

All not admitted to citizenship, excepting the roving bands, have their tribal governments. Of the 300,000 Indians now inhabiting the states and territories of the United States, only about 5,000 of them make their homes within the State of Wisconsin.

When the Europeans first landed on the Western continent, the character of the Indian was far different from what it is at the present time. Then he was temperate, strong, and brave. He walked with majestic mien—was proud, bold and independent. Now, we find him weak, deceitful, intemperate, and filthy. All the once noble characteristics of his soul seem to have vanished by contact with the vices which have followed the train of civilization. The governments then existing among the various tribes, were patriarchal in character. At a remote period, each tribe must have been few in numbers, forming no more than a family or clan. Some one from age, superiority in wisdom or in war, or because of parental authority, was designated as chief. As but little progress was made in a written language, among any of them, what are called the "laws" of a tribe, may be considered as nothing more than customs and practices, which had been handed down by tradition. These became sacred and binding, like the common law among civilized nations from long usage. There were, in some instances, several clans existing among the same general tribe or nation, whose principal or leader was also denominated a sachem or chief. Hence we account for the fact, that several persons in the same tribe bear the title of "chief." These minor chiefs, however, held only subordinate positions. Indeed, the leading chief, in time of peace, was not invested with any extraordinary powers. All matters of importance had to be settled by the tribe, in general council. When a chief died, his position was claimed, as a general rule, by his son, or some kinsman, as a hereditary right; but oftener, perhaps, the succession was in the female line. In some instances, when this right fell to one who was judged unworthy to possess it, the tribe chose their own chiefs. As instances of this kind; Brant of the Mo-