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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK PONTEACH; OR, THE SAVAGES OF AMERICA ***

Transcribers' Note:

This e-book contains the text of *Ponteach*, extracted from **Representative Plays by American Dramatists: Vol 1, 1765-1819**. Comments and background to all the plays, and links to the other plays are available [here](#).

For your convenience, the transcribers have provided the following links:

[Major Robert Rogers.
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Spelling as in the original has been preserved.

PONTEACH

By ROBERT ROGERS

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MAJOR ROBERT ROGERS

MAJOR ROBERT ROGERS

(1727-1795)

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Robert Rogers, a soldier of fortune, is the *Davy Crockett* of Colonial times. Born at Dumbarton, New Hampshire, on November 17th (some authorities say 1730, another 1731, while the *Dictionary of National Biography* says 1727), he was the son of James Rogers, a farmer living in a frontier cabin at Methuen, in upper Massachusetts.

Robert's boyhood was spent in an atmosphere characteristic of pioneer life. He had scarcely passed his fifteenth year (Nevins claims in 1746), when he helped withstand an attack of Indians near his home, and this may be considered his first active experience with the Red Man. From this time on, the history of the career of Robert Rogers is the history of the efforts of the Colonists against the Indians as far west as Detroit, and as far south as South Carolina. The necessity which confronted all of the Colonists made of young Rogers one of the most expert hunters of the period, and in this connection he was associated with the famous John Stark, of Green Mountain Boys reputation. In the latter's Memoir, written by Caleb Stark, we have as graphic a pen-picture of Rogers, the hunter, at twenty-two, as we have actual likenesses of Rogers in the pictures of the time.^[1]

Evidently Rogers flourished financially at this period, for we find him buying land in Massachusetts in 1753. His activity as a soldier in the French and Indian War put him in command of a company, known as "Rogers' Rangers," and he participated in the Siege of Detroit against Pontiac and the French. This experience of his must have fired Rogers with the desire, after careful consideration of the condition of the Indian, to put his special plea for the cause of the Red Man in some permanent literary form, for "Ponteach" was published in 1766, after Rogers had left America, had gone to London, and thence had taken vessel for Algiers, where he fought under Dey.

By 1761, Rogers had so far advanced in worldly standing that he could afford to turn his attention to family affairs. We find him visiting Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where Elizabeth, daughter of the Reverend Arthur Browne, lived. The two were married on June 30th of that year; but evidently there was about Robert Rogers something his father-in-law did not quite relish. For, in 1763, a dispute arose between the two, because of Rogers' increasing dissipation. That they did not reach, however, any immediate open rupture, may have been due very largely to the fact that Rogers was becoming quite a land-owner in New York and New Hampshire. It was not until March 4, 1778, after Rogers had gone through many and varied experiences, not the least of

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which was serving a term in the Debtors' Prison in England, that his wife was granted, by the New Hampshire Legislature, a decree of divorce. She thereupon married Captain John Poach.

Naturally, most of the interest attached to Rogers is historical, not literary. His career in the French and Indian War, outlined by him in his "Journal of the French and Indian War," which was published in London in 1765; his activity in the Cherokee War in South Carolina;^[2] his association with William Bird, when he had an opportunity of studying the methods of Indian guides; his political ambitions when he returned to England in 1765—all of these are matters for the historian, and have received adequate consideration by Francis Parkman and other writers. During these activities, Rogers was not idle with his pen. He kept his Journals, and they clearly reveal how much of a ranger he was. After the fashion of the times, when he returned to England, anxious to let his friends know of the conditions in America, he not only published his Journals (1769), but also a concise account of North America (1770). But there must have been something about Rogers as a soldier of fortune that was not as straight or as honest as *Davy Crockett*. We find him, for example, entrusted with the post of Governor of Mackinac, and conducting affairs so illy that he was tried for treason. He may have advanced as a soldier through the successive ranks to Major, but it would seem that the higher up he advanced in position the more unscrupulous he became.

After serving his term in the Debtors' Prison, which began on June 14, 1773, he returned to America, at the beginning of the Revolution. Among his Colonial friends, he not only counted John Stark, the ranger, but Israel Putnam as well, both of them ardent patriots and upholders of the American cause. It would seem, in 1775, that Rogers, to all outward appearance, was himself in sympathy with America. He professed being the staunch lover of those principles which America was upholding. But General Washington soon had cause to doubt his loyalty, and he was watched. With the result that his arrest was ordered, and thereupon he confessed his adherence to the Crown. Rogers then joined the forces of General Howe, bringing with him an invaluable knowledge of the land in New York and New Jersey, and adjacent territory. He was put in command of a company, known as the "Queen's Rangers," and throughout the Revolution fought bravely on the opposing side. After returning to England, he battled for further recognition, but never received the full honours he courted. He died on May 18, 1795, in South London.

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"Ponteach" was probably never given in Rogers's time. There is no record of its even having been considered by any of the theatrical companies. It was published in 1766, with a London imprint on the title-page.^[3] There is some slight probability that it was given an amateur production at Lake George by the summer residents there—certainly an appropriate spot to present a play by Rogers, inasmuch as the Ranger was known in that neighbourhood, and there is now familiar to all visitors a place called "Rogers's Slide," marking one of his escapades with the Indians.

In the present collection, the editor has followed the text of the 1766 edition, fully realizing the consistent changes made by Mr. Allan Nevins in his edition of the play which, with an Introduction, Biography, and invaluable historical notes, was published in 1914 by the Caxton Club of Chicago.^[4]

This piece is one which is not only interesting as representative of the early type of Indian drama in America, but it is also interesting as reflective of the attitude of a dramatist with a problem to propound. "Ponteach" is our first American problem play. Parkman claims that at least part of it was written by Rogers, thus throwing doubt on his entire claim to authorship. There is not only a dignity displayed in the drawing of the main character of the Indian, but there is a very naïve attempt at subtle humour in the characters of the Englishmen. There is no distinct excellence in depicting Indian character as such, after the romantic manner of Cooper, although Rogers, with his English tradition, has been able to lend to his dialogue a certain dignity of diction which is striking, and which gives the play a decided literary value. Taken, however, as an historical document—and Mr. Nevins does this—one can trace in "Ponteach" the whole range of Rogers's experience as an Indian fighter. There are constant allusions in the text to matters which Mr. Nevins has found necessary to explain in copious footnotes, and therefore to the student I would recommend this single edition of the play. "Ponteach" is published here, not from a scholarly standpoint, but simply as an example of early Indian drama.

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Of these Indian dramas, there are many examples in the early history of American playwriting. Laurence Hutton has an entertaining chapter on the subject in his "Curiosities of the American Stage," in which he enumerates such titles as "Oroloosa," "Oroonoka," "Miautoumah," to say nothing of "Hiawatha." "Metamora; or, The Last of the Wampanoags" was brought to success through the powerful acting of Edwin Forrest, December 15, 1829. William Wheatley, of the Park Theatre, was likewise famed for his Indian impersonations. Among other more or less well-known plays of the species, enumerated by Wegelin, are:

F. DEFFENBACH. "Onliata; or, The Indian Heroine." Philadelphia. 1821.

JOSEPH DODDRIDGE. "Logan: The Last of the Race of Skikkellemus, Chief of the Cayuga Nation." Buffalo Creek, Brooke Co., Va. 1823.

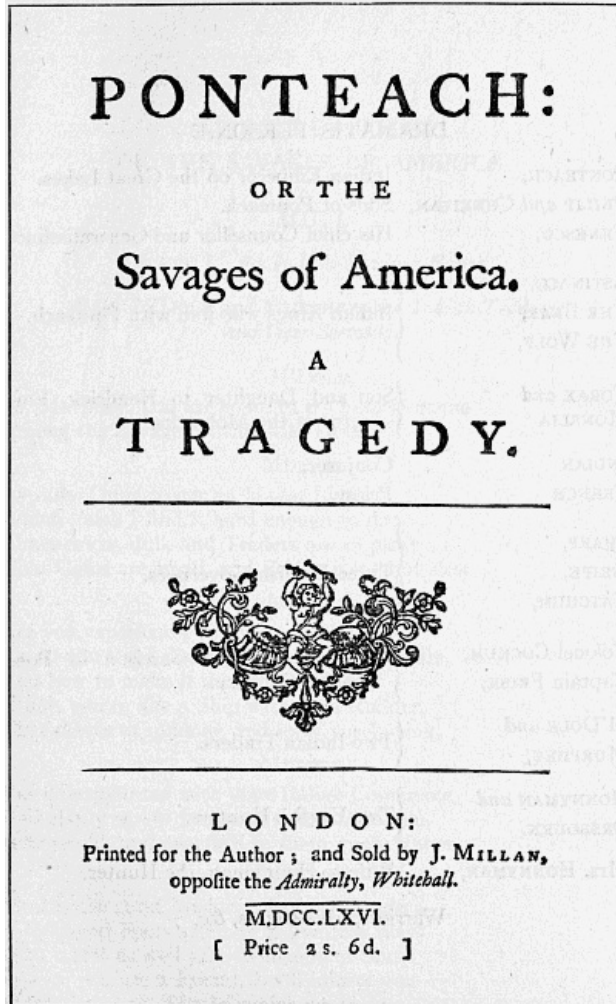
G. W. P. CUSTIS. "The Indian Prophecy." A National Drama in Two Acts, founded on a most interesting and romantic occurrence in the life of General Washington. Georgetown. 1828.

NATHANIEL DEERING. "Carrabasset; or, The Last of the Norridgewocks." A Tragedy in Five Acts. Portland. 1830.

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] These pictures were struck off on October 1, 1776. See Smith's "British Mezzotint Portraits."
- [2] See the South Carolina *Gazette* files for 1760, 1761.
- [3] *Ponteach; or the Savages of America, A Tragedy* [Major Robert Rogers.] London: Printed for the Author; and Sold by J. Millan, opposite the Admiralty, Whitehall. M.DCC.LXVI. [Price 2s. 6d.]
- [4] *Ponteach; or the Savages of America, A Tragedy* By Robert Rogers/With an Introduction/and a Biography of the Author/By Allan Nevins/Chicago/The Caxton Club/1914/

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FAC-SIMILE TITLE-PAGE OF THE FIRST EDITION

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PONTEACH,	Indian Emperor on the Great Lakes.
PHILIP <i>and</i> CHEKITAN,	Sons of Ponteach.
TENESCO,	His chief Counsellor and Generalissimo.
ASTINACO,	} Indian Kings who join with Ponteach.
THE BEAR,	
THE WOLF,	
TORAX <i>and</i> MONELIA	Son and Daughter to Hendrick, Emperor of the Mohawks.
INDIAN	Conjurer.
FRENCH	Priest.
SHARP,	} Three English Governors.
GRIPE,	
CATCHUM,	
Colonel COCKUM,	} Commanders at a Garrison in Ponteach's Country.

Captain FRISK,
M'DOLE *and* MURPHEY, Two Indian Traders.
HONNYMAN *and* ORSBOURN, Two English Hunters.
Mrs. HONNYMAN, Wife to Honnyman, the Hunter.
Warriors, Messengers, &c.

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PONTEACH:
OR THE SAVAGES OF AMERICA

ACT I.

SCENE I. *An Indian Trading House.*

Enter M'DOLE and MURPHEY, two Indian Traders, and their Servants.

M'DOLE.

So, Murphey, you are come to try your Fortune
Among the Savages in this wild Desart?

MURPHEY.

Ay, any Thing to get an honest Living,
Which 'faith I find it hard enough to do;
Times are so dull, and Traders are so plenty,
That Gains are small, and Profits come but slow.

M'DOLE.

Are you experienc'd in this kind of Trade?
Know you the Principles by which it prospers,
And how to make it lucrative and safe?
If not, you're like a Ship without a Rudder,
That drives at random, and must surely sink.

MURPHEY.

I'm unacquainted with your Indian Commerce,
And gladly would I learn the Arts from you,
Who're old, and practis'd in them many Years.

M'DOLE.

That is the curst Misfortune of our Traders,
A thousand Fools attempt to live this Way,
Who might as well turn Ministers of State.
But, as you are a Friend, I will inform you
Of all the secret Arts by which we thrive,
Which if all practis'd, we might all grow rich,
Nor circumvent each other in our Gains.
What have you got to part with to the Indians?

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MURPHEY.

I've Rum and Blankets, Wampum, Powder, Bells,
And such-like Trifles as they're wont to prize.

M'DOLE.

'Tis very well: your Articles are good:
But now the Thing's to make a Profit from them,
Worth all your Toil and Pains of coming hither.
Our fundamental Maxim is this,
That it's no Crime to cheat and gull an Indian.

MURPHEY.

How! Not a Sin to cheat an Indian, say you?
Are they not Men? hav'n't they a Right to Justice
As well as we, though savage in their Manners?

M'DOLE.

Ah! If you boggle here, I say no more;
This is the very Quintessence of Trade,
And ev'ry Hope of Gain depends upon it;
None who neglect it ever did grow rich,
Or ever will, or can by Indian Commerce.
By this old Ogden built his stately House,
Purchas'd Estates, and grew a little King.
He, like an honest Man, bought all by Weight,
And made the ign'rant Savages believe
That his Right Foot exactly weigh'd a Pound:
By this for many Years he bought their Furs,
And died in Quiet like an honest Dealer.

MURPHEY.

Well, I'll not stick at what is necessary:
But his Device is now grown old and stale,
Nor could I manage such a barefac'd Fraud.

M'DOLE.

A thousand Opportunities present
To take Advantage of their Ignorance;
But the great Engine I employ is Rum,
More pow'rful made by certain strength'ning Drugs. [Pg 119]
This I distribute with a lib'ral Hand,
Urge them to drink till they grow mad and valiant;
Which makes them think me generous and just,
And gives full Scope to practise all my Art.
I then begin my Trade with water'd Rum,
The cooling Draught well suits their scorching Throats.
Their Fur and Peltry come in quick Return:
My Scales are honest, but so well contriv'd,
That one small Slip will turn Three Pounds to One;
Which they, poor silly Souls! ignorant of Weights
And Rules of Balancing, do not perceive.
But here they come; you'll see how I proceed.
Jack, is the Rum prepar'd as I commanded?

JACK.

Yes, sir, all's ready when you please to call.

M'DOLE.

Bring here the Scales and Weights immediately.
You see the Trick is easy and conceal'd.
[*Shewing how to slip the scales.*]

MURPHEY.

By Jupiter, it's artfully contriv'd;
And was I King, I swear I'd knight th' Inventor.
—Tom, mind the Part that you will have to act.

TOM.

Ah, never fear, I'll do as well as Jack.
But then, you know, an honest Servant's Pains
Deserve Reward.

MURPHEY.

O! I'll take care of that.

Enter a number of INDIANS with packs of fur.

1ST INDIAN.

So, what you trade with Indians here to-day?

M'DOLE.

Yes, if my Goods will suit, and we agree.

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2ND INDIAN.

'Tis Rum we want, we're tired, hot, and thirsty.

3RD INDIAN.

You, Mr. Englishman, have you got Rum?

M'DOLE.

Jack, bring a Bottle, pour them each a Gill.
You know which Cask contains the Rum. The Rum?

1ST INDIAN.

It's good strong Rum, I feel it very soon.

M'DOLE.

Give me a Glass. Here's Honesty in Trade;
We English always drink before we deal.

2ND INDIAN.

Good Way enough; it makes one sharp and cunning.

M'DOLE.

Hand round another Gill. You're very welcome.

3RD INDIAN.

Some say you Englishmen are sometimes Rogues;
You make poor Indians drunk, and then you cheat.

1ST INDIAN.

No, English good. The Frenchmen give no Rum.

2ND INDIAN.

I think it's best to trade with Englishmen.

M'DOLE.

What is your Price for Beaver Skins per Pound?

1ST INDIAN.

How much you ask per Quart for this strong Rum?

M'DOLE.

Five Pounds of Beaver for One Quart of Rum.

1ST INDIAN.

Five Pounds? Too much. Which is 't you call Five Pound?

M'DOLE.

This little Weight. I cannot give you more.

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1ST INDIAN.

Well, take 'em; weigh 'em. Don't you cheat us now.

M'DOLE.

No: He that cheats an Indian should be hang'd.

[Weighing the packs.]

There's Thirty Pounds precisely of the Whole;

Five times Six is Thirty. Six Quarts of Rum.

Jack, measure it to them: you know the Cask.

This Rum is sold. You draw it off the best.

[Exeunt INDIANS to receive their rum.]

MURPHEY.

By Jove, you've gain'd more in a single Hour

Than ever I have done in Half a Year;

Curse on my Honesty! I might have been

A little King, and liv'd without Concern,

Had I but known the proper Arts to thrive.

M'DOLE.

Ay, there's the Way, my honest Friend, to live.

[Clapping his shoulder.]

There's Ninety Weight of Sterling Beaver for you,

Worth all the Rum and Trinkets in my Store;

And, would my Conscience let me to the Thing,

I might enhance my Price, and lessen theirs,

And raise my Profits to an higher Pitch.

MURPHEY.

I can't but thank you for your kind Instructions,

As from them I expect to reap Advantage.

But should the Dogs detect me in the Fraud,

They are malicious, and would have Revenge.

M'DOLE.

Can't you avoid them? Let their Vengeance light

On others' Heads, no matter whose, if you

Are but secure, and have the Cain in Hand:

For they're indiff'rent where they take Revenge,

Whether on him that cheated, or his Friend,

Or on a Stranger whom they never saw,

Perhaps an honest Peasant, who ne'er dreamt

Of Fraud or Villainy in all his life;

Such let them murder, if they will a Score,

The Guilt is theirs, while we secure the Gain,

Nor shall we feel the bleeding Victims Pain.

[Exeunt.]

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SCENE II. *A Desert.*

Enter ORSBOURN and HONNYMAN, two English Hunters.

ORSBOURN.

