

Yet he will not detain you. He will not hurt a hair of your head. He tells you to return to your village in peace. He gives you wherewith to warm your children for the coming winter. But he says to you, remain quiet—remember if you join the Long Knives, we shall sweep your villages from the earth, as fire eats up the dry grass on the prairie.”

Keesh-ke-mun, without answering a word, accepted the presents and returned to his village. To his influence may be chiefly attributed the fact that the Ojibways of Lake Superior and Mississippi remained neutral during the progress of the last war.

Another anecdote is told by my informant, who acted as the British interpreter for the Ojibways during the last war; which further illustrates the attachment which this tribe had conceived for the American people.

About the same time that Keesh-ke-mun so firmly withstood the inducements and threats of the British officers at Fort Howard, We-esh-coob, the war-chief of the Pillagers, with a party of his people from Leech Lake, happened to be present at the island of Michilimacinae. He was vainly urged by the British agents to join their arms with his band of warriors, who were noted as being the bravest of the Ojibway tribe. At a council held within the fort, this chief was asked, for the last time, by the British commandant, to array himself under their flag. We-esh-coob, in more decided terms than ever, refused, and his words so exasperated the commandant, that he rose from his seat, and forgot himself so far as to say to the Pillagers:—

“I thought you were men, but I see that you are but women, not fit even to wear the breech-cloth. Go back to your homes. I do not wish the assistance of women. Go, put on the clothing which more befits you, and remain quiet in your villages.”