

For more than a hundred years the lessons history might have taught, remained unheeded. The light of experience in fitful flickerings was dimly burning on the stern of the ship of state, leaving ghastly visions of rapine, war and murder on the waves. More than party or passion, vacillation and expediency, folly and crime, or to use the scathing indictment of the first Board of Indian Commissioners, "spoliation outrage and murder," tried to relegate the Indian question to the background and the Indian himself — underground. While blundering in policy we were plundering without shame or remorse; while foundering in the meshes of inherited precedents, we were floundering natural integrity on the reefs of self-seeking politics. Our treaties with the Indians were so many treacheries. The hand extended to the Red Man was a mailed one; the olive-branch we held out to him was twined about a keen-edged, blood dripping sword.

When the government committed itself to the Anglo-Saxon policy of civilization, reflected and enacted by the Puritans; it turned out to be, as might have been anticipated, not only of problematical advantage and uncertain success from an ethical standpoint, but disastrous to the fair repute of the nation and fatal to the life of the Indian. The melancholy humor of the somewhat timeworn witticism that "when landing upon Plymouth Rock, the Puritans first fell upon their knees and then upon the aborigines," is so unassailably in accord with historic facts borne out by the bloody roster of thirty-two exterminated native tribes, that the droll comment "it was a pity that the Puritans landed on Plymouth Rock instead of Plymouth Rock landing on the Puritans," has more than a semblance of retributive justification. "The Puritans," says an historical writer in a volume fresh from the press, "adopted the Cromwellian method in which they had been bred and trained. They extinguished the Indian title (to lands) by the simple, sure and irrevocable expedient of extinguishing the Indian." "They seized," continues the

† "William Penn." Augustus C. Buel.