Long have we toil'd, and rang'd the Woods in vain,

No Game, nor Track, nor Sign of any Kind

Is to be seen; I swear I am discourag'd
And weary'd out with this long fruitless Hunt.
No Life on Earth besides is half so hard,
So full of Disappointments, as a Hunter's:
Each Morn he wakes he views the destin'd Prey,
And counts the Profits of th' ensuing Day;
Each Ev'ning at his curs'd ill Fortune pines,
And till next Day his Hope of Gain resigns.
By Jove, I'll from these Desarts hasten home,
And swear that never more I'll touch a Gun.

HONNYMAN.

These hateful Indians kidnap all the Game.
Curse their black Heads! they fright the Deer and Bear,
And ev'ry Animal that haunts the Wood,
Or by their Witchcraft conjure them away.
No Englishman can get a single Shot,
While they go loaded home with Skins and Furs.
'Twere to be wish'd not one of them survived,
Thus to infest the World, and plague Mankind.
Curs'd Heathen Infidels! mere savage Beasts!
They don't deserve to breathe in Christian Air,
And should be hunted down like other Brutes.

ORSBOURN.

I only wish the Laws permitted us
To hunt the savage Herd where e'er they're found;
I'd never leave the Trade of Hunting then,
While one remain'd to tread and range the Wood.

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HONNYMAN.

Curse on the Law, I say, that makes it Death
To kill an Indian, more than to kill a Snake.
What if 'tis Peace? these Dogs deserve no Mercy;
Cursed revengeful, cruel, faithless Devils!
They kill'd my Father and my eldest Brother.
Since which I hate their very Looks and Name.

ORSBOURN.

And I, since they betray'd and kill'd my Uncle;
Hell seize their cruel, unrelenting Souls!
Tho' these are not the same, 'twould ease my Heart
To cleave their painted Heads, and spill their Blood.
I abhor, detest, and hate them all,
And now cou'd eat an Indian's Heart with Pleasure.

HONNYMAN.

I'd join you, and soop his savage Brains for Sauce;
I lose all Patience when I think of them,
And, if you will, we'll quickly have Amends
For our long Travel and successful Hunt,
And the sweet Pleasure of Revenge to boot.

ORSBOURN.

What will you do? Present, and pop one down?

HONNYMAN.

Yes, faith, the first we meet well fraught with Furs;
Or if there's Two, and we can make sure Work,
By Jove, we'll ease the Rascals of their Packs,
And send them empty home to their own Country.
But then observe, that what we do is secret,
Or the Hangman will come in for Snacks.

ORSHOURN.

Trust me for that; I'll join with all my Heart;
Nor with a nicer Aim, or steadier Hand,
Would shoot a Tyger than I would an Indian.
There is a Couple stalking now this Way
With lusty Packs; Heav'n favour our Design.

HONNYMAN.

Silence; conceal yourself, and mind your Eye.

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ORSHOURN.

Are you well charg'd?

HONNYMAN.

I am. Take you the nearest,
And mind to fire exactly when I do.

ORSHOURN.

A charming Chance!

HONNYMAN.

Hush, let them still come nearer.
[They shoot, and run to rifle the INDIANS.]
They're down, old Boy, a Brace of noble Bucks!

ORSHOURN.

Well tallow'd, faith, and noble Hides upon 'em.
[Taking up a pack.]
We might have hunted all the Season thro'
For Half this Game, and thought ourselves well paid.

HONNYMAN.

By Jove, we might, and been at great Expence
For Lead and Powder, here's a single Shot.

ORSHOURN.

I swear I've got as much as I can carry.

HONNYMAN.

And faith I'm not behind; this Pack is heavy.
But stop; we must conceal the tawny Dogs,
Or their blood-thirsty Countrymen will find them,
And then we're bit. There'll be the Devil to pay,
They'll murder us, and cheat the Hangman too.

ORSHOURN.

Right. We'll prevent all Mischief of this Kind.
Where shall we hide their savage Carcases?

HONNYMAN.

There they will lie conceal'd and snug enough—
[They cover them.]
But stay—perhaps ere long there'll be a War,
And then their Scalps will sell for ready Cash
Two Hundred Crowns at least, and that's worth saving.

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ORSBOURN.

Well! that is true, no sooner said than done—

[*Drawing his knife.*

I'll strip this Fellow's painted greasy Skull.

[*Strips off the scalp.*

HONNYMAN.

A damn'd tough Hide, or my Knife's devilish dull—

[*Takes the other scalp.*

Now let them sleep to-night without their Caps,

And pleasant Dreams attend their long Repose.

ORSBOURN.

Their Guns and Hatchets now are lawful Prize,

For they'll not need them on their present Journey.

HONNYMAN.

The Devil hates Arms, and dreads the Smell of Powder;

He'll not allow such Instruments about him,

They're free from training now, they're in his Clutches.

ORSBOURN.

But, Honnyman, d'ye think this is not Murder?

I vow I'm shock'd a little to see them scalp'd,

And fear their Ghosts will haunt us in the Dark.

HONNYMAN.

It's no more Murder than to crack a Louse,

That is, if you've the Wit to keep it private.

And as to Haunting, Indians have no Ghosts,

But as they live like Beasts, like Beasts they die.

I've kill'd a Dozen in this self-same Way,

And never yet was troubled with their Spirits.

ORSBOURN.

Then I'm content; my Scruples are remov'd.

And what I've done, my Conscience justifies.

But we must have these Guns and Hatchets alter'd,

Or they'll detect th' Affair, and hang us both.

HONNYMAN.

That's quickly done—Let us with Speed return,

And think no more of being hang'd or haunted;

But turn our Fur to Gold, our Gold to Wine,

Thus gaily spend what we've so slily won,

And bless the first Inventor of a Gun.

[*Exeunt.*

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SCENE III. *An English Fort.*

Enter Colonel COCKUM and Captain FRISK.

COCKUM.

What shall we do with these damn'd bawling Indians?

They're swarming every Day with their Complaints

Of Wrongs and Injuries, and God knows what—

I wish the Devil would take them to himself.

FRISK.

Your Honour's right to wish the Devil his Due.

I'd send the noisy Hellhounds packing hence,
Nor spend a Moment in debating with them.
The more you give Attention to their Murmurs,
The more they'll plague and haunt you every Day,
Besides, their old King Ponteach grows damn'd saucy,
Talks of his Power, and threatens what he'll do.
Perdition to their faithless sooty Souls,
I'd let 'em know at once to keep their Distance.

COCKUM.

Captain, You're right; their Insolence is such
As beats my Patience; cursed Miscreants!
They are encroaching; fain would be familiar:
I'll send their painted Heads to Hell with Thunder!
I swear I'll blow 'em hence with Cannon Ball,
And give the Devil an Hundred for his Supper.

FRISK.

They're coming here; you see they scent your Track,
And while you'll listen, they will ne'er be silent,
But every Day improve in Insolence.

COCKUM.

I'll soon dispatch and storm them from my Presence.

Enter PONTEACH, and other Indian CHIEFS.

PONTEACH.

Well, Mr. Colonel Cockum, what d' they call you?
You give no Answer yet to my Complaint;
Your Men give my Men always too much Rum,
Then trade and cheat 'em. What! d' ye think this right?

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COCKUM.

Tush! Silence! hold your noisy cursed Nonsense;
I've heard enough of it; what is it to me?

PONTEACH.

What! you a Colonel, and not command your Men?
Let ev'ry one be a Rogue that has a Mind to 't.

COCKUM.

Why, curse your Men, I suppose they wanted Rum;
They'll rarely be content, I know, without it.

PONTEACH.

What then? If Indians are such Fools, I think
White Men like you should stop and teach them better.

COCKUM.

I'm not a Pedagogue to your curs'd Indians.

[*Aside.*]

PONTEACH.

Colonel, I hope that you'll consider this.

FRISK.

Why, don't you see the Colonel will not hear you?
You'd better go and watch your Men yourself,

Nor plague us with your cursed endless Noise;
We've something else to do of more Importance.

PONTEACH.

Hah! Captain Frisk, what! you a great man too?
My Bus'ness here is only with your Colonel;
And I'll be heard, or know the Reason why.

1ST CHIEF.

I thought the English had been better Men.

2ND CHIEF.

Frenchmen would always hear an Indian speak,
And answer fair, and make good Promises.

COCKUM.

You may be d—d, and all your Frenchmen too.

PONTEACH.

Be d—d! what's that? I do not understand.

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COCKUM.

The Devil teach you; he'll do it without a Fee.

PONTEACH.

The Devil teach! I think you one great Fool.
Did your King tell you thus to treat the Indians?
Had he been such a Dunce he ne'er had conquer'd,
And made the running French for Quarter cry.
I always mind that such proud Fools are Cowards,
And never do aught that is great or good.

COCKUM.

Forbear your Impudence, you curs'd old Thief;
This Moment leave my Fort, and to your Country.
Let me hear no more of your hellish Clamour,
Or to D—n I will blow you all,
And feast the Devil with one hearty Meal.

PONTEACH.

So ho! Know you whose Country you are in?
Think you, because you have subdu'd the French,
That Indians too are now become your Slaves?
This Country's mine, and here I reign as King;
I value not your Threats, nor Forts, nor Guns;
I have got Warriors, Courage, Strength, and Skill.
Colonel, take care; the Wound is very deep,
Consider well, for it is hard to cure.

[*Exeunt* INDIANS.]

FRISK.

Vile Infidels! observe their Insolence;
Old Ponteach puts on a mighty Air.

COCKUM.

They'll always be a Torment till destroy'd,
And sent all headlong to the Devil's Kitchen.
This curs'd old Thief, no doubt, will give us Trouble,
Provok'd and madd'd at his cool Reception.

FRISK.

Oh! Colonel, they are never worth our minding,
What can they do against our Bombs and Cannon?
True, they may skulk, and kill and scalp a few,
But, Heav'n be thank'd, we're safe within these Walls:
Besides, I think the Governors are coming,
To make them Presents, and establish Peace.

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COCKUM.

That may perhaps appease their bloody Minds,
And keep them quiet for some little Term.
God send the Day that puts them all to sleep,
Come, will you crack a Bottle at my Tent?

FRISK.

With all my Heart, and drink D——n to them.

COCKUM.

I can in nothing more sincerely join. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV. *An Apartment in the Fort.*

Enter Governors SHARP, GRIPE, and CATCHUM.

SHARP.

Here are we met to represent our King,
And by his royal Bounties to conciliate
These Indians' Minds to Friendship, Peace, and Love.
But he that would an honest Living get
In Times so hard and difficult as these,
Must mind that good old Rule, Take care of One.

GRIPE.

Ay, Christian Charity begins at home;
I think it's in the Bible, I know I've read it.

CATCHUM.

I join with Paul, that he's an Infidel
Who does not for himself and Friends provide.

SHARP.

Yes, Paul in fact was no bad Politician,
And understood himself as well as most.
All good and wise Men certainly take care
To help themselves and Families the first;
Thus dictates Nature, Instinct, and Religion,
Whose easy Precepts ought to be obey'd.

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GRIPE.

But how does this affect our present Purpose?
We've heard the Doctrine; what's the Application?

SHARP.

We are intrusted with these Indian Presents.
A Thousand Pound was granted by the King,
To satisfy them of his Royal Goodness,
His constant Disposition to their Welfare,
And reconcile their savage Minds to Peace.
Five hundred's gone; you know our late Division,

Our great Expence, *Et cetera*, no Matter:
The other Half was laid out for these Goods,
To be distributed as we think proper;
And whether Half (I only put the Question)
Of these said Goods, won't answer every End,
And bring about as long a lasting Peace
As tho' the Whole were lavishly bestow'd?

CATCHUM.

I'm clear upon 't they will, if we affirm
That Half's the Whole was sent them by the King.

GRIPE.

There is no doubt but that One Third wou'd answer,
For they, poor Souls! are ign'rant of the Worth
Of single Things, nor know they how to add
Or calculate, and cast the whole Amount.

SHARP.

Why, Want of Learning is a great Misfortune.
How thankful should we be that we have Schools,
And better taught and bred than these poor Heathen.

CATCHUM.

Yes, only these Two simple easy Rules,
Addition and Subtraction, are great Helps,
And much contribute to our happiness.

SHARP.

'Tis these I mean to put in Practice now;
Subtraction from these Royal Presents makes
Addition to our Gains without a Fraction.
But let us overhaul and take the best,
Things may be given that won't do to sell.

[They overhaul the goods, &c.]

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CATCHUM.

Lay these aside; they'll fetch a noble Price.

GRIPE.

And these are very saleable, I think.

SHARP.

The Indians will be very fond of these.
Is there the Half, think you?

GRIPE.

It's thereabouts.

CATCHUM.

This bag of Wampum may be added yet.

SHARP.

Here, Lads, convey these Goods to our Apartment.

SERVANT.

The Indians, sir, are waiting at the Gate.

GRIPE.

Conduct them in when you've disposed of these.

CATCHUM.

This should have been new-drawn before they enter'd.
[Pulling out an inventory of the whole goods.]

GRIPE.

What matters that? They cannot read, you know,
And you can read to them in gen'ral Terms.

Enter PONTEACH, with several of his Chieftains.

SHARP.

Welcome, my Brothers, we are glad to meet you,
And hope that you will not repent our coming.

PONTEACH.

We're glad to see our Brothers here the English.
If honourable Peace be your Desire,
We'd always have the Hatchet buried deep,
While Sun and Moon, Rivers and Lakes endure,
And Trees and Herbs within our Country grow.
But then you must not cheat and wrong the Indians,
Or treat us with Reproach, Contempt, and Scorn;
Else we will raise the Hatchet to the Sky,
And let it never touch the Earth again,
Sharpen its Edge, and keep it bright as Silver,
Or stain it red with Murder and with Blood.
Mind what I say, I do not tell you Lies.

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SHARP.

We hope you have no Reason to complain
That Englishmen conduct to you amiss;
We're griev'd if they have given you Offence,
And fain would heal the Wound while it is fresh,
Lest it should spread, grow painful, and severe.

PONTEACH.

Your Men make Indians drunk, and then they cheat 'em.
Your Officers, your Colonels, and your Captains
Are proud, morose, ill-natur'd, churlish Men,
Treat us with Disrespect, Contempt, and Scorn.
I tell you plainly this will never do,
We never thus were treated by the French,
Them we thought bad enough, but think you worse.

SHARP.

There's good and bad, you know, in every Nation;
There's some good Indians, some are the reverse,
Whom you can't govern, and restrain from ill;
So there's some Englishmen that will be bad.
You must not mind the Conduct of a few,
Nor judge the rest by what you see of them.

PONTEACH.

If you've some good, why don't you send them here?
These every one are Rogues, and Knaves, and Fools,
And think no more of Indians than of Dogs.

Your King had better send his good Men hither,
And keep his bad ones in some other Country;
Then you would find that Indians would do well,
Be peaceable, and honest in their Trade;
We'd love you, treat you, as our Friends and Brothers,
And Raise the Hatchet only in your Cause.

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SHARP.

Our King is very anxious for your Welfare,
And greatly wishes for your Love and Friendship;
He would not have the Hatchet ever raised,
But buried deep, stamp'd down and cover'd o'er,
As with a Mountain that can never move:
For this he sent us to your distant Country,
Bid us deliver you these friendly Belts,
[Holding out belts of wampum.]
All cover'd over with his Love and Kindness.
He like a Father loves you as his Children;
And like a Brother wishes you all Good;
We'll let him know the Wounds that you complain of,
And he'll be speedy to apply the Cure,
And clear the Path to Friendship, Peace, and Trade.

PONTEACH.

Your King, I hear 's a good and upright Man,
True to his word, and friendly in his Heart;
Not proud and insolent, morose and sour,
Like these his petty Officers and Servants:
I want to see your King, and let him know
What must be done to keep the Hatchet dull,
And how the Path of Friendship, Peace, and Trade
May be kept clean and solid as a Rock.

SHARP.

Our King is distant over the great Lake,
But we can quickly send him your Requests;
To which he'll listen with attentive Ear,
And act as tho' you told him with your Tongue.

PONTEACH.

Let him know then his People here are Rogues,
And cheat and wrong and use the Indians ill.
Tell him to send good Officers, and call
These proud ill-natur'd Fellows from my Country,
And keep his Hunters from my hunting Ground.
He must do this, and do it quickly too,
Or he will find the Path between us bloody.

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SHARP.

Of this we will acquaint our gracious King,
And hope you and your Chiefs will now confirm
A solid Peace as if our King was present;
We're his Ambassadors, and represent him,
And bring these Tokens of his Royal Friendship
To you, your Captains, Chiefs, and valiant Men.
Read, Mr. Catchum, you've the Inventory.

CATCHUM.

The British King, of his great Bounty, sends
To Ponteach, King upon the Lakes, and his Chiefs,
Two hundred, No *[Aside]* a Number of fine Blankets,
Six hundred *[Aside]* Yes, and several Dozen Hatchets,
Twenty thousand *[Aside]* and a Bag of Wampum,
A Parcel too of Pans, and Knives, and Kettles.

SHARP.

This rich and royal Bounty you'll accept,
And as you please distribute to your Chiefs,
And let them know they come from England's King,
As Tokens to them of his Love and Favour.
We've taken this long Journey at great Charge,
To see and hold with you this friendly Talk;
We hope your Minds are all disposed to Peace,
And that you like our Sovereign's Bounty well.

1ST CHIEF.

We think it very small, we heard of more.
Most of our Chiefs and Warriors are not here,
They all expect to share a Part with us.

2ND CHIEF.

These won't reach round to more than half our Tribes,
Few of our Chiefs will have a single Token
Of your King's Bounty, that you speak so much of.

3RD CHIEF.

And those who haven't will be dissatisfied,
Think themselves slighted, think your King is stingy,
Or else that you his Governors are Rogues,
And keep your Master's Bounty for yourselves.

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4TH CHIEF.

We hear such Tricks are sometimes play'd with Indians.
King Astenaco, the great Southern Chief,
Who's been in England, and has seen your King,
Told me that he was generous, kind, and true,
But that his Officers were Rogues and Knaves,
And cheated Indians out of what he gave.

GRIPE.

The Devil's in 't, I fear that we're detected.

[*Aside.*]

PONTEACH.

