great Spirit will put sense enough into his head to induce him to give up the lands; it is true, he is so far off he will not be injured by the war; he may sit still in his town, and drink his wine, while you and I will have to fight it out."

As the mind reflects over these incidents, it will be asked, What were the intentions of the great chief? Did he marshal around him his warriors with the intention of committing personal violence, of shedding blood, of laying waste the country? or was it for making an exhibition of his power before the representatives of government, and creating upon the minds of the whites fear and dread of his wrath? Was the outbreak of passion a premeditated thing, or was it the spark of anger caused to fly from his flinted mind, by the contradiction of his assertions? On the 30th of July, 1810, Tecumseh, with a large number of his followers, went to Vincennes, and had another interview with Harrison. At this council the land question was extensively discussed.

And Tecumseh informed the Governor "that after much trouble and difficulty, he had induced all the northern tribes to unite, and place themselves under his directions; that the white people were unnecessarily alarmed at his measures, which meant nothing but peace; that the United States had set him the example of forming a strict union among all the Fires (States) that composed their confederacy; that the Indians did not complain of it; nor should his white brothers complain of him for doing the same thing in regard to the Indians." (Drake's Life of Tecumseh, 140). The Governor closed this council by saying "that the moon which they beheld (it was night) would sooner fall to the earth, than the President would suffer his people to be murdered with impunity; and that he would put his warriors in petticoats, sooner than give up the country, which he had fairly acquired from the rightful owners." Most of those who came with Tecumseh, returned to their villages, but Tecumseh with about twenty warriors went south to get the tribes there to join them. He easily induced the tribes he met with to embrace his cause, till he came to the Creeks, of southern Alabama. He visited a Creek town of the Tallapoosa river, and immediately made his way to the lodge of the chief, to whom he explained the object of his visit, to which the chief pretended to give his assent, but Tecumseh, reading from his countenance his intentions, looked him in the eye, and pointing his finger towards his face said, "Your blood is white; you do not intend to fight; I know the reason: you do not believe the Great Spirit has sent me—you shall know." "I leave directly, and shall go to Detroit; when I arrive there I shall stamp on the ground with my foot, and shake down every house in Tuckhabatehee." So saying, he turned and left the chief and those around him in utter amazement. They often talked over the acts of Tecumseh, and carefully calculated the time he would arrive at Detroit. And it so happened, that on the very day they had fixed for his arrival at Detroit, there came an earthquake, and shook down every house in their town. This

produced a great effect upon the minds of the superstitious Indians, and caused them to look to Tecumseh as their great chief. (Drake's Life of Tecumseh, 144.) After Tecumseh left for the south, the alarm on the frontiers greatly increased. Public meetings were held, and memorials were forwarded to the President asking for protection, and that the Indians might be removed from Tippecanoe. A military force was placed at the disposal of the Governor. Learning of this, the Prophet sent assurances to Harrison of his peaceful intentions; but, notwithstanding this, early in September, the Governor marched with a body of troops towards the Prophet's town, and on the 5th of November, 1811, with nine hundred men, camped within ten miles of it. When the forces were within a mile and a half of this town, the troops made a halt, and the Prophet sent a message to that place to inquire the cause of this military display, and to assure Harrison that he desired to avoid hostilities. And "a suspension of hostilities was agreed upon, and the terms of peace were to be settled on the following morning." The place where the army had halted not being a favorable spot for an encampment, the army was marched up to within three-fourths of a mile of the village. This move alarmed the Indians, and they made preparations for hostilities. "The night was dark and cloudy, and after midnight there was a drizzling rain." This was a night of anxious thought. The whites, distrustful of Indian character, lay upon their arms. The soldiers were camped in marshal order, ready to spring to arms at the word of command. The Indians not understanding the reason of such a military display, and after they had made arrangements for a council to adjust all matters of difference, learning that a threatening force had approached still nearer their village, became uneasy and alarmed. Their town was a chosen place by the Indians; it had been the scene of the mysterious rites of the Prophet; it was now invaded by a hostile foe. Thus the slow momentous moments coursed along in deep silence till about four o'clock in the morning, when the sharp click of the

Indian rifle was heard upon the left of the encampment. The whole army of the whites were instantly on their feet, "and the whole of the troops were prepared for action in the course of two minutes." The battle raged with unabating fury and mutual slaughter until daylight, when a gallant and successful charge by our troops drove the enemy into the swamp, and put an end to the conflict." (Drake's Life of Tecumseh, 151.) This engagement took place while Tecumseh was absent, and against his wishes and instructions, and when he met the Prophet, "he reprimanded him in bitter terms, for having departed from his instructions, to preserve peace with the United States at all hazards." After Tecumseh returned from the south, he made efforts to adjust the difficulties between his people and the whites, but without success.

