

The war-paint on the Sachem's face,
 Unwet with tears, shone fierce and red,
 And, still in battle or in chase,
 Dry leaf and snow-rime crisped beneath his fore-
 most tread.

Yet, when her name was heard no more,
 And when the robe her mother gave,
 And small, light moccasin she wore,
 Had slowly wasted on her grave,
 Unmarked of him the dark maids sped
 Their sunset dance and moon-lit play;
 No other shared his lonely bed,
 No other fair young head upon his bosom lay.

A lone, stern man. Yet, as sometimes
 The tempest-smitten tree receives
 From one small root the sap which climbs
 Its topmost spray and crowning leaves,
 So from his child the Sachem drew
 A life of Love and Hope, and felt
 His cold and rugged nature through
 The softness and the warmth of her young being
 melt.

A laugh which in the woodland rang
 Bemocking April's gladdest bird —
 A light and graceful form which sprang
 To meet him when his step was heard —
 Eyes by his lodge-fire flashing dark,
 Small fingers stringing bead and shell
 Or weaving mats of bright-hued bark,—
 With these the household-god* had graced his wig-
 wam well.

* "The Indians," says Roger Williams, "have a god whom they call Wetuomanit, who presides over the household."

Child of the forest! — strong and free,
 Slight-robed, with loosely flowing hair,
 She swam the lake or climbed the tree,
 Or struck the flying bird in air.
 O'er the heaped drifts of Winter's moon
 Her snow-shoes tracked the hunter's way;
 And dazzling in the Summer noon
 The blade of her light oar threw off its shower of
 spray!

Unknown to her the rigid rule,
 The dull restraint, the chiding frown,
 The weary torture of the school,
 The taming of wild nature down.
 Her only lore, the legends told
 Around the hunter's fire at night;
 Stars rose and set, and seasons rolled,
 Flowers bloomed and snow-flakes fell, unquestioned
 in her sight.

Unknown to her the subtle skill
 With which the artist-eye can trace
 In rock and tree and lake and hill
 The outlines of divinest grace;
 Unknown the fine soul's keen unrest
 Which sees, admires, yet yearns away;
 Too closely on her mother's breast
 To note her smiles of love the child of Nature lay!

It is enough for such to be
 Of common, natural things a part,
 To feel with bird and stream and tree
 The pulses of the same great heart;

But we, from Nature long exiled
 In our cold homes of Art and Thought,
 Grieve like the stranger-tended child,
 Which seeks its mother's arms, and sees but feels
 them not.

The garden rose may richly bloom
 In cultured soil and genial air,
 To cloud the light of Fashion's room
 Or droop in Beauty's midnight hair,
 In lonelier grace, to sun and dew
 The sweet-briar on the hill-side shows
 Its single leaf and fainter hue,
 Untrained and wildly free, yet still a sister rose!

Thus o'er the heart of Weetamoo
 Their mingling shades of joy and ill
 The instincts of her nature threw,—
 The savage was a woman still.
 Midst outlines dim of maiden schemes,
 Heart-colored prophecies of life,
 Rose on the ground of her young dreams
 The light of a new home — the lover and the wife!

IV. — THE WEDDING.

COOL and dark fell the Autumn night,
 But the Bashaba's wigwam glowed with light,
 For down from its roof by green withes hung
 Flaring and smoking the pine-knots swung.

And along the river great wood fires
 Shot into the night their long red spires,
 Showing behind the tall, dark wood
 Flashing before on the sweeping flood.

In the changeful wind, with shimmer and shade,
 Now high, now low, that fire-light played,
 On tree-leaves wet with evening dews,
 On gliding water and still canoes.

The trapper that night on Turee's brook
 And the weary fisher on Contoocook
 Saw over the marshes and through the pine,
 And down on the river the dance-lights shine.

For the Saugus Sachem had come to woo
 The Bashaba's daughter Weetamoo,
 And laid at her father's feet that night
 His softest furs and wampum white.

From the Crystal Hills to the far South East
 The river Sagamores came to the feast;
 And chiefs whose homes the sea-winds shook,
 Sat down on the mats of Pennacook.

They came from Sunapee's shore of rock,
 From the snowy sources of Snooganock,
 And from rough Coös whose thick woods shake
 Their pine-cones in Umbagog lake.

From Ammonoosuck's mountain pass
 Wild as his home came Chepewass;
 And the Keenomps of the hills which throw
 Their shade on the Smile of Manito.

With pipes of peace and bows unstrung,
 Glowing with paint came old and young,
 In wampum and furs and feathers arrayed
 To the dance and feast the Bashaba made.