Indians a'n't Fools, if White Men think us so;
We see, we hear, we think as well as you;
We know there 're Lies, and Mischiefs in the World;
We don't know whom to trust, nor when to fear;
Men are uncertain, changing as the Wind,
Inconstant as the Waters of the Lakes,
Some smooth and fair, and pleasant as the Sun,
Some rough and boist'rous, like the Winter Storm;
Some are Insidious as the subtle Snake,
Some innocent, and harmless as the Dove;
Some like the Tyger raging, cruel, fierce,
Some like the Lamb, humble, submissive, mild,
And scarcely one is every Day the same;
But I call no Man bad, till such he's found,
Then I condemn and cast him from my Sight;
And no more trust him as a Friend and Brother.
I hope to find you honest Men and true.

SHARP.

Indeed you may depend upon our Honours,
We're faithful Servants of the best of Kings;
We scorn an Imposition on your Ignorance,
Abhor the Arts of Falsehood and Deceit.
These are the Presents our great Monarch sent,
He's of a bounteous, noble, princely Mind

And had he known the Numbers of your Chiefs,
Each would have largely shar'd his Royal Goodness;
But these are rich and worthy your Acceptance,
Few Kings on Earth can such as these bestow,
For Goodness, Beauty, Excellence, and Worth.

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PONTEACH.

The Presents from your Sovereign I accept,
His friendly Belts to us shall be preserved,
And in Return convey you those to him. *[Belts and furs.*
Which let him know our Mind, and what we wish,
That we dislike his crusty Officers,
And wish the Path of Peace was made more plain,
The Calumet I do not choose to smoke,
Till I see further, and my other Chiefs
Have been consulted. Tell your King from me,
That first or last a Rogue will be detected,
That I have Warriors, am myself a King,
And will be honour'd and obey'd as such;
Tell him my Subjects shall not be oppress'd,
But I will seek Redress and take Revenge;
Tell your King this; I have no more to say.

SHARP.

To our great King your Gifts we will convey,
And let him know the Talk we've had with you;
We're griev'd we cannot smoke the Pipe of Peace,
And part with stronger Proofs of Love and Friendship;
Meantime we hope you'll so consider Matters,
As still to keep the Hatchet dull and buried,
And open wide the shining Path of Peace,
That you and we may walk without a Blunder. *[Exeunt INDIANS.*

GRIPE.

Th' appear not fully satisfied, I think.

CATCHUM.

I do not like old Ponteach's Talk and Air,
He seems suspicious, and inclin'd to war.

SHARP.

They're always jealous, bloody, and revengeful,
You see that they distrust our Word and Honour;
No wonder then if they suspect the Traders,
And often charge them with downright Injustice.

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GRIPE.

True, when even we that come to make them Presents,
Cannot escape their Fears and Jealousies.

CATCHUM.

Well, we have this, at least, to comfort us;
Their good Opinion is no Commendation,
Nor their foul Slanders any Stain to Honour.
I think we've done whatever Men could do
To reconcile their savage Minds to Peace.
If they're displeas'd, our Honour is acquitted,
And we have not been wanting in our Duty
To them, our King, our Country, and our Friends.

GRIPE.

But what Returns are these they've left behind?

These Belts are valuable, and neatly wrought.

CATCHUM.

This Pack of Furs is very weighty too;
The Skins are pick'd, and of the choicest Kind.

SHARP.

By Jove, they're worth more Money than their Presents.

GRIPE.

Indeed they are; the King will be no Loser.

SHARP.

The King! who ever sent such Trumpery to him?

CATCHUM.

What would the King of England do with Wampum?
Or Beaver Skins, d'ye think? He's not a Hatter!

GRIPE.

Then it's a Perquisite belongs to us?

SHARP.

Yes, they're become our lawful Goods and Chattels,
By all the Rules and Laws of Indian Treaties.
The King would scorn to take a Gift from Indians,
And think us Madmen, should we send them to him.

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CATCHUM.

I understand we make a fair Division,
And have no Words nor Fraud among ourselves.

SHARP.

We throw the whole into one common Stock,
And go Copartners in the Loss and Gain.
Thus most who handle Money for the Crown
Find means to make the better Half their own;
And, to your better Judgments with Submission,
The self Neglecter's a poor Politician.
These Gifts, you see will all Expences pay;
Heav'n send an Indian Treaty every Day;
We dearly love to serve our King this way. }

The End of the First Act.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *An Indian House.*

Enter PHILIP and CHEKITAN from hunting, loaded with venison.

PHILIP.

The Day's Toil's ended, and the Ev'ning smiles
With all the Joy and Pleasantness of Plenty.
Our good Success and Fortune in the Chace

Will make us Mirth and Pastime for the Night.
How will the old King and his Hunters smile
To see us loaded with the fatt'ning Prey,
And joyously relate their own Adventures?
Not the brave Victor's Shout, or Spoils of War,
Would give such Pleasure to their gladden'd Hearts.

CHEKITAN.

These, Philip, are the unstain'd Fruits of Peace,
Effected by the conqu'ring British Troops.
Now may we hunt the Wilds secure from Foes,
And seek our Food and Clothing by the Chace,
While Ease and Plenty thro' our Country reign.

PHILIP.

Happy Effects indeed! long may they last!
But I suspect the Term will be but short,
Ere this our happy Realm is curs'd afresh
With all the Noise and Miseries of War,
And Blood and Murder stain our Land again.

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CHEKITAN.

What hast thou heard that seems to threaten this,
Or is it idle Fancy and Conjectures?

PHILIP.

Our Father's late Behaviour and Discourse
Unite to raise Suspicions in my Mind
Of his Designs? Hast thou not yet observ'd,
That tho' at first he favour'd England's Troops,
When they late landed on our fertile Shore,
Proclaim'd his Approbation of their March,
Convoy'd their Stores, protected them from Harm,
Nay, put them in Possession of Detroit;
And join'd to fill the Air with loud Huzzas
When England's Flag was planted on its Walls?
Yet, since, he seems displeas'd at their Success,
Thinks himself injured, treated with Neglect
By their Commanders, as of no Account,
As one subdu'd and conquer'd with the French,
As one, whose Right to Empire now is lost,
And he become a Vassal of their Power,
Instead of an Ally. At this he's mov'd,
And in his Royal Bosom glows Revenge,
Which I suspect will sudden burst and spread
Like Lightning from the Summer's burning Cloud,
That instant sets whole Forests in a Blaze.

CHEKITAN.

Something like this I have indeed perceiv'd;
And this explains what I but now beheld,
Returning from the Chace, myself concealed,
Our Royal Father basking in the Shade,
His Looks severe, Revenge was in his Eyes,
All his great Soul seem'd mounted in his Face,
And bent on something hazardous and great.
With pensive Air he view'd the Forest round;
Smote on his Breast as if oppress'd with Wrongs,
With Indignation stamp'd upon the Ground;
Extended then and shook his mighty Arm,
As in Defiance of a coming Foe;
Then like the hunted Elk he forward sprung,
As tho' to trample his Assailants down.
The broken Accents murmur'd from his Tongue,
As rumbling Thunder from a distant Cloud,
Distinct I heard, "'Tis fix'd, I'll be reveng'd;
I will make War; I'll drown this Land in Blood."

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He disappear'd like the fresh-started Roe
Pursu'd by Hounds o'er rocky Hills and Dales,
That instant leaves the anxious Hunter's Eye;
Such was his Speed towards the other Chiefs.

PHILIP.

He's gone to sound their Minds to Peace and War,
And learn who'll join the Hazards in his Cause.
The Fox, the Bear, the Eagle, Otter, Wolf,
And other valiant Princes of the Empire,
Have late resorted hither for some End
Of common Import. Time will soon reveal
Their secret Counsels and their fix'd Decrees.
Peace has its Charms for those who love their Ease,
But active Souls like mine delight in Blood.

CHEKITAN.

Should War be wag'd, what Discords may we fear
Among ourselves? The powerful Mohawk King
Will ne'er consent to fight against the English,
Nay, more, will join them as firm Ally,
And influence other Chiefs by his Example,
To muster all their Strength against our Father.
Fathers perhaps will fight against their Sons,
And nearest Friends pursue each other's Lives;
Blood, Murder, Death, and Horror will be rife,
Where Peace and Love, and Friendship triumph now.

PHILIP.

Such stale Conjectures smell of Cowardice.
Our Father's Temper shews us the reverse:
All Danger he defies, and, once resolv'd,
No Arguments will move him to relent,
No Motives change his Purpose of Revenge,
No Prayers prevail upon him to delay
The Execution of his fix'd Design:
Like the starv'd Tyger in Pursuit of Prey,
No Opposition will retard his Course;
Like the wing'd Eagle that looks down on Clouds,
All Hindrances are little in his Eye,
And his great Mind knows not the Pain of Fear.

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CHEKITAN.

Such Hurricanes of Courage often lead
To Shame and Disappointment in the End,
And tumble blindfold on their own Disgrace.
True Valour's slow, deliberate, and cool,
Considers well the End, the Way, the Means,
And weighs each Circumstance attending them.
Imaginary Dangers it detects,
And guards itself against all real Evils.
But here Tenesco comes with Speed important;
His Looks and Face presage us something new.

TENESCO.

Hail, noble Youth! The News of your Return
And great Success has reach'd your Father's Ears.
Great is his Joy; but something more important
Seems to rest heavy on his anxious Mind,
And he commands your Presence at his Cabin.

PHILIP.

We will attend his Call with utmost Speed,
Nor wait Refreshment after our Day's Toil.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. PONTEACH'S *Cabin*.

PONTEACH, PHILIP, CHEKITAN, *and* TENESCO.

PONTEACH.

My Sons, and trusty Counsellor Tenesco,
As the sweet smelling Rose, when yet a Bud,
Lies close conceal'd, till Time and the Sun's Warmth
Hath swell'd, matur'd, and brought it forth to View,
So these my Purposes I now reveal
Are to be kept with You, on pain of Death,
Till Time hath ripen'd my aspiring Plan,
And Fortune's Sunshine shall disclose the Whole;
Or should we fail, and Fortune prove perverse,
Let it be never known how far we fail'd,
Lest Fools shou'd triumph, or our Foes rejoice.

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TENESCO.

The Life of Great Designs is Secrecy,
And in Affairs of State 'tis Honour's Guard;
For Wisdom cannot form a Scheme so well,
But Fools will laugh if it should prove abortive;
And our Designs once known, our Honour's made
Dependent on the Fickleness of Fortune.

PHILIP.

What may your great and secret Purpose be,
That thus requires Concealment in its Birth?

PONTEACH.

To raise the Hatchet from its short Repose,
Brighten its Edge, and stain it deep with Blood;
To scourge my proud, insulting, haughty Foes,
To enlarge my Empire, which will soon be yours:
Your Interest, Glory, Grandeur, I consult,
And therefore hope with Vigour you'll pursue
And execute whatever I command.

CHEKITAN.

When we refuse Obedience to your Will,
We are not worthy to be call'd your Sons.

PHILIP.

If we inherit not our Father's Valour,
We never can deserve to share his Empire.

TENESCO.

Spoke like yourselves, the Sons of Ponteach;
Strength, Courage, and Obedience form the Soldier,
And the firm Base of all true Greatness lay.

PONTEACH.

Our Empire now is large, our Forces strong,
Our Chiefs are wise, our Warriors valiant Men;
We all are furnish'd with the best of Arms,
And all things requisite to curb a Foe;
And now's our Time, if ever, to secure
Our Country, Kindred, Empire, all that's dear,
From these Invaders of our Rights, the English,
And set their Bounds towards the rising Sun.
Long have I seen with a suspicious Eye
The Strength and growing Numbers of the French;
Their Forts and Settlements I've view'd as Snakes

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Of mortal Bite, bound by the Winter Frost,
 Which in some future warm reviving Day
 Would stir and hiss, and spit their Poison forth,
 And spread Destruction through our happy Land.
 Where are we now? The French are all subdued,
 But who are in their Stead become our Lords?
 A proud, imperious, churlish, haughty Band.
 The French familiarized themselves with us,
 Studied our Tongue, and Manners, wore our Dress,
 Married our Daughters, and our Sons their Maids,
 Dealt honestly, and well supplied our Wants,
 Used no One ill, and treated with Respect
 Our Kings, our Captains, and our aged Men;
 Call'd us their Friends, nay, what is more, their Children,
 And seem'd like Fathers anxious for our Welfare.
 Whom see we now? their haughty Conquerors
 Possess'd of every Fort, and Lake, and Pass,
 Big with their Victories so often gain'd;
 On us they look with deep Contempt and Scorn,
 Are false, deceitful, knavish, insolent;
 Nay, think us conquered, and our Country theirs,
 Without a Purchase, or ev'n asking for it.
 With Pleasure I wou'd call their King my Friend,
 Yea, honour and obey him as my Father;
 I'd be content, would he keep his own Sea,
 And leave these distant Lakes and Streams to us;
 Nay, I would pay him Homage, if requested,
 And furnish Warriors to support his Cause.
 But thus to lose my Country and my Empire,
 To be a Vassal to his low Commanders,
 Treated with disrespect and public Scorn
 By Knaves, by Miscreants, Creatures of his Power;
 Can this become a King like Ponteach,
 Whose Empire's measured only by the Sun?
 No, I'll assert my Right, the Hatchet raise,
 And drive these Britons hence like frightened Deer,
 Destroy their Forts, and make them rue the Day
 That to our fertile Land they found the Way.

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TENESCO.

No Contradiction to your great Design;
 But will not such Proceeding injure us?
 Where is our Trade and Commerce to be carry'd?
 For they're possess'd of all the Country round,
 Or whence Supplies of Implements for War?

PONTEACH.

Whence? Take them from our conquered running Foes.
 Their Fortresses are Magazines of Death,
 Which we can quickly turn against themselves;
 And when they're driven to their destin'd Bounds,
 Their Love of Gain will soon renew their Trade.
 The heartless French, whene'er they see us conquer,
 Will join their little Force to help us on.
 Nay, many of their own brave trusty Soldiers,
 In Hope of Gain, will give us their Assistance;
 For Gain's their great Commander, and will lead them
 Where their brave Generals cannot force their March:
 Some have engag'd, when they see hope of Plunder,
 In sly Disguise to kill their Countrymen.

CHEKITAN.

These Things indeed are promising and fair,
 And seem a Prelude to our full Success.
 But will not many Indian Chiefs refuse
 To join the Lists, and hold themselves oblig'd
 T' assist the Foe when hardly press'd by us?

PONTEACH.

I've sounded all their Minds; there's but a few
That are not warm and hearty in our Cause,
And those faint Hearts we'll punish at our Leisure:
For hither tends my Purpose; to subdue
The Tribes who now their annual Homage pay
To the imperious haughty Mohawk Chief,
Whose Pride and Insolence 'tis Time to curb.
He ever boasts the Greatness of his Empire,
The Swiftness, Skill and Valour of his Warriors,
His former Conquests, and his fresh Exploits,
The Terror of his Arms in distant Lands,
And on a Footing puts himself with me,
For Wisdom to contrive, and Power to do.
Such a proud Rival must not breathe the Air;
I'll die in fighting, or I'll reign alone
O'er every Indian Nation, Tribe, and Chief.
But this in solemn Silence we conceal,
Till they're drawn in to fight the common Foe,
Then from my Face, the sly Disguise I'll cast,
And shew them Ponteach to their Surprise.

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TENESCO.

Thy Plan is wise, and may Success attend it;
May all the warlike numerous Tribes unite,
Nor cease to conquer while thou hast a Foe!
Then may they join and own thee for their Sovereign,
Pay full Submission to thy scepter'd Arm,
And universal Empire by thy own!

CHEKITAN.

Would you the Mohawk Emperor displease,
And wage a bloody War, by which you made
Him and his num'rous Tribes your certain Foes?

PONTEACH.

Most of his Tribes will welcome the Proposal;
For long their galled Necks have felt the Yoke,
Long wish'd for Freedom from his partial Sway,
In favour of the proud incroaching Britons.
Nay, they have oft, in spite of his Displeasure,
Rush'd forth like Wolves upon their naked Borders,
And now, like Tygers broken from their Chains,
they'll glut themselves, and revel in their Blood.

PHILIP.

Myself will undertake to make even Hendrick
Our zealous Friend against the common Foe;
His strong Attachment to them I'll dissolve,
And make him rage, and thirst for Vengeance on them.

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PONTEACH.

This would be doing Honour to thyself,
And make thee worthy of thy Father's Crown.
The secret Means I will not now inquire,
Nor doubt but thus engag'd you will perform.
The Chiefs in part are knowing to my Purpose,
And think of nought but War, and Blood, and Plunder,
Till in full Council we declare our Pleasure.
But first my last Night's Dream I will relate,
Which much disturb'd my weary anxious Mind,
And must portend some signal grand Event
Of Good or Evil both to me or mine.
On yonder Plain I saw the lordly Elk
Snuffing the empty Air in seeming Sport,
Tossing his Head aloft, as if in Pride
Of his great Bulk and nervous active Limbs,
And Scorn of every Beast that haunts the Wood.

With mighty Stride he travelled to and fro,
And as he mov'd his Size was still increas'd,
Till his wide Branches reached above the Trees,
And his extended Trunk across the Plain.
The other Beasts beheld with wild Amaze,
Stood trembling round, nor dare they to approach
Till the fierce Tyger yell'd the loud Alarm,
When Bears, Cats, Wolves, Panthers, and Porcupines,
And other Beasts of Prey, with Force united
And savage Rage, attack'd the common Foe.
But as the busking Bull, when Summer Flies,
With keenest Sting disturb the grazing Herd,
Stands careless in some shady cool Retreat,
And from his Sides sweeps the envenom'd Mites,
Or shakes them with a Stamp into the Dust;
So he unmov'd amidst their Clamours stood,
Trampled and spurn'd them with his Hoofs and Horns,
Till all dispers'd in wild Disorder fled,
And left him Master of th' extended Plain.

TENESCO.

This Dream no doubt is full of some great Meaning,
And in it bears the Fate of your Design,
But whether good or ill, to me 's a Secret.

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PHILIP.

It ne'er was counted ill to dream of Elks,
But always thought portentous of Success,
Of happy Life, and Victories in War,
Or fortune good when we attempt the Chace.