In 1811, there being a strong probability of a war with England, a delegation of the Sacs and Foxes visited Washington, and had an interview with the President, and proposed in the event of war to assist in behalf of the United States; but they were told that in case of hostilities their Great Father did not wish them to interfere on either side, but to remain quietly at home and provide for their families. But Tecumseh and the Prophet were busy in their machinations to bring all the Indians into one combination. On the 18th of June, 1812, congress made a formal declaration of war, and from that time Tecumseh threw his whole influence with the British, and induced most of the Indian tribes to imitate his example. But the Osages, and some other tribes of the Missouri valley, hesitated about going to war. Among the Sacs and Foxes there was a division in sentiment. Black Hawk and the larger portion of them were friendly to the British, and he and about two hundred warriors entered into their service against the United States, and Black Hawk kept up these hostilities till the 13th of May, 1816, nearly a year and a half after the close of the war. Shamaga (the Lance) with a few other chiefs, cultivated friendly relations towards the United States, and after

the declaration of war, went to St. Louis and tendered their services to the government; but the offer was declined, on the ground that it had been determined not to employ Indians in the war. Those opposed to the British being in the minority, and finding it unpleasant to remain in close proximity to those in favor of the British, withdrew from their villages on the Mississippi, and located themselves in the valley of the Missouri, in close proximity to the Osages. This state of affairs being understood by Tecumseh, he goes to their village and holds a council with these Indians. To form an estimation of his ability as an orator, and his power of persuasion, imagine the Osages and other tribes of those who were opposed to joining the British, on the borders of a beautiful prairie, under the cool shades of an adjoining grove, with a few "distinguished strangers" assembled in council to hear the words of the great chief. When "Tecumseh arose, and after a pause of some minutes, in which he surveyed his audience in a very dignified, though respectfully complaisant, sympathizing manner, he commenced as follows:"—

"BROTHERS: We all belong to one family; we are all children of the Great Spirit; we walk in the same path; slake our thirst at the same spring, and now affairs of the greatest concern lead us to smoke the same pipe around the same council fire. Brothers, we are friends; we must assist each other to bear our burdens. The blood of many of our fathers and brothers has run like water on the ground to satisfy the avarice of the white men. We, ourselves, are threatened with a great evil; nothing will pacify them but the destruction of all the red men. Brothers, when the white men first set foot on our grounds, they were hungry; they had no place on which to spread their blankets or kindle their fires. They were feeble; they could do nothing for themselves. Our fathers commiserated their distress, and shared freely with them whatever the Great Spirit had given the red children. They gave them food when hungry, medicine when sick, spread skins for them to sleep on,

and gave them grounds that they might hunt and raise corn. Brothers, the white people are like poisonous serpents: when chilled they are feeble and harmless; but invigorate them with warmth, and they sting their benefactors to death. The white people came among us feeble, and now we have made them strong; they wish to kill us, or drive us back as they would wolves or panthers. Brothers, the white men are not friends to the Indians; at first they only asked for land sufficient to build their wigwams; now nothing will satisfy them but the whole of our hunting grounds, from the rising to the setting sun. Brothers, the white men want more than our hunting grounds—they wish to kill our warriors; they would even kill our old men, women, and little ones. Brothers, many winters ago there was no land; the sun did not rise and set; all was darkness. The Great Spirit made all things. He gave the white people a home beyond the great waters. He supplied these grounds with game, and gave them to his red children, and he gave them strength and courage to defend them. Brothers, my people wish for peace; the red men all wish for peace, but where the white people are, there is no rest for them, except it is on the bosom of our mother. Brothers, the white men despise and cheat the Indians; they abuse and insult them; they do not think the red men sufficiently good to live. The red men have borne many and great injuries; they ought to suffer them no longer. They will not; they are determined on vengeance; they have taken up the tomahawk; they will make it fat with blood; they will drink the blood of the white people. Brothers, my people are brave and numerous, but the white people are too strong for them alone. I wish you to take up the tomahawk with them. If we all unite, we will cause the rivers to stain the great waters with their blood. Brothers, if you do not unite with us, they will first destroy us, and then you will fall an easy prey to them. They have destroyed many nations of red men, because they were not united; because they were not friends to each other. Brothers, the white people send

runners among us; they wish to make us enemies, that they may sweep over and desolate our hunting grounds, like devastating winds or rushing waters. Brothers, our Great Father over the great water is angry with the white people, our enemies. He will send his brave warriors against them. He will send us rifles and whatever else we want; he is our friend, and we are his children. Brothers, who are the white men, that we should fear them? They cannot run fast, and are good marks to shoot at; they are only men; our fathers have killed many of them; we are not squaws, and we will stain the earth red with their blood. Brothers, the Great Spirit is angry with our enemies; He speaks in thunder, and the earth swallows up villages and drinks up the Mississippi. The great waters will cover their low lands; their corn cannot grow; and the Great Spirit will sweep those who escape to the hills from the earth with his terrible breath. Brothers, we must be united; we must smoke the same pipe; we must fight each others battles; and more than all, we must love the Great Spirit. He is for us. He will destroy our enemies, and make all his red children happy."