Bird of the air and beast of the field,
 All which the woods and waters yield
 On dishes of birch and hemlock piled
 Garnished and graced that banquet wild.

Steaks of the brown bear fat and large
 From the rocky slopes of the Kearsarge;
 Delicate trout from Babboosuck brook,
 And salmon spear'd in the Contoocook;

Squirrels which fed where nuts fell thick
 In the gravelly bed of the Otternic,
 And small wild hens in reed-snares caught
 From the banks of Sondagardee brought;

Pike and perch from the Suncook taken,
 Nuts from the trees of the Black Hills shaken,
 Cranberries picked in the Squamscot bog,
 And grapes from the vines of Piscataquog:

And, drawn from that great stone vase which
 stands

In the river scooped by a spirit's hands,*
 Garnished with spoons of shell and horn,
 Stood the birchen dishes of smoking corn.

Thus bird of the air and beast of the field,
 All which the woods and the waters yield,
 Furnished in that olden day
 The bridal feast of the Bashaba.

And merrily when that feast was done
 On the fire-lit green the dance begun,

* There are rocks in the River at the Falls of Amoskeag, in the cavities of which, tradition says, the Indians formerly stored and concealed their corn.

With squaws' shrill stave, and deeper hum
 Of old men beating the Indian drum.

Painted and plumed, with scalp locks flowing,
 And red arms tossing and black eyes glowing,
 Now in the light and now in the shade
 Around the fires the dancers played.

The step was quicker, the song more shrill,
 And the beat of the small drums louder still
 Whenever within the circle drew
 The Saugus Sachem and Weetamoo.

The moons of forty winters had shed
 Their snow upon that chieftain's head,
 And toil and care, and battle's chance
 Had seamed his hard dark countenance.

A fawn beside the bison grim —
 Why turns the bride's fond eye on him,
 In whose cold look is naught beside
 The triumph of a sullen pride?

Ask why the graceful grape entwines
 The rough oak with her arm of vines;
 And why the gray rock's rugged cheek
 The soft lips of the mosses seek:

Why, with wise instinct, Nature seems
 To harmonize her wide extremes,
 Linking the stronger with the weak,
 The haughty with the soft and meek!

V. — THE NEW HOME.

A WILD and broken landscape, spiked with firs,
 Roughening the bleak horizon's northern edge,
 Steep, cavernous hill-side, where black hemlock
 spurs

And sharp, gray splinters of the wind-swept ledge
 Pierced the thin-glaz'd ice, or bristling rose,
 Where the cold rim of the sky sunk down upon the
 snows.

And eastward cold, wide marshes stretched away,
 Dull, dreary flats without a bush or tree,
 O'er-crossed by icy creeks, where twice a day
 Gurgled the waters of the moon-struck sea;
 And faint with distance came the stifled roar,
 The melancholy lapse of waves on that low shore.

No cheerful village with its mingling smokes,
 No laugh of children wrestling in the snow,
 No camp-fire blazing through the hill-side oaks,
 No fishers kneeling on the ice below;
 Yet midst all desolate things of sound and view,
 Through the long winter moons smiled dark-eyed
 Weetamoo.

Her heart had found a home; and freshly all
 Its beautiful affections overgrew
 Their rugged prop. As o'er some granite wall
 Soft vine leaves open to the moistening dew
 And warm bright sun, the love of that young wife
 Found on a hard cold breast the dew and warmth
 of life.

The steep bleak hills, the melancholy shore,
 The long dead level of the marsh between,
 A coloring of unreal beauty wore
 Through the soft golden mist of young love seen,
 For o'er those hills and from that dreary plain,
 Nightly she welcomed home her hunter chief again.

No warmth of heart, no passionate burst of feeling
 Repaid her welcoming smile, and parting kiss,
 No fond and playful dalliance half concealing,
 Under the guise of mirth, its tenderness;
 But, in their stead, the warrior's settled pride,
 And vanity's pleased smile with homage satisfied.

Enough for Weetamoo, that she alone
 Sat on his mat and slumbered at his side;
 That he whose fame to her young ear had flown,
 Now looked upon her proudly as his bride;
 That he whose name the Mohawk trembling heard
 Vouchsafed to her at times a kindly look or word.

For she had learned the maxims of her race,
 Which teach the woman to become a slave
 And feel herself the pardonless disgrace
 Of love's fond weakness in the wise and brave —
 The scandal and the shame which they incur,
 Who give to woman all which man requires of her.