CHEKITAN.

Such is the common Say; but here the Size
And all the Circumstances are uncommon,
And therefore can contain no common Meaning:
I fear these Things portend no Good to us,
That Mischiefs lurk like Serpents in the Grass,
Whose pois'nous deadly Bite precedes all Warning.
That this Design will end in mighty Ruin
To us and ours, Discord among our Friends,
And Triumph to our Foes.

PHILIP.

A valiant Hero!
Thou always wast a Coward, and hated War,
And lov'st to loll on the soft Lap of Peace.
Thou art a very Woman in thy Heart,
And talk'st of Snakes and Bugbears in the Dark,
Till all is Horror and Amaze about thee,
And even thy own Shadow makes thee tremble.

CHEKITAN.

Is there no Courage in delib'rate Wisdom?
Is all rank Cowardice but Fire and Fury?
Is it all womanish to re-consider
And weigh the Consequences of our Actions,
Before we desperately rush upon them?
Let me then be the Coward, a mere Woman,
Mine be the Praise of Coolness, yours of Rage.

PONTEACH.

Peace, Peace, my Sons, nor let this casual Strife
divide your Hearts; both mean the common Good;
Go Hand in Hand to conquer and promote it.
I'll to our worthy Doctor and the Priest,

Who for our Souls' Salvation come from France;
They sure can solve the Mysteries of Fate,
And all the Secrets of a Dream explain;
Mean while, Tenesco, warn the other Chiefs
That they attend my Call within an Hour.

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[*Exeunt* PONTEACH *and* TENESCO.]

PHILIP.

My Warmth perhaps has carried me too far,
But it's not in me to be cool and backward
To act or speak when Kingdoms are the Prize.
My Blood runs high at the sweet Sound of Empire,
Such as our Father's Plan ensures to us,
And I'm impatient of the least Delay.

CHEKITAN.

Thy Fire thou hast a Right to style a Virtue;
Heat is our Friend when kept within due Bounds,
But if unbridled and allowed to rage,
It burns and blisters, torments and consumes,
And, Torrent-like, sweeps every Comfort by.
Think if our Father's Plan should prove abortive,
Our Troops repuls'd, or in th' Encounter slain,
Where are our conquer'd Kingdoms then to share,
Where are our Vict'ries, Trophies, Triumphs, Crowns,
That dazzle in thy Eye, and swell thy Heart;
That nerve thy Arm, and wing thy Feet to War
With this impetuous Violence and Speed?
Crest-fallen then, our native Empire lost,
In captive Chains we drag a wretched Life,
Or fly inglorious from the conquering Foe
To barren Mountains from this fertile Land,
There to repent our Folly when too late,
In Anguish mourn, and curse our wretched Fate.

PHILIP.

But why so much of Mischiefs that may happen?
These are mere Possibilities at most;
Creatures of Thought, which ne'er can be Objections,
In valiant Minds, to any great Attempt;
They're empty Echoes of a tim'rous Soul,
Like Bubbles driv'n by the tempestuous Storm,
The Breath of Resolution sweeps them off.
Nor dost thou judge them solid from thy Heart,
I know the secret Motive in thy Breast,
Thus to oppose our Father's great Design,
And from an Undertaking to dissuade,
In which thou'lt share the Profit and the Glory.
Hendrick, the King of Mohawks, hath a Daughter,
With whom I saw you dallying in the Shade,
And thought you then a Captive to her Charms.
The bright Monelia hangs upon thy Heart,
And softens all the Passions of thy Soul;
Her thou think'st lost should we proclaim a War,
In which the King her Father will not join.

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CHEKITAN.

What if I have a Value for Monelia,
Is it a Crime? Does she not merit Love
From all who see her move, or hear her speak?

PHILIP.

True, she is engaging, has a charming Air;
And if thy Love is fix'd, I will assist it,
And put thee in Possession of the Joy
That thou desirest more than Crowns and Empire.

CHEKITAN.

As how, dear Philip? Should we wage a War,
Which Hendrick disapproves, the Prize is lost.
Not Empires then could make Monelia mine;
All Hopes are dash'd upon that fatal Rock;
Nor Gold, nor Prayers, nor Tears, nor Promises,
Nor all the Engin'ry of Love at Work,
Could save a single Moment of my Joy.

PHILIP.

Yes, I will save it all and make her thine,
Act but thy Part, and do as I prescribe,
In Peace or War thou shalt possess the Prize.

CHEKITAN.

Thy Words revive my half-despairing Heart.
What must I act? or which Way must I turn?
I'll brave all Dangers, every Ill defy,
Risk Life itself, to call Monelia mine.
Help me, my Philip, and I'll be thy Slave,
Resign my Share of Empire to thy Hand,
And lay a Claim to nothing but Monelia.

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PHILIP.

Rewards I do not ask; I am thy Brother,
And hold my Kindness to thee as a Debt.
Thou know'st I have engag'd to bring King Hendrick
To join the Lists, and fight against our Foes,
To rouse him to Revenge, and Rage, and War,
And make him zealous in the common Cause.
Nay, with uncommon Fury he shall rave,
And urge his Warriors on to Blood and Murder.
When this is done, Monelia may be thine,
Hendrick will court Alliance to our Tribe,
And joy to call great Ponteach's Son his own.

CHEKITAN.

But should you fail in these Attempts, and he
Prove obstinately fix'd against the War,
Where's then Monelia? where is Chekitan?
My Hopes are blasted, all my Joys are fled,
Like the vain Phantoms of a Midnight Dream,
Are scattered like the Dust before a Whirlwind,
And all my Soul is left a Void for Pain,
Vexation, Madness, Frenzy, and Despair,
And all the Pains of disappointed Love.
Better I ne'er had flattered my fond Heart,
Nor sooth'd my Mind with Prospects of my Joy,
Than thus to perish on the Point of Hope.

PHILIP.

Leave all to me; I've so concerted Matters,
That I defy ev'n Fate to disappoint me.
Exert thyself, and to Monelia go,
Before th' assembled Chiefs in Council meet;
Urge it to her, and to her Brother Torax,
That should their Father prove refractory,
Withdraw himself, and order his Domestics
To hasten home at News of our Design;
Urge it, I say, to them; Torax loves War;
To linger here in Hopes of his Return,
Which tell them I'll effect ere twice the Sun
Has run the Circuit of his daily Race.
Here they may loiter careless, range the Woods,
As tho' the Noise of War had not been heard.
This will give full Success to both our Wishes:

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Thou'lt gain the Prize of Love, and I of Wrath,
In favour to our Family and State.
Thou'lt tame the Turtle, I shall rouse the Tyger;
The one will soothe thy Soul to soft Repose,
The other prove a Terror to our Foes.

CHEKITAN.

I see the subtle Argument thou'lt use,
And how thou'lt work upon the old King's Weakness,
Thou'lt set his strong Affection for his Children
At War against his Kindness for our Foes,
By urging their Attachment to our Cause,
That they'll endure ev'n Banishment and Death,
Rather than cease to be our steadfast Friends.

PHILIP.

All this I'll urge, nay, more, I will convince him,
These Foes to us can be no Friends to him;
I'll thunder in his Ears their growing Power,
Their Villainies and Cheats upon his Subjects:
That their fair Shew of Love is foul Disguise;
That in their Hearts they hate the Name of Indians,
And court his Friendship only for their Profit;
That when no longer he subserves their Ends,
He may go whistle up some other Friends.

CHEKITAN.

This must alarm and bring him to our Mind.
I'll hasten to my Charge with utmost Speed,
Strain every Nerve, and every Power exert;
Plead, promise, swear like any Christian Trader;
But I'll detain them till our Ends are answer'd,
And you have won their Father to our Purpose.

[*Exit.*

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PHILIP [*solus*].

Oh! what a wretched Thing is a Man in Love!
All Fear—all Hope—all Diffidence—all Faith—
Distrusts the greatest Strength, depends on Straws—
Softened, unprovident, disarm'd, unman'd,
Led blindfold; every Power denies its Aid,
And every Passion's but a Slave to this;
Honour, Revenge, Ambition, Interest, all
Upon its Altar bleed—Kingdoms and Crowns
Are slighted and condemn'd, and all the Ties
Of Nature are dissolv'd by this poor Passion:
Once have I felt its Poison in my Heart,
When this same Chekitan a Captive led
The fair Donanta from the Illinois;
I saw, admir'd, and lov'd the charming Maid,
And as a Favour ask'd her from his Hands,
But he refus'd and sold her for a Slave.
My Love is dead, but my Resentment lives,
And now's my Time to let the Flame break forth,
For while I pay this ancient Debt of Vengeance,
I'll serve my Country, and advance myself.
He loves Monelia—Hendrick must be won—
Monelia and her Brother both must bleed—
This is my Vengeance on her Lover's Head—
Then I'll affirm, 'twas done by Englishmen—
And to gain Credit both with Friends and Foes,
I'll wound myself, and say that I receiv'd it
By striving to assist them in the Combat.
This will rouse Hendrick's Wrath, and arm his Troops
To Blood and Vengeance on the common Foe.
And further still my Profit may extend;
My Brother's Rage will lead him into Danger,
And, he cut off, the Empire's all my own.
Thus am I fix'd; my Scheme of Goodness laid,

And I'll effect it, tho' thro' Blood I wade,
To desperate Wounds apply a desperate Cure,
And to tall Structures lay Foundations sure;
To Fame and Empire hence my Course I bend,
And every Step I take shall thither tend.

End of the Second Act.

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ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Forest.*

CHEKITAN.

[*Seeing TORAX and MONELIA, coming towards them.*]

As the young Hunter, anxious in the Chace,
With beating Heart and quivering Hand espies
The wish'd for Game, and trembles for th' Event,
So I behold the bright Monelia's Steps,
Whom anxiously I've sought, approach this way—
What shall I say? or how shall I accost her?
It is a fatal Minute to mistake in.
The Joy or Grief of Life depends upon 't;
It is the important Crisis of my Fate.
I've thought a thousand things to say and do,
But know not which to say or do the first.
Shall I begin with my old Tale of Love?
Or shall I shock her with the News of War?
Must I put on the Face of Joy or Grief?
Seem unconcern'd or full of Doubts and Fears?
How unprepar'd I am for the Encounter!
I'd rather stand against an Host of Foes—
But she draws near, and Fate must guide me now,
[*Enter TORAX and MONELIA.*]
Where tend your Steps with such an Air of Joy?

TORAX.

To view the Beauties of th' extended Lake,
And on its mossy Bank recline at Ease,
While we behold the Sports of Fish and Fowl,
Which in this Calm no doubt will be diverting.
And these are new Amusements to Monelia,
She never saw the Sea or Lakes before.

CHEKITAN.

I'm glad our Country's aught to give such Pleasure
To one deservedly so welcome in it.

MONELIA.

That I am welcome you have oft assur'd me,
That I deserve it you may be mistaken,
The outside Shew, the Form, the Dress, the Air,
That please at first Acquaintance, oft deceive us,
And prove more Mimickers of true Desert,
Which always brightens by a further Trial,
Appears more lovely as we know it better,
At least can never suffer by Acquaintance.
Perhaps then you To-morrow will despise
What you esteem To-day, and call deserving.

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CHEKITAN.

My Love to you, Monelia, cannot change.
Your Beauty, like the Sun, for ever pleases,

And like the Earth, my Love can never move.

MONELIA.

The Earth itself is sometimes known to shake,
And the bright Sun by Clouds is oft conceal'd,
And gloomy Night succeeds the Smiles of Day;
So Beauty oft by foulest Faults is veil'd,
And after one short Blaze admir'd no more,
Loses its Lustre, drops its sparkling Charms,
The Lover sickens, and his Passion dies.
Nay, worse, he hates what he so doted on.
Time only proves the Truth of Worth and Love,
The one may be a Cheat, the other change,
And Fears, and Jealousies, and mortal Hate,
Succeed the Sunshine of the warmest Passion.

CHEKITAN.

Have I not vow'd my Love to you, Monelia,
And open'd all the Weakness of my Heart?
You cannot think me false and insincere,
When I repeat my Vows to love you still;
Each time I see you move, or hear you speak,
It adds fresh Fuel to the growing Flame.
You're like the rising Sun, whose Beams increase
As he advances upward to our View;
We gaze with growing Wonder till we're blind,
And every Beauty fades and dies but his.
Thus shall I always view your growing Charm,
And every Day and Hour with fresh Delight.
Witness thou Sun and Moon, and Stars above,
Witness ye purling Streams and quivering Lakes,
Witness ye Groves and Hills, and Springs and Plains,
Witness ye Shades, and the cool Fountain, where
I first espied the Image of her Charms,
And starting saw her on th' adjacent Bank,
If I to my Monelia prove untrue.

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MONELIA.

Hoh! now your Talk is so much like a Christian's,
That I must be excus'd if I distrust you,
And think your fair Pretences all designing.
I once was courted by a spruce young Blade,
A lac'd Coat Captain, warlike, active, gay,
Cockaded Hat and Medal on his Breast,
And every thing was clever but his Tongue;
He swore he lov'd, O! how he swore he lov'd,
Call'd on his God and Stars to witness for him,
Wish'd he might die, be blown to Hell and damn'd,
If ever he lov'd woman so before:
Call'd me his Princess, Charmer, Angel, Goddess,
Swore nothing else was ever half so pretty,
So dear, so sweet, so much to please his Taste,
He kiss'd, he squeez'd, and press'd me to his Bosom,
Vow'd nothing could abate his ardent Passion,
Swore he should die, should drown, or hang himself,
Could not exist if I denied his Suit,
And said a thousand Things I cannot Name:
My simple Heart, made soft by so much Heat,
Half gave Consent, meaning to be his Bride.
The Moment thus unguarded, he embrac'd,
And impudently ask'd to stain my Virtue.
With just Disdain I push'd him from my Arms,
And let him know he'd kindled my Resentment;
The Scene was chang'd from Sunshine to a Storm,
Oh! then he curs'd, and swore, and damn'd, and sunk,
Call'd me proud Bitch, pray'd Heav'n to blast my Soul,
Wish'd Furies, Hell, and Devils had my Body,
To say no more; bid me begone in Haste
Without the smallest Mark of his Affection.
This was an Englishman, a Christian Lover.

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CHEKITAN.

Would you compare an Indian Prince to those
Whose Trade it is to cheat, deceive, and flatter?
Who rarely speak the Meaning of their Hearts?
Whose Tongues are full of Promises and Vows?
Whose very Language is a downright Lie?
Who swear and call on Gods when they mean nothing?
Who call it complaisant, polite good Breeding,
To say Ten thousand things they don't intend,
And tell their nearest Friends the basest Falsehood?
I know you cannot think me so perverse,
Such Baseness dwells not in an Indian's Heart,
And I'll convince you that I am no Christian.

MONELIA.

Then do not swear, nor vow, nor promise much,
An honest Heart needs none of this Parade;
Its Sense steals softly to the list'ning Ear,
And Love, like a rich Jewel we most value,
When we ourselves by Chance espy its Blaze
And none proclaims where we may find the Prize.
Mistake me not, I don't impeach your Honour,
Nor think you undeserving my Esteem;
When our Hands join you may repeat your Love,
But save these Repetitions from the Tongue.

CHEKITAN.

Forgive me, if my Fondness is too pressing,
'Tis Fear, 'tis anxious Fear, that makes it so.

MONELIA.

What do you fear? have I not said enough?
Or would you have me swear some Christian Oath?

CHEKITAN.

No, but I fear our Love will be oppos'd,
Your Father will forbid our Hands to join.

MONELIA.

I cannot think it; you are Ponteach's Son,
Heir to an Empire large and rich as his.

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CHEKITAN.

True; but your Father is a Friend to Britons,
And mine a Foe, and now is fix'd on War,
Immediate War: This Day the Chiefs assemble,
To raise the Hatchet, and to arm the Troops.

MONELIA.

Then I must leave your Realm, and bid Adieu,
In spite of your fond Passion, or my own;
For I can never disoblige my Father,
Though by it I were sure to gain an Empire.

CHEKITAN.

Then Chekitan's undone, undone for ever.
Unless your Father by kind Fate is mov'd
To be our Friend, and join the Lists with mine.

TORAX.

Nothing would please me better; I love War,
And think it time to curb the English Pride,
And give a check to their increasing Power.
The Land is ravag'd by their numerous Bands,
And every Day they're growing more our Lords.

CHEKITAN.

Are you sincere, or do you feign this Speech?

TORAX.

Indeed my Tongue does not bely my Heart;
And but my Father's wrong-turn'd Policy
Forbids, I'd instant join in War with you,
And help to set new Limits to their Power.

CHEKITAN.

'Tis plain, if they proceed, nor you nor I
Shall rule an Empire, or possess a Crown,
Our Countries all will soon become a Prey
To Strangers; we perhaps shall be their Slaves.
But will your Father be convinc'd of this?

TORAX.

I doubt he'll not. The good old Man esteems
And dotes upon them as most worthy Friends;
I've told him often that he cherish'd Serpents,
To bite his Children, and destroy his Friends.
But this he calls the Folly of my Youth,
Bids me be silent, show Respect to Age,
Nor sow Sedition in my Father's Empire.

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CHEKITAN.

Stiff as he is, he yet may be subdued;
And I've a Power prepar'd that will attack him.
Should he refuse his Aid to our Design,
Retire himself, and bid his Troops to follow,
Yet Philip stands engag'd for his Return,
Ere twice the Sun has ris'n and blest the Earth.
Philip is eloquent, and so prepar'd,
He cannot fail to bend him to our Purpose.
You and Monelia have a Part to act;
To linger here, should he in Haste retreat
Till Philip follows and employs his Force.
Your Stay will add new Life to the Design,
And be of mighty Weight to gain Success.

MONELIA.

How shall we tarry midst the Noise of War,
In Danger of our Lives from Friends and Foes;
This will be deem'd a Madness by our Father,
And will deserve his most severe Rebuke.

CHEKITAN.

