

## **The Delaware Indians**

### **A Friendly Tribe That Is about to Leave the United States for Mexico**

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"It is likely," says Walter S. Logan, attorney for the Delaware Indians, "that the United States will soon see the last of them." The Delawares have a peculiar history. They met William Penn upon his arrival and with them he negotiated the famous treaty. They stood as a solid wall between European settlers on the east and the ferocious Indian tribes of the West. They were known as "peaceful" Indians, ever ready to defend their rights, if necessary, when attacked, but never provoking trouble or making an attack themselves. It is doubtful whether the early English settlements in this country could have been maintained if it had not been for their leadership.

"Originally the Delawares and kindred Algonquian tribes occupied more than two thirds of all the territory which constituted the original United States, from the Penobscots to the Savannas and away beyond the Alleghenies toward the Mississippi, and they numbered nearly 100,000 souls. European civilization, ever pressing them on the east, and drove them westward and westward, and until finally what were left of them were peaceably settled in Kansas, where the treaty was made in 1866.

"The Delawares had been loyal through the Civil War and many of the tribe served with honor and distinction in the Union Army. The Cherokees, on the other hand, sided with the South. The white man wanted the Delaware country in Kansas, and the fact that Delaware braves had stood side-by-side with them in defense of the union was not strong enough to protect them. But the land had been solemnly guaranteed to the Delawares by the United States and the faith of the nation was behind the Delaware title. Again the Delawares proved themselves the friends of the white man. Fertile as was their newfound home on the plains of Kansas, much as they had become attached to it, they consented to move again. So the treaty of 1866 was made.

"A suit is now pending in the United States Court of Claims and will be tried this winter to determine the rights of the parties under the contract. The Delawares claim that they bought and paid for two things - to wit, land and the privilege of citizenship - they are entitled to both. The Cherokees claim that the Delawares must put their land back into the common pool and divide up with the Cherokees.

"Whatever the result of this suit," continued Mr. Logan, "the Delawares have determined that they will shake the dust of the United States from the soles of their moccasins. They foresee that the Indian territory is soon to be open to the white man. They are not strong enough to resist the terrible and constant pressure. They have the best lands in the United States, and the white man is

bound to have them. The offer of citizenship and the privilege of voting contained in the recently passed Curtis bill have no allurements for the Delaware. He has had too much experience with the white man. The Mexican Republic, our sister on the south, asks the Delawares to transfer their allegiance, and offers to welcome them to hospital homes. A tract of land around the mouth of the Yaqui River, on the Gulf of California, in the state of Sonora, fertile as the valley of the Nile, and in a climate where life is worth living, has been offered if they will come in cultivate it. The leading men of the tribe visited this country and reported strongly in its favor. There seems to be little doubt that they will move to Sonora as fast as they can sell out their interests in the United States.

"The Republic of Mexico has dealt more kindly with her Indians than the United States," said Mr. Logan. "Our fathers wiped Indians off the face of the earth. In Mexico there are more men up Indian lineage today than in the time of Montezuma. English colonists in America brought their wives with them, and the civilization that they planted was the European civilization. In Mexico the Spaniard came along, and the first thing he did was to marry an Indian girl. And so the present Mexican race is the result of the union of the strongest men of Spain and the most attractive women of the Aztecs.

"Today in the United States the Indian is a ward of the nation. In Mexico he is free and the equal of every other citizen. Benito Juarez, the great liberator of Mexico, was a full blooded Zapotec Indian. Porfirio Diaz, Mexico's present great president, combines Indian with European blood in his veins. Matias Romero, for almost half a century Mexico's representative to the United States, has the best blood of both races in his veins. And the men who are ruling Mexico now are of Indian ancestry. The Delawares think that in a country where the Indian is a citizen and an equal, where he holds the principal places of profit and emolument, where it is held in honor and not a disgrace to have Indian blood in one's veins, they may find a home and rest in peace and quiet for their footsore race."