

Brothers:- It is now more than fifteen years since the Committees of the four Yearly Meetings of Friends of Seneca, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, were united together in labor for your welfare. Your people were then in trouble; heavy clouds hung over the Seneca Nation. When we contrast that dark and gloomy day with the bright one that now shines upon you, our hearts are glad, and we thank the Great Spirit who has been pleased to remove the clouds which then darkened the path of our Red brothers. On your Reservations, the improvements observable in your houses, your farms, your stock and your mode of living, give cheering evidence of your advancement in civilization and refinement. As they all tend to promote your comfort and happiness, so they also tend to give you stability and influence as a branch of the great human family.

Brothers:- We say it has pleased the Great Spirit to give you a bright day. Few or none of the numerous Indian tribes in our country are placed under such favourable circumstances as those of the Senecas at Cattaraugus and Allegany. you have rich and fertile lands, of which none can deprive you without your consent. You have good schools for your children, provided by the bounty of the great and benevolent State in which your Reservations are located. You have formed and adopted a Constitution of government, under which you cannot be oppressed, because your laws are made and executed by yourselves. You pay no taxes either to the General Government or to the State of New York, and you have large annuities sufficient to obviate or relieve you from taxation among yourselves. You are surrounded by the best examples in agriculture and the arts of civilized life. You are placed in the midst of facilities for physical, intellectual and moral improvement, whilst all the sources of literary information are opened before you. With all these advantages where shall we find an Indian nation on whom the Great Spirit has caused his sun to shine with a brighter light?

Where shall we find a people whose happiness more entirely depends on the proper use of such blessings as heaven has showered down upon you?

Brothers:- We have been rejoiced to hear that your Nation has united in a resolution to establish an institution among yourselves for the protection and education of your orphan children, and that for this benevolent purpose you have lately laid the corner stone of a building in which to carry your intentions into effect.

It is now nearly six years since we received a communication from a Committee of your National Council, announcing the determination of that body to establish an Asylum for the children of deceased parents, to be called the Orphans' House. This announcement gave your friends great pleasure, as an evidence of the humanity and liberality of the Seneca Government.

Now it is highly gratifying as an unquestionable proof of the great advancement of your nation in civilization. No barbarous people ever instituted an Orphan Asylum.

Such an institution can only emanate from a community already far advanced toward a state of refinement.

Brothers:- The Delegation now with you cannot go away without expressing the lively pleasure we have felt on being once more among our Red Brothers.

The greater part of us are now very far advanced in years, and cannot reasonably hope ever to meet you here again.

But, although we should never see you any more in this world, we feel assured that we shall never cease to love our Indian Brothers, nor to feel a deep interest in their prosperity. It was this that first brought us among you, and in this we shall now leave you, with warm wishes for your preservation and welfare in this life, and your eternal felicity in that which is to come.

Allegany, in the State of New York,
9th month, 1855.

Abraham Bell
Nathaniel Starbuck
Benjamin Ferris,
P. C. Thomas.