Myself will be a Sponsor for your Safety;
And should your Father baffle our Attempts,
Conduct you home from all the Noise of War,
Where may you long in Peace and Plenty smile,
While I return to mourn my hapless Fate.
But should Success attend on Philip's Purpose.
Your Father will not discommend your Stay,
But smiling give new Vigour to the War;
Which being ended, and our Foes subdu'd,
The happy Fruits of Peace succeed to all,
But we shall taste the greater Sweets of Love.

TORAX.

The Purport of our Stay is hid from me;
But Philip's subtle, crafty as the Fox.
We'll give full Scope to his enticing Art,
And help him what we can to take the Prey.

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MONELIA.

In your Protection then I trust myself,
Nor will delay beyond th' appointed Term,
Lest anxious Fears possess our Father's Heart,
Or Mischiefs happen that incur his Anger.

TORAX.

It is agreed; we now pursue our Walk;
Mean time consult what else may be of Use,
You're pain'd with Love, and I'm in Pain for War. [Exeunt.

CHEKITAN [*solus*].

The Game is sure—Her Brother's on my Side—
Her Brother and my own—My Force is strong—
But could her Father now be rous'd to War,
How should I triumph and defy even Fate?
But Fortune favours all advent'rous Souls:
I'll now to Philip; tell him my Success,
And rouse up every Spark of Vigour in him:
He will conceive fresh Hopes, and be more zealous.

SCENE II. PONTEACH'S *Cabin*.

PONTEACH, *an Indian* CONJURER, *and French* PRIEST.

PONTEACH.

Well! have you found the Secret of my Dream,
By all your Cries, and Howls, and Sweats, and Prayers?
Or is the Meaning still conceal'd from Man,
And only known to Genii and the Gods?

CONJURER.

Two Hours I've lain within the sultry Stove,
While Floods of Sweat ran trickling from my Skin;
With Howls and Cries and all the Force of Sound
Have I invok'd your Genius and my own,
Smote on my Breast, and beat against my Head,
To move an Answer, and the Secret learn.
But all in vain, no Answer can I have,
Till I first learn what secret Purposes
And great Designs are brooding in your Mind.

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PRIEST.

At our pure Virgin's Shrine I've bowed my Knees,
And there in fervent Prayer pour'd out my Soul;
Call'd on Saint Peter, call'd on all the Saints
That know the Secrets both of Heaven and Earth,
And can reveal what Gods themselves can do:
I've us'd the Arts of our most holy Mother,
Which I receiv'd when I forsook the World,
And gave myself to Holiness and Heaven;
But can't obtain the Secret of your Dream,
Till I first know the Secrets of your Heart,
Or what you hope or wish to be effected.
'Tis on these Terms we learn the Will of God,
What Good or Ill awaits on Kings or Kingdoms;
And without this, St. Peter's Self can't tell,

But at a Dream like yours would be confounded.

PONTEACH.

You're well agreed—Our Gods are much alike—
And I suspect both Rogues—What! won't they tell!
Should they betray my Scheme, the whole is blown.
And yet I fain would know. I'll charge them first.
Look here; if I disclose a Secret to you,
Tell it to none but silent honest Gods;
Death to you both, if you reveal to Men.

BOTH.

We will, we will, the Gods alone shall know.

PONTEACH.

Know then that I have fix'd on speedy War,
To drive these new Encroachers from my Country.
For this I meant t' engage our several Tribes,
And when our Foes are driven to their Bounds,
That we may stand and hold our Rights secure,
Unite our Strength under one common Head,
Whom all these Petty Kings must own their Lord,
Not even Hendrick's self shall be excused.
This is my Purpose. Learn if it shall prosper,
Or will it end in Infamy and Shame?

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CONJURER.

[Smiting on his breast, groaning, and muttering in his cloak or blanket, falls down upon the ground, beats his head against it, and pretends to listen: then rises, and says with a rumbling hideous voice:]

Success and Victory shall attend your Arms;
You are the mighty Elk that none can conquer,
And all the Tribes shall own you for their King.
Thus, say the Genii, does your Dream intend.

PRIEST.

[Looking up to Heaven in a praying posture for a small space, says:]

Had I but known you was resolv'd on War,
And War against those Heretics the English,
I need not to have ask'd a God or Saint
To signify the Import of your Dream.
Your great Design shall have a prosperous End,
'Tis by the Gods approv'd, and must succeed.
Angels and Saints are dancing now in Heaven:
Your Enemies are theirs, are hated by them,
And they'll protect and help you as their Champion, *[Aside.*
That fights their Battles, and defends their Cause.
Our great St. Peter is himself a Warrior;
He drew his Sword against such Infidels,
And now, like him, you'll gain immortal Honour,
And Gods in Heaven and Saints on Earth will praise you.

PONTEACH.

The Gods and Genii do as you have said.
I'll to the Chiefs, and hasten them to Arms.

[Exeunt PONTEACH and CONJURER.]

PRIEST *[solus]*.

This, by St. Peter, goes as I would have it.
The Conjuror agreed with me to pump him,
Or else deny to solve his dubious Vision:
But, that we've so agreed in our Responses,
Is all mere Providence, and rul'd by Heaven,

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To give us further Credit with this Indian.
Now he is fix'd—will wage immediate War—
This will be joyful News in France and Rome,
That Ponteach is in Arms, and won't allow
The English to possess their new-gain'd Empire:
That he has slain their Troops, destroy'd their Forts,
Expell'd them from the Lakes to their old Limits:
That he prefers the French, and will assist
To repossess them of this fertile Land.
By all the Saints, of this I'll make a Merit,
Declare myself to be the wise Projector;
This may advance me towards St. Peter's Chair,
And these blind Infidels by Accident
May have a Hand in making me a Pope—
But stop—Won't this defeat my other Purpose?
To gain the Mohawk Princess to my Wishes?
No—by the holy Virgin, I'll surprise her,
And have one hearty Revel in her Charms.
But now I'll hasten to this Indian Council;
I may do something there that's apropos. [Exit.

SCENE III. *An Indian Senate-House.*

PONTEACH, TENESCO, PHILIP, ASTINACO, BEAR, WOLF, and French PRIEST.

PONTEACH.

Are all the Chiefs and Warriors here assembled,
That we expect to honour this Day's Council?

TENESCO.

All are conven'd except the Mohawk King,
Who, as we are inform'd, denies his Presence.

PHILIP.

I've half succeeded with the stubborn Chief.
He will not join in Council, but hath promised,
Till further Notice, not to be our Foe:
He'll see how we unite, and what Success
Attends our Arms; in short, he gives strong Hints
That he will soon befriend the common Cause.

[Pg 163]

PONTEACH.

Do what he will, 'tis this explains my Meaning;
[Taking up the hatchet.
You all are well appris'd of my Design,
Which every passing Moment but confirms:
Nay, my Heart's pain'd while I withhold my Hand
From Blood and Vengeance on our hated Foes.
Tho' I should stand alone, I'll try my Power
To punish their Encroachments, Frauds, and Pride;
Yet tho' I die, it is my Country's Cause,
'Tis better thus to die than be despis'd;
Better to die than be a Slave to Cowards,
Better to die than see my Friends abus'd;
The Aged scorn'd, the Young despis'd and spurn'd.
Better to die than see my Country ruin'd,
Myself, my Sons, my Friends reduc'd to Famine,
Expell'd from hence to barren Rocks and Mountains,
To curse our wretched Fate and pine in Want;
Our pleasant Lakes and Fertile Lands usurp'd
By Strangers, Ravagers, rapacious Christians.
Who is it don't prefer a Death in War
To this impending Wretchedness and Shame?
Who is it loves his Country, Friends, or Self,
And does not feel Resentment in his Soul?
Who is it sees their growing Strength and Power,
And how we waste and fail by swift Degrees,

That does not think it Time to rouse and arm,
 And kill the Serpent ere we feel it sting,
 And fall the Victims of its painful Poison?
 Oh! could our Fathers from their Country see
 Their ancient Rights encroach'd upon and ravag'd,
 And we their Children slow, supine, and careless
 To keep the Liberty and Land they left us,
 And tamely fall a Sacrifice to Knaves!
 How would their Bosoms glow with patriot Shame,
 To see their Offspring so unlike themselves?
 They dared all Dangers to defend their Rights,
 Nor tamely bore an Insult from a Foe.
 Their plain rough Souls were brave and full of Fire,
 Lovers of War, nor knew the Pain of Fear.
 Rouse, then, ye Sons of ancient Heroes, rouse,
 Put on your Arms, and let us act a Part
 Worthy the Sons of such renowned Chiefs.
 Nor urge I you to Dangers that I shun,
 Or mean to act my Part by Words alone;
 This Hand shall wield the Hatchet in the Cause,
 These Feet pursue the frighted running Foe,
 This Body rush into the hottest Battle;
 There should I fall, I shall secure my Honour,
 And, dying, urge my Countrymen to Vengeance
 With more Success than all the Force of Words.
 Should I survive, I'll shed the foremost Tear
 O'er my brave Countrymen that chance to fall;
 I'll be the foremost to revenge their Blood,
 And, while I live, honour both them and theirs,
 I add no more, but wait to hear your Minds.

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TENESCO.

Tho' I'm a Warrior, and delight in Arms,
 Have oft with Pleasure heard the Sound of Battle,
 And oft return'd with Victory and Triumph;
 Yet I'm not fond to fight without just Cause,
 Or shed the Blood of Men for my Diversion;
 But I have seen, with my own Eyes I've seen,
 High Provocations from our present Foes,
 Their Pride and Insults, Knavery and Frauds,
 Their large Encroachments on our common Rights,
 Which every Day increase, are seen by all,
 And grown so common, they are disregarded.
 What calls on us more loudly for Revenge,
 Is their Contempt and Breach of public Faith.
 When we complain, they sometimes promise fair;
 When we grow restless, Treaties are propos'd,
 And Promises are gilded then with Presents.
 What is the End? Still the old Trade goes on;
 Their Colonels, Governors, and mighty Men,
 Cheat, lie, and break their solemn Promises,
 And take no care to have our Wrongs redress'd.
 Their King is distant, would he hear our Prayers:
 Still we've no other Way to come at Justice,
 But by our Arms to punish Wrongs like these,
 And Wrongs like these are national and public,
 Concern us all, and call for public Vengeance.
 And Wrongs like these are recent in our Minds.

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PHILIP.

Public or private Wrongs, no matter which.
 I think our Hunters ought to be reveng'd;
 Their Bodies are found torn by rav'nous Beasts,
 But who doubts they were kill'd by Englishmen?
 Their Heads are scalp'd, their Arms and Jewels gone,
 And Beasts of Prey can have no Use for these.
 No, they were murdered, slyly, basely shot,
 And who that has a Heart does not resent it?
 Oh! how I long to tear their mangled Limbs!
 Yes, I could eat their Hearts, and drink their Blood,
 And revel in their Torments, Pains, and Tortures;
 And, though I go alone, I'll seek Revenge.

This is the Fire and Madness of your Youth,
 And must be curb'd to do your Country Service.
 Facts are not always what they seem to be,
 And this perhaps may be the Fault of One
 Whom their Laws punish if you once detect him.
 Shall we then, to revenge your Countrymen,
 To recompense a Wrong by one committed,
 Rouse all to Arms, and make a general Slaughter?
 'Tis higher Motives move my Mind to War,
 And make me zealous in the common Cause.
 But hear me—"Tis no Trifle we're upon—
 If we have Wisdom, it must now be used;
 If we have Numbers, they must be united;
 If we have Strength, it must be all exerted;
 If we have Courage it must be inflamed,
 And every Art and Stratagem be practis'd:
 We've more to do than fright a Pigeon Roost,
 Or start a timorous Flock of running Deer;
 Yes, we've a strong, a warlike stubborn Foe,
 Unus'd to be repuls'd and quit the Field,
 Nay, flush'd with Victories and long Success,
 Their Numbers, Strength, and Courage all renown'd,
 'Tis little of them that you see or know.
 I've seen their Capital, their Troops and Stores,
 Their Ships, their Magazines of Death and Vengeance,
 And, what is more, I've seen their potent King,
 Who like a God sits over all the World,
 And thunders forth his Vengeance thro' the Earth.
 When he is pleas'd, Smiles sit upon his Face,
 And Goodness flows in Rivers at his Feet;
 When he's provok'd, 'tis like a fiery Tempest,
 All's Terror and Amazement in his Presence,
 And frightened Heroes trembling flee his Wrath.
 What then is to be done? what may we hope?
 At most, by secret, sly, and subtle Means
 To curb these vagrant Outcasts of his Subjects,
 Secure our Countries from their further Ravage,
 And make ourselves of more Importance to them,
 Perhaps procure a Peace to our Advantage.
 In this I'll join and head my valiant Troops,
 Who will not fail to act a valiant Part.

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THE BEAR.

What is the Greatness of their King to us?
 What of his Strength or Wisdom? Shall we fear
 A Lion chain'd, or in another World?
 Or what avails his flowing Goodness to us?
 Does not the ravenous Tyger feed her Young?
 And the fierce Panther fawn upon his Mate?
 Do not the Wolves defend and help their Fellows,
 The poisonous Serpent feed her hissing Brood,
 And open wide her Mouth for their Protection?
 So this good King shows Kindness to his own,
 And favours them, to make a Prey of others;
 But at his Hands we may expect no Favour,
 Look back, my Friends, to our Forefathers' Time,
 Where is their Country? where their pleasant Haunts?
 The running Streams and shady Forests where?
 They chas'd the flying Game, and liv'd in Plenty.
 Lo, these proud Strangers now possess the Whole;
 Their Cities, Towns, and Villages arise,
 Forests are spoil'd, the Haunts of Game destroy'd,
 And all the Sea Coasts made one general Waste;
 Between the Rivers Torrent-like they sweep,
 And drive our Tribes toward the setting Sun.
 They who once liv'd on yon delightful Plains
 Are now no more, their very Name is lost.
 The Sons of potent Kings, subdu'd and murder'd,
 Are Vagrants, and unknown among their Neighbours.
 Where will the Ravage stop? the Ruin where?

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Does not the Torrent rush with growing Speed,
And hurry us to the same wretched End?
Let us grow wise then by our Fathers' Folly,
Unite our Strength, too long it's been divided,
And mutual Fears and Jealousies obtain'd:
This has encourag'd our encroaching Foes,
But we'll convince them, once, we dare oppose them.

THE WOLF.

Yet we have Strength by which we may oppose,
But every Day this Strength declines and fails.
Our great Forefathers, ere these Strangers came,
Liv'd by the Chace, with Nature's Gifts content,
The cooling Fountain quench'd their raging Thirst.
Doctors, and Drugs, and Med'cines were unknown,
Even Age itself was free from Pain and Sickness.
Swift as the Wind, o'er Rocks and Hills they chas'd
The flying Game, the bounding Stag outwinded,
And tir'd the savage Bear, and tam'd the Tyger;
At Evening feasted on the past Day's Toil,
Nor then fatigu'd; the merry Dance and Song
Succeeded; still with every rising Sun
The Sport renew'd; or if some daring Foe
Provok'd their Wrath, they bent the hostile Bow,
Nor waited his Approach, but rush'd with Speed,
Fearless of Hunger, Thirst, Fatigue, or Death.
But we their soften'd Sons, a puny Race,
Are weak in Youth, fear Dangers where they're not;
Are weary'd with what was to them a Sport,
Panting and breathless in One short Hour's Chace;
And every Effort of our Strength is feeble.
We're poison'd with the Infection of our Foes,
Their very Looks and Actions are infectious,
And in deep Silence spread Destruction round them.
Bethink yourselves while any Strength remains;
Dare to be like your Fathers, brave and strong,
Nor further let the growing Poison spread.
And would you stop it, you must resolve to conquer,
Destroy their Forts and Bulwarks, burn their Towns,
And keep them at a greater Distance from us.
Oh! 'tis a Day I long have wish'd to see,
And, aged as I am, my Youth returns
To act with Vigour in so good a Cause.
Yes, you shall see the old Wolf will not fail
To head his Troops, and urge them on to Battle.

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PONTEACH.

Your Minds are all for War, we'll not delay;
Nor doubt but others gladly will comply,
When they behold our Union and Success.

TENESCO.

This Holy Priest has something to propose
That may excite us all to greater Zeal.

PONTEACH.

Let him be heard: 'Tis something from his Gods,
And may import the common Interest much.

PRIEST.

[*Coming from one side, where he hath stood listening.*]

'Tis not to shew my Eloquence of Speech,
Or drown your Senses with unmeaning Sound,
That I desire Admittance to your Council;
It is an Impulse from the Gods that moves me,
That what I say will be to your Advantage.

Oh! With what secret Pleasure I behold
So many wise and valiant Kings unite,
And in a Cause by Gods and Saints espous'd.
Heaven smiles on your Design, and it shall prosper.
You're going to fight the Enemies of God;
Rebels and Traitors to the King of Kings;
Nay, those who once betray'd and kill'd his Son,
Who came to save you Indians from Damnation—
He was an Indian, therefore they destroy'd him;
He rose again and took his flight to Heaven;
But when his Foes are slain he'll quick return;
And be your kind Protector, Friend, and King.
Be therefore brave and fight his Battles for him;
Spare not his Enemies, where-e'r you find 'em:
The more you murder them, the more you please him;
Kill all you captivate, both old and young,
Mothers and Children, let them feel your Tortures;
He that shall kill a Briton, merits Heaven.
And should you chance to fall, you'll be convey'd
By flying Angels to your King that's there
Where these your hated Foes can never come.
Doubt you the Truth of this my Declaration?
I have a Witness here that cannot lie.

[*Pulling out a burning glass.*

This Glass was touch'd by your great Saviour's Hand,
And after left in holy Peter's Care;
When I command, it brings down Fire from Heaven,
To witness for me that I tell no Lie.

[*The INDIANS gather round and gaze.*

Behold—Great God, send Fire, convince these Indian Kings
That I'm thy Servant, and report the Truth,

[*In a very praying posture and solemn canting tone.*

Am sent to teach them what they ought to do,
To kill and scalp, to torture and torment
Thy murderous treacherous Foes, the hateful English.

[*It takes fire; the INDIANS are amaz'd, and retreat from it.*

PONTEACH.

Who now can doubt the Justice of our Cause,
Or this Man's Mission from the King above,
And that we ought to follow his Commands?