So passed the winter moons. The sun at last
 Broke link by link the frost chain of the rills,
 And the warm breathings of the southwest passed
 Over the hoar rime of the Saugus hills,
 The gray and desolate marsh grew green once more,
 And the birch-tree's tremulous shade fell round the
 Sachem's door.

Then from far Pennacook swift runners came,
 With gift and greeting for the Saugus chief;
 Beseeching him in the great Sachem's name,
 That, with the coming of the flower and leaf,
 The song of birds, the warm breeze and the rain,
 Young Weetamoo might greet her lonely sire again.

And Winnepurkit called his chiefs together,
 And a grave council in his wigwam met,
 Solemn and brief in words, considering whether
 The rigid rules of forest etiquette
 Permitted Weetamoo once more to look
 Upon her father's face and green-banked Penna-
 cook.

With interludes of pipe-smoke and strong water,
 The forest sages pondered, and at length,
 Concluded in a body to escort her
 Up to her father's home of pride and strength,
 Impressing thus on Pennacook a sense
 Of Winnepurkit's power and regal consequence.

So through old woods which Aukeetamit's* hand,
 A soft and many-shaded greenness lent,
 Over high breezy hills, and meadow land
 Yellow with flowers, the wild procession went,
 Till rolling down its wooded banks between,
 A broad, clear, mountain stream, the Merrimack
 was seen.

The hunter leaning on his bow undrawn —
 The fisher lounging on the pebbled shores,

*The Spring God. — See Roger Williams's *Key*, etc.

Squaws in the clearing dropping the seed-corn,
 Young children peering through the wigwam
 doors,
 Saw with delight, surrounded by her train
 Of painted Saugus braves, their Weetamoo again.

VI. — AT PENNACOOK.

THE hills are dearest which our childish feet
 Have climbed the earliest; and the streams most
 sweet,
 Are ever those at which our young lips drank,
 Stooped to their waters o'er the grassy bank:

Midst the cold dreary sea-watch, Home's hearth-
 light
 Shines round the helmsman plunging through the
 night;
 And still, with inward eye, the traveller sees
 In close, dark, stranger streets his native trees.

The home-sick dreamer's brow is nightly fanned
 By breezes whispering of his native land,
 And, on the stranger's dim and dying eye,
 The soft, sweet pictures of his childhood lie!

Joy then for Weetamoo, to sit once more
 A child upon her father's wigwam floor!
 Once more with her old fondness to beguile
 From his cold eye the strange light of a smile.

The long bright days of Summer swiftly passed,
 The dry leaves whirled in Autumn's rising blast,
 And evening cloud and whitening sunrise rime
 Told of the coming of the winter time.

But vainly looked, the while, young Weetamoo,
Down the dark river for her chief's canoe;
No dusky messenger from Saugus brought
The grateful tidings which the young wife sought.

At length a runner, from her father sent
To Winnepurkit's sea-cooled wigwam went:
"Eagle of Saugus,— in the woods the dove,
Mourns for the shelter of thy wings of love."

But the dark chief of Saugus turned aside
In the grim anger of hard-hearted pride;
"I bore her as became a chieftain's daughter,
Up to her home beside the gliding water.

"If now no more a mat for her is found
Of all which line her father's wigwam round,
Let Pennacook call out his warrior train
And send her back with wampum gifts again."

The baffled runner turned upon his track,
Bearing the words of Winnepurkit back.
"Dog of the Marsh," cried Pennacook, "no more
Shall child of mine sit on his wigwam floor.

"Go — let him seek some meaner squaw to spread
The stolen bear-skin of his beggar's bed:
Son of a fish-hawk! — let him dig his clams
For some vile daughter of the Agawams,

"Or coward Nipmucks! — may his scalp dry black
In Mohawk smoke, before I send her back."
He shook his clenched hand towards the ocean
wave,
While hoarse assent his listening council gave.

Alas poor bride! — can thy grim sire impart
His iron hardness to thy woman's heart?
Or cold self-torturing pride like his atone
For love denied and life's warm beauty flown?

On Autumn's gray and mournful grave the snow
Hung its white wreaths; with stifled voice and low
The river crept, by one vast bridge o'ercrossed,
Built by the hoar-locked artisan of Frost.

And many a Moon in beauty newly born
Pierced the red sunset with her silver horn,
Or, from the east across her azure field,
Rolled the wide brightness of her full-orbed shield.

Yet Winnepurkit came not — on the mat
Of the scorned wife her dusky rival sat,
And he, the while, in Western woods afar —
Urged the long chase, or trod the path of war.

Dry up thy tears, young daughter of a chief!
Waste not on him the sacredness of grief;
Be the fierce spirit of thy sire thine own,
His lips of scorning, and his heart of stone.

