

The consummation of the treaties would have been entirely impossible had not the chiefs themselves exercised patient diplomacy in the management of their turbulent followers. Long and discouraging delays frequently occurred, for which the nominal heads of the tribes were in no way responsible. The whole current of recent events in Indian history had tended to weaken the authority exercised by the chiefs,—an authority always precarious enough, and depending chiefly upon the inherent force of character marking him who exercised it. The rejoicing of these hard pressed chieftains when the negotiations were successfully completed, was expressed by many of them in language of great dignity and high emotion. Let us quote a passage from Governor Morris's account of the signing of the North West Angle Treaty (No. 3):

"The business of the treaty having now been completed, Chief Ma-we-do-pe-nais, who, with Pow-hass-an, had with such wonderful dignity carried on the negotiations, stepped up to the Governor and said, "Now you see me stand before you all. What has been done here to-day, has been done openly, before the Great Spirit and the Nation: and I hope that I may never hear anyone say that this treaty has been done secretly; and now in closing this council, I take off my glove, and in giving you my hand, I deliver over my birthright and lands: and taking your hand, I hold fast to the promises you have made, and I hope they will last as long as the sun goes round and the water flows, as you have said.' The Governor then took his hand, and said, 'I accept your hand, and with it the lands, and will keep all my promises in the firm belief that the treaty now to be signed will bind the red men and the white together as friends forever.'"

Everyone in the West recognized the necessity of negotiating Indian treaties at the earliest possible moment. Numerous disconcerting delays occurred before the entire series of surrenders was concluded, but they