

We are so prone to associate greatness with schools and books, and the arts and sciences of civilized life, that it is extremely difficult to realize that a man may be great without any of these things entering into the elements of his greatness; and I presume it is as true of others, as of myself, that we have no just understanding of the Indian character until after a personal and somewhat intimate acquaintance with them. Reading and description do not give it unto us, for the reason that we have formed in our mind one standard of greatness for civilized, and another for savage life; and we involuntarily and almost necessarily employ the latter when contemplating any of the race to which we have applied it. Personal acquaintance alone will thoroughly rectify this mistake. Nature is true to herself. The greatness of genius is inherent, and not the result of nationality or of any factitious circumstances of birth or education. Quickness of perception, firmness of purpose, comprehensiveness of mind, incorruptible fidelity, nobleness of disposition—these, and other like qualities, make the truly great man, whether civilized or savage; and the career of Hole-in-the-day, short and unfavorable as it was, developed these traits of character, and for these let us respect his memory, and draw a veil, if possible, over that part of his life in which the power of the tempter was too strong even for these virtues to resist, and wherein he fell, as many of our own good and great have fallen.

February 11th, 1862.