ASTINACO.

'Tis wonderful indeed—It must be so—

TENESCO.

This cannot be a Cheat—It is from Heaven—

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ALL.

We are convinc'd and ready to obey;
We are impatient to revenge our King.

PONTEACH.

[*Takes up the bloody hatchet and flourishes it round.*]

Thus do I raise the Hatchet from the Ground,
Sharpen'd and bright may it be stain'd with Blood,
And never dull'd nor rusted till we've conquer'd,
And taught proud Englishmen to dread its Edge.

ALL.

[*Flourishing their hatchets, and striking them upon a block.*]

Thus will we hew and carve their mangled Bodies,
And give them to the Beasts and Birds for Food.

And thus our Names and Honours will maintain
 While Sun and Moon, Rivers and Trees remain;
 Our unborn Children shall rejoice to hear
 How we their Fathers made the English fear.

THE WAR SONG.

To the tune of "Over the Hills and far away," sung by TENESCO, the head warrior. They all join in the Chorus, and dance, while that is singing, in a circle round him; and during the Chorus the music plays.

Where-e'r the Sun displays his Light,
 Or Moon is seen to shine by Night,
 Where-e'r the noisy Rivers flow
 Or Trees and Grass and Herbage grow.—*Chorus.*

Be 't known that we this War begin
 With proud insulting Englishmen;
 The Hatchet we have lifted high, [*Holding up their hatchets.*]
 And them we'll conquer or we'll die.—*Chorus.*

The Edge is keen, the Blade is bright,
 Nothing saves them but their Flight;
 And then like Heroes we'll pursue,
 Over the Hills and Valleys through.—*Chorus.*

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They'll like frightened Women quake,
 When they behold a hissing Snake;
 Or like timorous Deer away,
 And leave both Goods and Arms a Prey.—*Chorus.*

Pain'd with Hunger, Cold, or Heat,
 In Haste they'll from our Land retreat;
 While we'll employ our scalping Knives—
 [*Drawing and flourishing their scalping knives.*]
 Take off their Skulls, and spare their Lives.—*Chorus.*

Or in their Country they'll complain,
 Nor ever dare return again;
 Or if they should they'll rue the Day,
 And curse the Guide that shew'd the Way.—*Chorus.*

If Fortune smiles, we'll not be long
 Ere we return with Dance and Song,
 But ah! if we should chance to die,
 Dear Wives and Children do not cry.—*Chorus.*

Our Friends will ease your Grief and Woe,
 By double Vengeance on the Foe;
 Will kill, and scalp, and shed their Blood,
 Where-e'r they find them thro' the Wood.—*Chorus.*

No pointing Foe shall ever say
 'Twas there the vanquish'd Indian lay;
 Or boasting to his Friends relate
 The Tale of our unhappy Fate.—*Chorus.*

Let us with Courage then away
 To hunt and seize the frightened Prey;
 Nor think of Children, Friend, or Wife,
 While there's an Englishman alive.—*Chorus.*

In Heat and Cold, thro' Wet and Dry,
 Will we pursue, and they shall fly
 To Seas which they a Refuge think,
 And there in wretched Crowds they'll sink.—*Chorus.*
 [*Exeunt omnes singing.*]

The End of the Third Act.

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ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The Border of a Grove.*

Enter TENESCO *to* PHILIP *and* CHEKITAN.

TENESCO.

The Troops are all assembled, some have march'd,
Perhaps are now engag'd, and warm in Battle;
The rest have Orders where to bend their Course.
Each Tribe is headed by a valiant Chief,
Except the Bulls which fall to one of you;
The other stays to serve the State at home,
Or back us, should our Forces prove too weak.

PHILIP.

The Bulls are brave, had they a brave Commander,
They'd push the Battle home with sure Success.
I'd choose of all the Troops to be their Leader;
For tho' I'd neither Courage, Skill, nor Strength,
Honour attends the Man who heads the Brave;
Many are dubb'd for Heroes in these Times,
Who owe their Fame to those whom they commanded.

TENESCO.

But we shall ne'er suspect your Title false;
Already you've confirm'd your Fame and Courage,
And prov'd your Skill and Strength as a Commander.

PHILIP.

Still I'll endeavour to deserve your Praise,
Nor long delay the Honour you propose.

CHEKITAN.

But this will interfere with your Design,
And oversets the Scheme of winning Hendrick.

PHILIP.

Ah true—and kills your Hope—This Man 's in Love.

[*To* TENESCO.]

TENESCO.

Indeed! In Love with whom? King Hendrick's Daughter?

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PHILIP.

The same; and I've engag'd to win her Father.

TENESCO.

This may induce him to espouse our Cause,
Which likewise you engag'd should be effected.

PHILIP.

But then I can't command as was propos'd,
I must resign that Honour to this Lover,
While I conduct and form this double Treaty.

TENESCO.

I am content if you but please yourselves
By Means and Ways not hurtful to the Public.

CHEKITAN.

Was not the Public serv'd, no private Ends
Would tempt me to detain him from the Field,
Or in his stead propose myself a Leader;
But every Power I have shall be exerted:
And if in Strength or Wisdom I should fail,
I dare presume you'll ever find me faithful.

TENESCO.

I doubt it not—You'll not delay your Charge;
The Troops are all impatient for the Battle.

[*Exeunt* TENESCO *and* PHILIP.

CHEKITAN [*solus*].

This is not to my Mind—But I must do it—
If Philip heads the Troops, my Hopes are blown—
I must prepare, and leave the Event to Fate
And him—"Tis fix'd—There is no other Choice;
Monelia I must leave, and think of Battles—
She will be safe—But, Oh! the Chance of War—
Perhaps I fall—and never see her more—
This shocks my Soul in spite of Resolution—
The bare Perhaps is more than Daggers to me—
To part for ever! I'd rather stand against
Embattled Troops than meet this single Thought;
A Thought in Poison dipp'd and pointed round;
Oh! how it pains my doubting trembling Heart!
I must not harbour it—My Word is gone—
My Honour calls—and, what is more, my Love.

[*Noise of* MONELIA *striving behind the scene.*

What Sound is that?—It is Monelia's Voice;
And in Distress—What Monster gives her Pain?

[*Going towards the sound, the Scene opens and discovers the*
PRIEST *with her.*

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SCENE II. MONELIA *and* PRIEST.

CHEKITAN.

What do I see? The holy PRIEST is with her.

MONELIA.

[*Struggling with the* PRIEST, *and trying to disengage herself.*]

No, I would sooner die than be dishonour'd—
Cut my own Throat, or drown me in the Lake.

PRIEST.

Do you love Indians better than us white Men?

MONELIA.

Nay, should an Indian make the foul Attempt,
I'd murder him, or kill my wretched Self.

PRIEST.

I must I can, and will enjoy you now.

MONELIA.

You must! You sha'n't, you cruel, barbarous Christian.

CHEKITAN.

Hold, thou mad Tyger—What Attempt is this? [Seizing him.
Are you a Christian Priest? What do you here? [Pushes him.
What was his Will, Monelia? He is dumb.

MONELIA.

May he be dumb and blind, and senseless quite,
That had such brutal Baseness in his Mind.

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CHEKITAN.

Base false Deceiver, what could you intend?
[Making towards him.

MONELIA.

Oh I am faint—You have preserv'd my Honour,
Which he, foul Christian, thirsted to destroy.
[PRIEST attempts to go.

CHEKITAN.

Stay; leave your Life to expiate your Crime:
Your heated Blood shall pay for your Presumption.
[Offering to strike him with a hatchet.

PRIEST.

Good Prince, forbear your pious Hand from Blood;
I did not know you was this Maiden's Lover,
I took her for a Stranger, half your Foe.

CHEKITAN.

Did you not know she was King Hendrick's Daughter?
Did you not know that she was not your Wife?
Have you not told us, holy Men like you
Are by the Gods forbid all fleshly Converse?
Have you not told us, Death, and Fire, and Hell
Await those who are incontinent,
Or dare to violate the Rites of Wedlock?
That your God's Mother liv'd and died a Virgin,
And thereby set Example to her Sex?
What means all this? Say you such Things to us,
That you alone may revel in these Pleasures?

PRIEST.

I have a Dispensation from St. Peter
To quench the Fire of Love when it grows painful.
This makes it innocent like Marriage Vows;
And all our holy Priests, and she herself,
Commit no Sin in this Relief of Nature:
For, being holy, there is no Pollution
Communicated from us as from others;
Nay, Maids are holy after we've enjoy'd them,
And, should the Seed take Root, the Fruit is pure.

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CHEKITAN.

Oh vain Pretense! Falsehood and foul Deception!
None but a Christian could devise such Lies!
Did I not fear it might provoke your Gods,
Your Tongue should never frame Deceit again.
If there are Gods, and such as you have told us,
They must abhor all Baseness and Deceit,
And will not fail to punish Crimes like yours.
To them I leave you—But avoid my Presence,
Nor let me ever see your hated Head,
Or hear your lying Tongue within this Country.

PRIEST.

Now by St. Peter I must go—He's raging.

[*Aside.*]

CHEKITAN.

That Day I do, by your great dreadful God,
This Hand shall cleave your Head, and spill your Blood,
Not all your Prayers, and Lies, and Saints shall save you.

PRIEST.

I've got his Father's Secret, and will use it.
Such Disappointment ought to be reveng'd.

[*Aside.*]

CHEKITAN.

Don't mutter here, and conjure up your Saints,
I value not their Curses, or your Prayers.

[*Stepping towards the PRIEST to hurry him.*]

PRIEST.

By all the Saints, young Man, thou shalt repent it.

[*Exit.*]

MONELIA.

Base, false Dissembler—Tyger, Snake, a Christian!
I hate the Sight; I fear the very Name.
O Prince, what has not your kind Presence sav'd me!

CHEKITAN.

It sav'd to me more than my Father's Empire;
Far more than Crowns and Worlds—It sav'd Monelia,
The Hope of whom is more than the Creation.
In this I feel the Triumph of an Hero,
And glory more than if I'd conquer'd Kingdoms.

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MONELIA.

Oh, I am thine, I'm more than ever thine;
I am your Captive now, your lawful Prize:
You've taken me in War, a dreadful War!
And snatch'd me from the hungry Tyger's Jaw.
More than my Life and Service is your Due,
And had I more I would devote it to you.

CHEKITAN.

O my Monelia! rich is my Reward,
Had I lost Life itself in the Encounter;
But still I fear that Fate will snatch you from me.
Where is your Brother? Why was you alone?

Enter TORAX, from listening to their discourse.

TORAX.

Here am I: What would you of me?

MONELIA.

Torax!
I've been assaulted by a barbarous Man,
And by mere Accident escap'd my Ruin.

TORAX.

What Foe is here? The English are not come?

MONELIA.

No: But a Christian lurk'd within the Grove,
And every Christian is a Foe to Virtue;
Insidious, subtle, cruel, base, and false!
Like Snakes, their very Eyes are full of Poison;
And where they are not, Innocence is safe.

TORAX.

The holy Priest! Is he so vile a Man?
I heard him mutter Threat'nings as I past him.

CHEKITAN.

I spar'd his guilty Life, but drove him hence,
On Pain of Death and Tortures, never more
To tread the Earth, or breathe the Air with me.
Be warn'd by this to better tend your Charge.
You see how Mischiefs lie conceal'd about us,
We tread on Serpents ere we hear them hiss,
And Tygers lurk to seize the incautious Prey.
I must this Hour lead forth my Troops to Battle,
They're now in Arms, and waiting my Command.

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MONELIA.

What Safety shall I have when you are gone?
I must not, cannot, will not longer tarry,
Lest other Christians, or some other Foe,
Attempt my Ruin.

CHEKITAN.

Torax will be your Guard.
My Honour suffers, should I now decline;
It is my Country's Cause; I've pawn'd my Word,
Prevented Philip, to make sure of you.
He stays. 'Tis all in favour to our Love;
We must at present please ourselves with Hopes.

MONELIA.

Oh! my fond Heart no more conceals its Flame;
I fear, my Prince, I fear our Fates are cruel:
There's something whispers in my anxious Breast,
That if you go, I ne'er shall see you more.

CHEKITAN.

Oh! how her Words unman and melt my Soul!
As if her Fears were Prophecies of Fate.
I will not go and leave you thus in Fears;
I'll frame Excuses—Philip shall command—
I'll find some other Means to turn the King;
I'll venture Honour, Fortune, Life, and Love,
Rather than trust you from my Sight again.
For what avails all that the World can give?
If you're withheld, all other Gifts are Curses,
And Fame and Fortune serve to make me wretched.

[*Aside.*]

MONELIA.

Now you grow wild—You must not think of staying;
Our only Hope, you know, depends on Philip.
I will not fear, but hope for his Success,
And your Return with Victory and Triumph,
That Love and Honour both may crown our Joy.

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CHEKITAN.

Now this is kind; I am myself again.
You had unman'd and soften'd all my Soul,
Disarm'd my Hand, and cowardiz'd my Heart:
But now in every Vein I feel an Hero,
Defy the thickest Tempest of the War:
Yes, like a Lion conscious of his Strength,
Fearless of Death I'll rush into the Battle;
I'll fight, I'll conquer, triumph and return;
Laurels I'll gain and lay them at your Feet.

MONELIA.

May the Success attend you that you wish!
May our whole Scheme of Happiness succeed!
May our next Meeting put an End to Fear,
And Fortune shine upon us in full Blaze!

CHEKITAN.

May Fate preserve you as her Darling Charge!
May all the Gods and Goddesses, and Saints,
If conscious of our Love, turn your Protectors!
And the great thundering God with Lightning burn
Him that but means to interrupt your Peace.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *Indian Senate-House.*

PONTEACH *and* PHILIP.

PONTEACH.

Say you that Torax then is fond of War?

PHILIP.

He is, and waits impatient my Return.

PONTEACH.

'Tis friendly in you thus to help your Brother;
But I suspect his Courage in the Field;
A love-sick Boy makes but a cow'rdly Captain.

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PHILIP.

His Love may spur him on with greater Courage;
He thinks he's fighting for a double Prize;
And but for this, and Hopes of greater Service
In forwarding the Treaty with the Mohawk,
I now had been in Arms and warm in Battle.

PONTEACH.

I much commend the Wisdom of your Stay.
Prepare yourself, and hasten to his Quarters;
You cannot make th' Attempt with too much Speed.
Urge ev'ry Argument with Force upon him,
Urge my strong Friendship, urge your Brother's Love,
His Daughter's Happiness, the common Good;
The general Sense of all the Indian Chiefs,
The Baseness of our Foes, our Hope of Conquest;
The Richness of the Plunder if we speed;
That we'll divide and share it as he pleases;
That our Success is certain if he joins us.
Urge these, and what besides to you occurs;
All cannot fail, I think, to change his Purpose.

PHILIP.

You'd think so more if you knew all my Plan. [Aside.
I'm all prepar'd now I've receiv'd your Orders,
But first must speak t' his Children ere I part,
I am to meet them in the further Grove.

PONTEACH.

Hark! there's a Shout—We've News of some Success;
It is the Noise of Victory and Triumph. [Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

Huzza! for our brave Warriors are return'd
Loaded with Plunder and the Scalps of Christians. [Enter WARRIORS.

PONTEACH.

What have you done? Why all this Noise and Shouting? [Pg 181]

1ST WARRIOR.

Three Forts are taken, all consum'd and plunder'd;
The English in them all destroy'd by Fire,
Except some few escap'd to die with Hunger.

2ND WARRIOR.

We've smok'd the Bear in spite of all his Craft,
Burnt up their Den, and made them take the Field:
The mighty Colonel Cockum and his Captain
Have dull'd our Tomhocks; here are both their Scalps:
[Holding out the two scalps.
Their Heads are split, our Dogs have eat their Brains.

PHILIP.

If that be all they've eat, the Hounds will starve.

3RD WARRIOR.

These are the scalps of those two famous Cheats
Who bought our Furs for Rum, and sold us Water.
[Holding out the scalps, which PONTEACH takes.
Our Men are loaded with their Furs again,
And other Plunder from the Villains' Stores.

PONTEACH.

All this is brave!
[Tossing up the scalps, which others catch, and
toss and throw them about.
This Way we'll serve them all.

PHILIP.

We'll cover all our Cabins with their Scalps.

WARRIORS.

We'll fat our Dogs upon their Brains and Blood.

PONTEACH.

Ere long we'll have their Governors in Play.

PONTEACH.

Stop—We must first consult which way to torture.
And whether all shall die—We will retire.

PHILIP [*going*].

Take care they don't escape.

WARRIOR.

They're bound secure. [*Exeunt* INDIANS; *manent* PRISONERS.

SCENE IV.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

Oh, Honnyman, how desperate is our Case!
There's not a single Hope of Mercy left:
How savage, cruel, bloody did they look!
Rage and Revenge appear'd in every Face.

HONNYMAN.

You may depend upon 't, we all must die,
I've made such Havoc, they'll have no Compassion;
They only wait to study out new Torments:
All that can be inflicted or endur'd,
We may expect from their relentless Hands.
Their brutal Eyes ne'er shed a pitying Tear;
Their savage Hearts ne'er had a Thought of Mercy;
Their Bosoms swell with Rancour and Revenge,
And, Devil-like, delight in others' Plagues,
Love Torments, Torture, Anguish, Fire, and Pain,
The deep-fetch'd Groan, the melancholy Sigh,
And all the Terrors and Distress of Death,
These are their Music, and enhance their Joy.
In Silence then submit yourself to Fate:
Make no Complaint, nor ask for their Compassion;
This will confound and half destroy their Mirth;
Nay, this may put a stop to many Tortures,
To which our Prayers and Tears and Plaints would move them.

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MRS. HONNYMAN.

Oh, dreadful Scene! Support me, mighty God,
To pass the Terrors of this dismal Hour,
All dark with Horrors, Torments, Pains, and Death!
Oh, let me not despair of thy kind Help;
Give Courage to my wretched, groaning Heart!

HONNYMAN.

Tush, Silence! You'll be overheard.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

Oh, my dear Husband! 'Tis an Hour for Prayer,
An Infidel would pray in our Distress:
An Atheist would believe there was some God
To pity Pains and Miseries so great.