What heeds the warrior of a hundred fights,
The storm-worn watcher through long hunting
nights,
Cold, crafty, proud, of woman's weak distress,
Her home-bound grief and pining loneliness?

VII. — THE DEPARTURE.

THE wild March rains had fallen fast and long
The snowy mountains of the North among,
Making each vale a water-course — each hill
Bright with the cascade of some new made rill.

Gnawed by the sunbeams, softened by the rain,
Heaved underneath by the swollen current's strain,
The ice-bridge yielded, and the Merrimack
Bore the huge ruin crashing down its track.

On that strong turbid water, a small boat
Guided by one weak hand was seen to float,
Evil the fate which loosed it from the shore,
Too early voyager with too frail an oar!

Down the vexed centre of that rushing tide,
The thick huge ice-blocks threatening either side,
The foam-white rocks of Amoskeag in view,
With arrowy swiftness sped that light canoe.

The trapper, moistening his moose's meat
On the wet bank by Uncanoonuc's feet,
Saw the swift boat flash down the troubled stream —
Slept he, or waked he? — was it truth or dream?

The straining eye bent fearfully before,
The small hand clenching on the useless oar,
The bead-wrought blanket trailing o'er the water —
He knew them all — wo for the Sachem's daughter!

Sick and aweary of her lonely life,
Heedless of peril the still faithful wife

Had left her mother's grave, her father's door,
To seek the wigwam of her chief once more.

Down the white rapids like a sear leaf whirled,
On the sharp rocks and piled up ices hurled,
Empty and broken, circled the canoe
In the vexed pool below — but, where was Weeta-
moo?

VIII. — SONG OF INDIAN WOMEN.

THE Dark eye has left us,
The Spring-bird has flown,
On the pathway of spirits
She wanders alone.

The song of the wood-dove has died on our shore
*Mat wonck kunna-monee!** — we hear it no more!

Oh, dark water Spirit!
We cast on thy wave
These furs which may never
Hang over her grave;

Bear down to the lost one the robes that she wore;
Mat wonck kunna-monee! — We see her no more!

Of the strange land she walks in
No Powah has told:
It may burn with the sunshine,
Or freeze with the cold.

Let us give to our lost one the robes that she wore,
Mat wonck kunna-monee! — We see her no more!

* "Mat wonck kunna-monee." We shall see thee or her no more. — Vide Roger Williams's *Key to the Indian Language*.

The path she is treading
 Shall soon be our own;
 Each gliding in shadow
 Unseen and alone! —

In vain shall we call on the souls gone before —
Mat wonck kunna-monee! — They hear us no more!

Oh mighty Sowanna! *
 Thy gateways unfold,
 From thy wigwam of sunset
 Lift curtains of gold!

Take home the poor Spirit whose journey is o'er —
Mat wonck kunna-monee! — We see her no more!

So sang the Children of the Leaves beside
 The broad, dark river's coldly-flowing tide,
 Now low, now harsh, with sob-like pause and swell
 On the high wind their voices rose and fell.
 Nature's wild music — sounds of wind-swept trees,
 The scream of birds, the wailing of the breeze,
 The roar of waters, steady, deep and strong,
 Mingled and murmured in that farewell song.

* "The Great South West God." — See Roger Williams's *Observations*, etc.

1844.

MOGG MEGONE.

PART I.

[The story of MOGG MEGONE has been considered by the author only as a framework for sketches of the scenery of New England, and of its early inhabitants. In portraying the Indian character, he has followed, as closely as his story would admit, the rough but natural delineations of Church, Mayhew, Charlevoix, and Roger Williams; and in so doing he has necessarily discarded much of the romance which poets and novelists have thrown around the ill-fated red man. — Ed.]

Who stands on that cliff, like a figure of stone,
 Unmoving and tall in the light of the sky,
 Where the spray of the cataract sparkles on high,
 Lonely and sternly, save Mogg Megone? *
 Close to the verge of the rock is he,
 While beneath him the Saco its work is doing,
 Hurrying down to its grave, the sea,
 And slow through the rock its pathway hewing!
 Far down, through the mist of the falling river,
 Which rises up like an incense ever,

* MOGG MEGONE, or Hegone, was a leader among the Saco Indians, in the bloody war of 1677. He attacked and captured the garrison at Black Point, October 12th of that year; and cut off, at the same time, a party of Englishmen near Saco River. From a deed signed by this Indian in 1664, and from other circumstances, it seems that, previous to the war, he had mingled much with the colonists. On this account, he was probably selected by the principal sachems as their agent, in the treaty signed in November, 1676.