Tecumseh and his brother, by their eloquence, industry, and energy, had united into a confederacy, the Creeks, Cherokees, Chickasaws, and Choctaws, of the south, the Souix, from the extreme north, the Menominees and Chippewas, from the vicinity of Green Bay, the Senecas, of north Ohio, the Miamies, (consisting of the Weas, Piankeshaws, Eelrivers, Mississinoways, Maumees), Kickapoos, Wyandots, Shawnees, and Delawares, of Indiana and eastern Illinois, the Kaskaskias, of southwestern Illinois, the Ottowas, of Illinois river, the Pottawattamies, who lived around Lake Michigan, the Winnebagoes, of northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, the Mahas, Osages, Kansas, and Ottoes, of the Missouri valley, and most of the Iowas, Sacs, and Foxes. All these tribes embraced the British cause, and fought against the Americans. The British army, at the commencement of the war, met with suc-

cess, and this had a tendency to encourage the Indians in their efforts to establish a confederacy, and brought many into the battle field. But in 1813 the British met with reverses, and Gen. Proctor with his forces retreated into Canada. This did not please, and was disheartning to, the Indians. And through the influence of Tecumseh and his followers, on the 5th of October, the British made a halt at the river Thames, and prepared for battle. The forces on both sides were drawn up in battle array, defiant of each other, and threatening grim death. The deadly strife was about to commence. Just at this critical moment Gen. Harrison received the intelligence "that the British lines, instead of the usual close order, were drawn up in open order." (Drake's Life of Tecumseh, 1125). On the receipt of this intelligence, at a thought, Harrison determined to change the whole order of attack. And contrary to the usual mode of conducting a battle, a battalion of mounted men, under command of Col. James Johnson, were ordered to charge the British line of regulars, and instantly the battalion in close column, was hurled upon the British lines. At first "on receiving the fire of the British, the horses in the front column recoiled, but again getting in motion, they broke through the enemy with irresistible force. This achieved, and with the British in one minute the contest was over." And "the British officers, seeing no prospects of reducing their disordered ranks to order, and seeing the advance of the infantry, and our mounted men wheeling upon them and pouring in a destructive fire, immediately surrendered." Col. Richard M. Johnson, with the balance of the regiment of mounted men, dismounted, gallantly charged upon the Indians, but he met a resolute force, who hotly contested the field, and for about thirty minutes a fierce fight ensued. Col. Richard M. Johnson received a severe wound, which caused him to be taken off of the field, "not, however, till he had dispatched an Indian by a pistol shot," and "the great leader of the Indians, Tecumseh, was no more. From the commencement of the attack on the Indian lines, "his

voice was distinctly heard by his followers, animating them to deeds worthy of the race to which they belonged." When that well known voice was heard no longer above the din of arms, the battle ceased. Thus fell Tecumseh, a man of the wilderness, who at this time had not his equal in swaying and controlling the Indian tribes.

INCIDENTS RELATING TO THE EARLY SETTLEMENT
OF MARION COUNTY.

BY WILLIAM M. DONNELL.

NEXT to Knoxville, the county seat, Red Rock is the oldest village in Marion county, having been laid out in August, 1845, by John D. Bedell, who is still a resident of the place. Mr. B. was formerly a citizen of Missouri, from which state he emigrated to near Farmington, Van Buren county, in the autumn of 1842. Early in the spring following, having associated with him a Frenchman named Louis Leplant, who was conversant with the Indian language, he applied to Capt. Allen, the commandant of the military post of Iowaville, for permission to cross the line and make a tour in the "New Purchase," as it was then called. The Captain refused to grant permission officially; he told the applicants, however, that he should not prevent them from going, but would not be responsible for what might befall them, should they chance to fall into the hands of the Indians or dragoons, and advised them to be on their guard.

Being willing to take the risk, the two adventurers set out on foot, equipped with guns, ammunition, a couple of blankets, and what cold victuals they could carry, taking the Indian trail up the north side of the Des Moines river.

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