HONNYMAN.

If there's a God, he knows our secret Wishes;
This Noise can be no Sacrifice to him;
It opens all the Springs of our weak Passions.
Besides, it will be Mirth to our Tormentors;
They'll laugh, and call this Cowardice in Christians

And say Religion makes us all mere Women.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

I will suppress my Grief in Silence then,
And secretly implore the Aid of Heaven.
Forbid to pray! Oh, dreadful Hour indeed! [Pausing.
Think you they will not spare our dear sweet Babes?
Must these dear Innocents be put to Tortures,
Or dash'd to Death, and share our wretched Fate?
Must this dear Babe that hangs upon my Breast

[Looking upon her infant.

Be snatch'd by savage Hands and torn in Pieces!
Oh, how it rends my Heart! It is too much!
Tygers would kindly soothe a Grief like mine;
Unconscious Rocks would melt, and flow in Tears
At this last Anguish of a Mother's Soul.

[Pauses, and views her child again.

Sweet Innocent! It smiles at this Distress,
And fondly draws this final Comfort from me:
Dear Babe, no more: Dear Tommy too must die,

[Looking at her other child.

Oh, my sweet First-born! Oh, I'm overpower'd. [Pausing.

HONNYMAN.

I had determin'd not to shed a Tear; [Weeping.
But you have all unman'd my Resolution;
You've call'd up all the Father in my Soul;
Why have you nam'd my Children? Oh, my Son!

[Looking upon him.

My only Son—My Image—Other Self!
How have I doted on the charming Boy,
And fondly plann'd his Happiness in Life!
Now his Life ends: Oh, the Soul-bursting Thought!
He falls a Victim for his Father's Folly.
Had I not kill'd their Friends, they might have spar'd
My Wife, my Children, and perhaps myself,
And this sad, dreadful Scene had never happen'd.
But 'tis too late that I perceive my Folly;
If Heaven forgive, 'tis all I dare to hope for.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

What! have you been a Murderer indeed!
And kill'd the Indians for Revenge and Plunder?
I thought you rash to tempt their brutal Rage,
But did not dream you guilty as you said.

HONNYMAN.

I am indeed. I murder'd many of them,
And thought it not amiss, but now I fear.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

O shocking Thought! Why have you let me know
Yourself thus guilty in the Eye of Heaven?
That I and my dear Babes were by you brought
To this Extreme of Wretchedness and Woe?
Why have you let me know the solemn Weight
Of horrid Guilt that lies upon us all?
To have died innocent, and seen these Babes
By savage Hands dash'd to immortal Rest,
This had been light, for this implies no Crime:
But now we die as guilty Murderers,
Not savage Indians, but just Heaven's Vengeance
Pursues our Lives with all these Pains and Tortures.
This is a Thought that points the keenest Sorrow,
And leaves no Room for Anguish to be heighten'd.

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HONNYMAN.

Upbraid me not, nor lay my Guilt to Heart;
You and these Fruits of our past Morning Love
Are innocent. I feel the Smart and Anguish,
The Stings of Conscience, and my Soul on Fire.
There's not a Hell more painful than my Bosom,
Nor Torments for the Damn'd more keenly pointed.
How could I think to murder was no Sin?
Oh, my lost Neighbour! I seduc'd him too.
Now death with all its Terrors disappears,
And all I fear 's a dreadful Something-after;
My Mind forebodes a horrid, woful Scene,
Where Guilt is chain'd and tortur'd with Despair.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

The Mind oppress'd with Guilt may find Relief.

HONNYMAN.

Oh, could I reach the pitying Ear of Heaven,
And all my Soul evaporate in Sound,
'T would ask Forgiveness! but I fear too late;
And next I'd ask that you and these dear Babes
Might bear no Part in my just Punishment.
Who knows but by pathetic Prayers and Tears
Their savage Bosoms may relent towards you,
And fix their Vengeance where just Heaven points it?
I still will hope, and every Motive urge.
Should I succeed, and melt their rocky Hearts,
I'd take it as a Presage of my Pardon,
And die with Comfort when I see you live.

[Death halloo is heard without.

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MRS. HONNYMAN.

Hark! they are coming—Hear that dreadful Halloo.

HONNYMAN.

It is Death's solemn Sentence to us all;
They are resolv'd, and all Entreaty's vain.
Oh horrid Scene! how shall I act my Part?
Was it but simple Death to me alone!
But all your Deaths are mine, and mine the Guilt.

Enter INDIANS with stakes, hatchets, and firebrands.

Oh, horrid Preparation, more than Death!

PONTEACH.

Plant down the Stakes, and let them be confin'd:
[They loose them from each other.
First kill the Tygers, then destroy their Whelps.

PHILIP.

This Brat is in our Way, I will dispatch it.
[Offering to snatch the sucking infant.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

No, my dear Babe shall in my Bosom die;
There is its Nourishment, and there its End.

PHILIP.

Die both together then, 'twill mend the Sport;
Tie the other to his Father, make a Pair;

Then each will have a Consort in their Pains;
Their sweet Brats with them, to increase the Dance.
[*They are tied down, facing each other upon their knees, and
their backs to the stakes.*]

WARRIOR.

All now is ready; they are bound secure.

PHILIP.

Whene'er you please, their jovial Dance begins. [To PONTEACH.

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MRS. HONNYMAN.

Oh, my dear Husband! What a Sight is this!
Could ever fabling Poet draw Distress
To such Perfection! Sad Catastrophe!
There are not Colours for such deep-dyed Woe,
Nor words expressive of such heighten'd Anguish.
Ourselves, our Babes, O cruel, cruel Fate!
This, this is Death indeed with all its Terrors.

HONNYMAN.

Is there no secret Pity in your Minds?
Can you not feel some tender Passion move,
When you behold the Innocent distress'd?
True, I am guilty, and will bear your Tortures:
Take your Revenge by all the Arts of Torment;
Invent new Torments, lengthen out my Woe,
And let me feel the keenest Edge of Pain:
But spare this innocent afflicted Woman,
Those smiling Babes who never yet thought Ill,
They never did nor ever will offend you.

PHILIP.

It cannot be: They are akin to you.
Well learnt to hunt and murder, kill and rob.

PONTEACH.

Who ever spar'd a Serpent in the Egg?
Or left young Tygers quiet in their Den?

WARRIOR.

Or cherishes young Vipers in his Bosom?

PHILIP.

Begin, begin; I'll lead the merry Dance.
[*Offering at the woman with a firebrand.*]

PONTEACH.

Stop: Are we not unwise to kill this Woman?
Or Sacrifice her Children to our Vengeance?
They have not wrong'd us; can't do present Mischief.
I know her Friends; they're rich and powerful,
And in their Turn will take severe Revenge:
But if we spare, they'll hold themselves oblig'd,
And purchase their Redemption with rich Presents.
Is not this better than an Hour's Diversion,
To hear their Groans, and Plaints, and piteous Cries?

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WARRIORS.

Your Counsel's wise, and much deserves our Praise;
They shall be spar'd.

PONTEACH.

Untie, and take them hence;
[*They untie the woman and the oldest child from HONNYMAN,
and retire a little to consult his death.*]
When the War ends her Friends shall pay us for it.

PHILIP.

I'd rather have the Sport than all the Pay.

HONNYMAN.

O, now, kind Heaven, thou hast heard my Prayer,
And what's to follow I can meet with Patience.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

Oh, my dear husband, could you too be freed! [Weeping.]
Yet must I stay and suffer Torments with you.
This seeming Mercy is but Cruelty!
I cannot leave you in this Scene of Woe,
'Tis easier far to stay and die together!

HONNYMAN.

Ah! but regard our Children's Preservation:
Conduct their Youth, and form their Minds to Virtue;
Nor let them know their Father's wretched End,
Lest lawless Vengeance should betray them too.

MRS. HONNYMAN.

If I must live, I must retire from hence,
Nor see your fearful Agonies in Death;
This would be more than all the Train of Torments.
The horrid Sight would sink me to the Dust;
These helpless Infants would become a Prey
To worse than Beasts, to savage, bloody Men.

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HONNYMAN.

Leave me—They are prepar'd, and coming on—
Heav'n save you all! Oh, 'tis the last dear Sight!

MRS. HONNYMAN.

Oh, may we meet where Fear and Grief are banish'd!
Dearest of Men, adieu—Adieu till then.
[*Exit, weeping with her children.*]

PHILIP.

Bring Fire and Knives, and Clubs, and Hatchets all;
Let the old Hunter feel the Smart of Pain.
[*They fall upon HONNYMAN with various instruments of torture.*]

HONNYMAN.

Oh! this is exquisite! [Groaning and struggling.]

1ST WARRIOR.

Hah! Does this make you dance?

This is fine fat Game!

PHILIP.

Make him caper. [*Striking him with a club, kicking, &c.*]

HONNYMAN.

O ye eternal Powers, that rule on high,
If in your Minds be Sense of human Woe,
Hear my Complaints, and pity my Distress!

PHILIP.

Ah, call upon your Gods, you faint-heart Coward!

HONNYMAN.

Oh, dreadful Racks! When will this Torment end?
Oh, for a Respite from all Sense of Pain!
'Tis come—I go—You can—no more torment. [*Dies.*]

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PHILIP.

He's dead; he'll hunt no more; h' 'as done with Game.
 [*Striking the dead body, and spitting in the face.*]

PONTEACH.

Drive hence his wretched Spirit, lest it plague us;
Let him go hunt the Woods; he's now disarm'd.
 [*They run round brushing the walls, &c., to dislodge the spirit.*]

ALL.

Out, Hunter, out, your Business here is done.
Out to the Wilds, but do not take your Gun.

PONTEACH [*to the Spirit*].

Go, tell our Countrymen, whose Blood you shed,
That the great Hunter Honnyman is dead:
That we're alive, we'll make the English know,
Whene'er they dare to serve us Indians so:
This will be joyful News to Friends from France,
We'll join the Chorus then, and have a Dance.
 [*Exeunt omnes, dancing, and singing the last two lines.*]

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The Border of a Grove, in which MONELIA and TORAX are asleep.*

Enter PHILIP [speaking to himself].

As a dark Tempest brewing in the Air,
For many Days hides Sun and Moon, and Stars,
At length grown ripe, bursts forth and forms a Flood
That frights both Men and Beasts, and drowns the Land;
So my dark Purpose now must have its Birth,
Long nourish'd in my Bosom, 'tis matur'd,
And ready to astonish and embroil
Kings and their Kingdoms, and decide their Fates.

Are they not here? Have I delay'd too long?

[He spies them asleep.]

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Yes, in a Posture too beyond my Hopes,
Asleep! This is the Providence of Fate,
And proves she patronizes my Design,
And I'll show her that Philip is no Coward.

*[Taking up his hatchet in one hand, and scalping knife in
the other, towards them.]*

A Moment now is more than Years to come:
Intrepid as I am, the Work is shocking.

[He retreats from them.]

Is it their Innocence that shakes my Purpose?
No; I can tear the Suckling from the Breast,
And drink their Blood who never knew a Crime.
Is it because my Brother's Charmer dies?
That cannot be, for that is my Revenge.
Is it because Monelia is a Woman?
I've long been blind and deaf to their Enchantments.
Is it because I take them thus unguarded?
No; though I act the Coward, it's a Secret.
What is it shakes my firm and fix'd Resolve?
'Tis childish Weakness: I'll not be unman'd.

[Approaches and retreats again.]

There's something awful in the Face of Princes,
And he that sheds their Blood, assaults the Gods:
But I'm a Prince, and 'tis by me they die;

[Advances arm'd as before.]

Each Hand contains the Fate of future Kings,
And, were they Gods, I would not balk my Purpose.

[Stabs MONELIA with the knife.]

TORAX.

Hah! Philip, are you come? What can you mean?

[TORAX starts and cries out.]

PHILIP.

Go learn my Meaning in the World of Spirits;

[Knocks him down with his hatchet, &c.]

'Tis now too late to make a Question of it.
The Play is ended *[Looking upon the bodies]*, now succeeds
the Farce.

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Hullo! Help! Haste! the Enemy is here.

[Calling at one of the doors, and returning.]

Help is at Hand—But I must first be wounded:

[Wounds himself.]

Now let the Gods themselves detect the Fraud.

Enter an INDIAN.

INDIAN.

What means your Cry? Is any Mischief here?

PHILIP.

Behold this flowing Blood; a desperate Wound!

[Shewing his wound.]

And there's a Deed that shakes the Root of Empires.

[Pointing to the bodies.]

2ND INDIAN.

Oh, fatal Sight! the Mohawk Prince is murder'd.

3RD INDIAN.

The Princess too is weltering in her Blood.

PHILIP.

Both, both are gone; 'tis well that I escap'd.

Enter PONTEACH.

PONTEACH.

What means this Outcry, Noise, and Tumult here?

PHILIP.

Oh see, my Father! see the Blood of Princes,
A Sight that might provoke the Gods to weep,
And drown the Country in a Flood of Tears.
Great was my Haste, but could not stop the Deed;
I rush'd among their Numbers for Revenge,
They frighted fled; there I receiv'd this Wound.

[Shewing his wound to PONTEACH.

PONTEACH.

Who, what were they? or where did they escape?

PHILIP.

A Band of English Warriors, bloody Dogs!
This Way they ran from my vindictive Arm, *[Pointing, &c.*
Which but for this base Wound would sure have stopp'd them.

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PONTEACH.

Pursue, pursue, with utmost Speed pursue,
[To the WARRIORS present.
Outfly the Wind till you revenge this Blood;
'Tis royal Blood, we count it as our own.

[Exeunt WARRIORS in haste.

This Scene is dark, and doubtful the Event;
Some great Decree of Fate depends upon it,
And mighty Good or Ill awaits Mankind.
The Blood of Princes cannot flow in vain,
The Gods must be in Council to permit it:
It is the Harbinger of their Designs,
To change, new-mould, and alter Things on Earth:
And much I fear, 'tis ominous of Ill,
To me and mine; it happen'd in my Kingdom.
Their Father's Rage will swell into a Torrent—
They were my Guests—His Wrath will centre here;
Our guilty Land hath drunk his Children's Blood.

PHILIP.

Had I not seen the flying Murderers,
Myself been wounded to revenge their Crime,
Had you not hasten'd to pursue the assassins,
He might have thought us treacherous and false,
Or wanting in our hospitable Care:
But now it cannot but engage his Friendship,
Rouse him to Arms, and with a Father's Rage
He'll point his Vengeance where it ought to fall;
And thus this Deed, though vile and dark as Night,
In its Events will open Day upon us,
And prove of great Advantage to our State.

PONTEACH.

Haste then; declare our Innocence and Grief;
Tell the old King we mourn as for our own,
And are determin'd to revenge his Wrongs;
Assure him that our Enemies are his,
And rouse him like a Tyger to the Prey.

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PHILIP.

I will with Speed; but first this bleeding Wound
Demands my Care, lest you lament me too.

[Exit, to have his wound dress'd.]

PONTEACH *[solus]*.

Pale, breathless Youths! Your Dignity still lives:

[Viewing the bodies.]

Your Murderers were blind, or they'd have trembled,
Nor dar'd to wound such Majesty and Worth;
It would have tam'd the savage running Bear,
And made the raging Tyger fondly fawn;
But your more savage Murderers were Christians.
Oh, the distress'd good King! I feel for him,
And wish to comfort his desponding Heart;
But your last Rites require my present Care.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. *The Senate-House.*

PONTEACH, TENESCO, *and others.*

PONTEACH.

Let all be worthy of the royal Dead;
Spare no Expense to grace th' unhappy Scene,
And aggrandize the solemn, gloomy Pomp
With all our mournful, melancholy Rites.

TENESCO.

It shall be done; all Things are now preparing.

PONTEACH.

Never were Funeral Rites bestow'd more just;
Who knew them living, must lament them dead;
Who sees them dead, must wish to grace their Tombs
With all the sad Respect of Grief and Tears.

TENESCO.

The Mourning is as general as the News;
Grief sits on every Face, in every Eye,
And gloomy Melancholy in Silence reigns:
Nothing is heard but Sighs and sad Complaints,
As if the First-born of the Realm were slain.

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PONTEACH.

Thus would I have it; let no Eye be dry
No Heart unmov'd, let every Bosom swell
With Sighs and Groans. What Shouting do I hear?

[A shouting without, repeated several times.]

TENESCO.

It is the Shout of Warriors from the Battle;
The Sound of Victory and great Success.

[He goes to listen to it.]

PONTEACH.

Such is the State of Men and human Things;
We weep, we smile, we mourn, and laugh thro' Life,
Here falls a Blessing, there alights a Curse,
As the good Genius or the evil reigns.
It's right it should be so. Should either conquer,

The World would cease, and Mankind be undone
By constant Frowns or Flatteries from Fate;
This constant Mixture makes the Potion safe,
And keeps the sickly Mind of Man in Health.

Enter CHEKITAN.

It is my Son. What has been your Success?

CHEKITAN.

We've fought the Enemy, broke thro' their Ranks,
Slain many on the Spot, pursu'd the rest
Till Night conceal'd and sav'd them from our Arms.

PONTEACH.

'Tis bravely done, and shall be duly honour'd
With all the Signs and Marks of public Joy.

CHEKITAN.

What means this Gloom I see in every Face?
These smother'd Groans and stifled half-drawn Sighs;
Does it offend that I've return'd in Triumph?

PONTEACH.

I fear to name—And yet it must be known.
Be not alarm'd, my Son, the Laws of Fate
Must be obey'd: She will not hear our Dictates.
I'm not a Stranger to your youthful Passion,
And fear the Disappointment will confound you.

[*Aside.*

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CHEKITAN.

Has he not sped? Has ill befell my Brother?

PONTEACH.

Yes, he is wounded but—Monelia's slain,
And Torax both. Slain by the cowardly English,
Who 'scap'd your Brother's wounded threat'ning Arm,
But are pursued by such as will revenge it.—

CHEKITAN.

Oh wretched, wretched, wretched Chekitan!

[*Aside.*

PONTEACH.

I know you're shock'd—The Scene has shock'd us all,
And what we could, we've done to wipe the Stain
From us, our Family, our Land and State;
And now prepare due Honours for the Dead,
With all the solemn Pomp of public Grief,
To shew Respect as if they were our own.

CHEKITAN.

Is this my Triumph after Victory?
A solemn, dreadful pompous Shew:
Why have I 'scap'd their Swords and liv'd to see it?
Monelia dead! aught else I could have borne:
I'm stupefy'd: I can't believe it true;
Shew me the Dead; I will believe my Eyes,
But cannot mourn or drop a Tear till then.

[*Aside.*

TENESCO.

I will conduct you to them—Follow me—

[*Exeunt* TENESCO *and* CHEKITAN.]

PONTEACH.

This is a sad Reception from a Conquest,
And puts an awful Gloom upon our Joy;
I fear his Grief will overtop his Reason;
A Lover weeps with more than common Pain.
Nor flows his greatest Sorrow at his Eyes:
His Grief is inward, and his Heart sheds Tears,
And in his Soul he feels the pointed Woe,
When he beholds the lovely Object lost.
The deep-felt Wound admits no sudden Cure;
The festering Humour will not be dispers'd,
It gathers on the Mind, and Time alone,
That buries all Things, puts an End to this. [Exeunt omnes.]

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SCENE III. *The Grove, with the dead bodies; TENESCO pointing CHEKITAN to them.*

TENESCO.

There lie the Bodies, Prince, a wretched Sight!
Breathless and pale.

CHEKITAN.

A wretched Sight indeed; [Going towards them.]
Oh, my Monelia; has thy Spirit fled?
Art thou no more? a bloody, breathless Corpse!
Am I return'd full flush'd with Hopes of Joy,
With all the Honours Victory can give,
To see thee thus? Is this, is this my Welcome?
Is this our Wedding? Wilt thou not return?
Oh, charming Princess, art thou gone for ever?
Is this the fatal Period of our Love?
Oh! had I never seen thy Beauty bloom,
I had not now been griev'd to see it pale:
Had I not known such Excellence had liv'd,
I should not now be curs'd to see it dead:
Had not my Heart been melted by thy Charms,
It would not now have bled to see them lost.
Oh, wherefore, wherefore, wherefore do I live:
Monelia is not—What's the World to me?
All dark and gloomy, horrid, waste, and void:
The Light of the Creation is put out!—
The Blessings of the Gods are all withdrawn!
Nothing remains but Wretchedness and Woe;
Monelia's gone; Monelia is no more.
The Heavens are veil'd because she don't behold them:
The Earth is curs'd, for it hath drunk her Blood;
The Air is Poison, for she breathes no more:
Why fell I not by the base Briton's Sword?
Why press'd I not upon the fatal Point?
Then had I never seen this worse than Death,
But dying said, 'tis well—Monelia lives.

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TENESCO.

Comfort, my Prince, nor let your Passion swell
To such a Torrent, it o'erwhelms your Reason,
And preys upon the Vitals of your Soul.
You do but feed the Viper by this View;
Retire, and drive the Image from your Thought,
And Time will soon replace your every Joy.

CHEKITAN.

O my Tenesco, had you ever felt
The gilded Sweets, or pointed Pains of Love,

You'd not attempt to sooth a Grief like mine.
Why did you point me to the painful Sight?
Why have you shown this Shipwreck of my Hopes,
And plac'd me in this beating Storm of Woe?
Why was I told of my Monelia's Fate?
Why wa'n't the wretched Ruin all conceal'd
Under some fair Pretence—That she had fled—
Was made a Captive, or had chang'd her Love—
Why wa'n't I left to guess her wretched End?
Or have some slender Hope that she still liv'd?
You've all been cruel; she died to torment me;
To raise my Pain, and blot out every Joy.—

TENESCO.

I fear'd as much: His Passion makes him wild— [Aside.
I wish it may not end in perfect Frenzy.

CHEKITAN.

Who were the Murderers? Where did they fly?
Where was my Brother, not to take Revenge?
Show me their Tracks, I'll trace them round the Globe;
I'll fly like Lightning, ravage the whole Earth—
Kill every thing I meet, or hear, or see.
Depopulate the World of Men and Beasts,
'Tis all too little for that single Death.

[Pointing to MONELIA'S corpse.

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I'll tear the Earth that dar'd to drink her Blood;
Kill Trees, and Plants, and every springing Flower:
Nothing shall grow, nothing shall be alive,
Nothing shall move; I'll try to stop the Sun,
And make all dark and barren, dead and sad;
From his tall Sphere down to the lowest Centre,
There I'll descend, and hide my wretched Self,
And reign sole Monarch in a World of Ruin.

TENESCO.

This is deep Madness, it hath seiz'd his Brain. [Aside.

CHEKITAN.

But first I'll snatch a parting last Embrace.
[He touches and goes to embrace the corpse.
Thou dear cold Clay! forgive the daring Touch;
It is thy Chekitan, thy wounded Lover.
'Tis; and he hastens to revenge thy Death.

[TORAX groans and attempts to speak.

TORAX.

Oh, oh, I did not—Philip—Philip—Oh. [CHEKITAN starts.

CHEKITAN.

What—did I not hear a Groan? and Philip call'd?

TENESCO.

It was, it was, and there is Motion too.
[Approaches TORAX, who groans and speaks again.

TORAX.

Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Philip—help. Oh! Oh!

TENESCO.

He is alive—We'll raise him from the Ground.
[*They lift him up, and speak to him.*]
Torax, are you alive? or are our Ears deceiv'd?

TORAX.

Oh. Philip, do not—do not—be so cruel.

CHEKITAN.

He is bewilder'd, and not yet himself.
Pour this into his Lips—it will revive him.
[*They give him something.*]

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TENESCO.

This is a Joy unhop'd for in Distress. [TORAX *revives more.*]

TORAX.

Oh! Philip, Philip!—Where is Philip gone?

TENESCO.

The Murderers are pursued—He will go soon.
And now can carry Tidings of your Life.

TORAX.

He carry Tidings! he's the Murderer.

TENESCO.

He is not murder'd; he was slightly wounded,
And hastens now to see the King your Father.

TORAX.

He is false, a barbarous, bloody Man,
A Murderer, a base disguis'd Assassin.

CHEKITAN.

He still is maz'd, and knows not whom he's with

TORAX.

Yes, you are Chekitan, and that's Monelia.
[*Pointing to the corpse.*]

This is Tenesco—Philip stabb'd my Sister,
And struck at me; here was the stunning Blow.
[*Pointing to his head.*]

He took us sleeping in this silent Grove;
There by Appointment from himself we waited.
I saw him draw the bloody Knife from her,
And, starting, ask'd him, Why, or what he meant?
He answered with the Hatchet on my Skull,
And doubtless thought me dead and bound in Silence.
I am myself, and what I say is Fact.

TENESCO.

The English 'twas beset you; Philip ran
For your Assistance, and himself is wounded.

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TORAX.

He may be wounded, but he wounded me;

No Englishman was there, he was alone.
I dare confront him with his Villainy:
Depend upon 't, he's treacherous, false, and bloody.

CHEKITAN.

May we believe, or is this all a Dream?
Are we awake? Is Torax yet alive?
Or is it Juggling, Fascination all?

TENESCO.

'Tis most surprising! What to judge I know not.
I'll lead him hence; perhaps he's still confus'd.

TORAX.

I gladly will go hence for some Relief,
But shall not change, from what I've now aver'd.

TENESCO.

Then this sad Storm of Ruin 's but begun. [*Aside.*
Philip must fly, or next it lights on him.
[*Exeunt TENESCO and TORAX led by him.*

CHEKITAN.

And can this be—Can Philip be so false?
Dwells there such Baseness in a Brother's Heart?
So much Dissimulation in the Earth?
Is there such Perfidy among Mankind?
It shocks my Faith—But yet it must be so—
Yes, it was he, Monelia, shed thy Blood.
This made him forward to commence our Friend,
And with unusual Warmth engage to help us;
It was for this so cheerful he resign'd
To me the Honour of Command in War;
The English Troops would never come so near;
The Wounds were not inflicted by their Arms.
All, all confirms the Guilt on Philip's Head.
You died, Monelia, by my Brother's Hand;
A Brother too intrusted with our Love.
I'm stupify'd and senseless at the Thought;
My Head, my very Heart is petrify'd.
This adds a Mountain to my Weight of Woe.
It now is swell'd too high to be lamented;
Complaints, and Sighs, and Tears are thrown away,
Revenge is all the Remedy that's left;
But what Revenge is equal to the Crime?
His Life for her's! An Atom for the Earth—
A Single Fly—a Mite for the Creation:
Turn where I will I find myself confounded:
But I must seek and study out new Means.
Help me, ye Powers of Vengeance! grant your Aid,
Ye that delight in Blood, and Death, and Pain!
Teach me the Arts of Cruelty and Wrath,
Till I have Vengeance equal to my Love,
And my Monelia's Shade is satisfied.

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[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

PHILIP [*solus*].

His Grief no Doubt will rise into a Rage,
To see his Charmer rolling in her Blood,
I choose to see him not till my Return;
By then the Fierceness of the Flame may cease;
Nay, he'll grow cool, and quite forget his Love,
When I report her Father's kindled Wrath,

And all the Vengeance he intends to take.

[CHEKITAN *comes in sight.*

But this is he, I cannot now avoid him;
How shall I soothe his Grief—He looks distracted—
I'm such a Stranger grown to Tears and Pity,
I fear he will not think I sympathize.

Enter CHEKITAN.

CHEKITAN.

Have I then found thee, thou false hearted Traitor?
Thou Tyger, Viper, Snake, thou worse than Christian;
Bloodthirsty Butcher, more than Murderer!
Thou every Thing but what Men ought to love!
Do you still live to breathe and see the Sun?
And face me with your savage guilty Eye?

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PHILIP.

I fear'd, alas, you would run mad and rave.
Why do you blame me that I am not dead?
I risk'd my Life, was wounded for your Sake,
Did all I could for your Monelia's Safety,
And to revenge you on her Murderers.
Your Grief distracts you, or you'd thank me for 't.

CHEKITAN.

Would you still tempt my Rage, and fire my Soul,
Already bent to spill your treacherous Blood?
You base Dissembler! know you are detected,
Torax still lives, and has discover'd all.

[PHILIP *starts and trembles.*

PHILIP.

Torax alive!—It cannot—must not be.

[*Aside.*

CHEKITAN.

Well may you shake—You cannot mend your Blow.
He lived to see, what none but you could think of,
The bloody Knife drawn from Monelia's Breast.
Had you a thousand Lives, they'd be too few;
Had you a Sea of Blood, 't would be too small
To wash away your deep-dy'd Stain of Guilt.
Now you shall die; and Oh, if there be Powers
That after Death take Vengeance on such Crimes,
May they pursue you with their Flames of Wrath,
Till all their Magazines of Pain are spent.

[*He attacks* PHILIP *with his hatchet.*

PHILIP.

I must defend myself [*Drawing his hatchet*], the Case is
desperate.

[*Fights;* PHILIP *falls.*

Fate is too hard; and I'm oblig'd to yield.
'Twas well begun—but has a wretched End—
Yet I'm reveng'd—She cannot live again.
You cannot boast to 've shed more Blood than I—
Oh, had I—had I—struck but one Blow more!

[*Dies.*

CHEKITAN.

What have I done! this is my Brother's Blood!
A guilty Murderer's Blood! He was no Brother.
All Nature's Laws and Ties are hence dissolv'd;
There is no Kindred, Friendship, Faith, or Love
Among Mankind—Monelia's dead—The World

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Is all unhing'd—There's universal War—
She was the Tie, the Centre of the Whole;
And she remov'd, all is one general Jar.
Where next, Monelia, shall I bend my Arm
To heal this Discord, this Disorder still,
And bring the Chaos Universe to Form?
Blood still must flow and float the scatter'd Limbs
Till thy much injur'd love in Peace subsides.
Then every jarring Discord once will cease,
And a new World from these rude Ruins rise. [Pauses.
Here then I point the Edge, from hence shall flow

[Pointing his knife to his heart.

The raging crimson Flood, this is the Fountain
Whose swift Day's Stream shall waft me to thy Arms,
Lest Philip's Ghost should injure thy Repose. [Stabs himself.
I come, I come—Monelia, now I come—
Philip—away—She's mine in spite of Death. [Dies.

Enter TENESCO.

TENESCO.

Oh! I'm too late, the fatal Work is done.
Unhappy Princes; this your wretched End;
Your Country's Hopes and your fond Father's Joy;
Are you no more? Slain by each other's Hands,
Or what is worse; or by the Air you breath'd?
For all is Murder, Death, and Blood about us:
Nothing safe; it is contagious all:
The Earth, and Air, and Skies are full of Treason!
The Evil Genius rules the Universe,
And on Mankind rains Tempests of Destruction.
Where will the Slaughter of the Species end?
When it begins with Kings and with their Sons,
A general Ruin threatens all below.
How will the good King hear the sad Report?
I fear th' Event; but as it can't be hid,
I'll bear it to him in the softest Terms,
And summon every Power to soothe his Grief,
And slack the Torrent of his Royal Passion. [Exit.

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SCENE V. *Senate-House.*

PONTEACH [*solus*].

The Torrent rises, and the Tempest blows;
Where will this rough, rude Storm of Ruin end?
What crimson Floods are yet to drench the Earth?
What new-form'd Mischiefs hover in the Air,
And point their Stings at this devoted Head?
Has Fate exhausted all her Stores of Wrath,
Or has she other Vengeance in reserve?
What can she more? My Sons, my Name is gone;
My Hopes all blasted, my Delights all fled;
Nothing remains but an afflicted King,
That might be pitied by Earth's greatest Wretch.
My Friends; my Sons, ignobly, basely slain,
Are more than murder'd, more than lost by Death.
Had they died fighting in their Country's Cause,
I should have smil'd and gloried in their Fall;
Yes, boasting that I had such Sons to lose,
I would have rode in Triumph o'er their Tombs.
But thus to die, the Martyrs of their Folly,
Involv'd in all the complicated Guilt
Of Treason, Murder, Falsehood, and Deceit,
Unbridled Passion, Cowardice, Revenge,
And every Thing that can debase the Man,
And render him the just Contempt of all,
And fix the foulest Stain of Infamy,
Beyond the Power of Time to blot it out;
This is too much; and my griev'd Spirit sinks
Beneath the Weight of such gigantic Woe.

Ye that would see a piteous, wretched King,
Look on a Father griev'd and curs'd like me;
Look on a King whose Sons have died like mine!
Then you'll confess that these are dangerous Names,
And put it in the Power of Fate to curse us;
It is on such she shews her highest Spite.
But I'm too far—'Tis not a Time to grieve
For private Losses, when the Public calls.

Enter TENESCO, looking sorrowful.

What are your Tidings?—I have no more Sons.

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TENESCO.

But you have Subjects, and regard their Safety.
The treacherous Priest, intrusted with your Councils,
Has publish'd all, and added his own Falsehoods;
The Chiefs have all revolted from your Cause,
Patch'd up a Peace, and lend their Help no more.

PONTEACH.

And is this all? we must defend ourselves,
Supply the Place of Numbers with our Courage,
And learn to conquer with our very Looks:
This is a Time that tries the Truth of Valour;
He shows his Courage that dares stem the Storm,
And live in spite of Violence and Fate.
Shall holy Perfidy and seeming Lies
Destroy our Purpose, sink us into Cowards?

TENESCO.

May your Hopes prosper! I'll excite the Troops
By your Example still to keep the Field.

[*Exit.*

PONTEACH.

'Tis coming on. Thus Wave succeeds to Wave,
Till the Storm's spent, then all subsides again—
The Chiefs revolted:—My Design betray'd:—
May he that trusts a Christian meet the same;
They have no Faith, no Honesty, no God,
And cannot merit Confidence from Men.
Were I alone the boist'rous Tempest's Sport,
I'd quickly move my shatter'd, trembling Bark,
And follow my departed Sons to Rest.
But my brave Countrymen, my Friends, my Subjects,
Demand my Care: I'll not desert the Helm,
Nor leave a dang'rous Station in Distress;
Yes, I will live, in spite of Fate I'll live;
Was I not Ponteach, was I not a King,
Such Giant Mischiefs would not gather round me.
And since I'm Ponteach, since I am a King,
I'll shew myself Superior to them all;
I'll rise above this Hurricane of Fate,
And shew my Courage to the Gods themselves.

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Enter TENESCO, surprised and pausing.

I am prepar'd, be not afraid to tell;
You cannot speak what Ponteach dare not hear.

TENESCO.

Our bravest Troops are slain, the rest pursu'd;
All is Disorder, Tumult, and Rebellion.
Those that remain insist on speedy Flight;
You must attend them, or be left alone
Unto the Fury of a conquering Foe,
Nor will they long expect your Royal Pleasure.

Will they desert their King in such an Hour,
 When Pity might induce them to protect him?
 Kings like the Gods are valued and ador'd,
 When Men expect their Bounties in Return,
 Place them in Want, destroy the giving Power,
 All Sacrifices and Regards will cease.
 Go, tell my Friends that I'll attend their Call.

[*Rising. Exit* TENESCO.

I will not fear—but must obey my Stars: [Looking round.
 Ye fertile Fields and glad'ning Streams, adieu;
 Ye Fountains that have quench'd my scorching Thirst,
 Ye Shades that hid the Sun-beams from my Head,
 Ye Groves and Hills that yielded me the Chace,
 Ye flow'ry Meads, and Banks, and bending Trees,
 And thou proud Earth, made drunk with Royal Blood,
 I am no more your Owner and your King.
 But witness for me to your new base Lords,
 That my unconquer'd Mind defies them still;
 And though I fly, 'tis on the Wings of Hope.
 Yes, I will hence where there's no British Foe,
 And wait a Respite from this Storm of Woe;
 Beget more Sons, fresh Troops collect and arm,
 And other Schemes of future Greatness form;
 Britons may boast, the Gods may have their Will,
 Ponteach I am, and shall be Ponteach still. [Exit.

Finis.

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