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CHAPTER V

KĀNAKŪK AND MINOR PROPHETS

KĀNAKŪK

My father, the Great Spirit holds all the world in his hands. I pray to him that we may not be removed from our lands. . . . Take pity on us and let us remain where we are.—*Kānakūk*.

I was singularly struck with the noble efforts of this champion of the mere remnant of a poisoned race, so strenuously laboring to rescue the remainder of his people from the deadly bane that has been brought amongst them by enlightened Christians.—*Catlin*.

The scene now shifts to the west of the Mississippi. With the death of Tecumtha the confederacy of the northwestern tribes fell to pieces, and on the closing of the war of 1812 the government inaugurated a series of treaties resulting, within twenty years, in the removal of almost every tribe beyond the Mississippi and the appropriation of their former country by the whites. Among others the Kickapoo, by the treaty of Edwardsville in 1819, had ceded the whole of their ancient territory in Illinois, comprising nearly one-half the area of the state, in exchange for a much smaller tract on Osage river in Missouri and \$3,000 in goods. (*Treaties, 1.*) The government also agreed to furnish two boats to take them up the river to their new home, where "the United States promise to guarantee to the said tribe the peaceable possession of the tract of land hereby ceded to them, and to restrain and prevent all white persons from hunting, settling, or otherwise intruding upon it."

For some reason, however, the Kickapoo manifested no overwhelming desire to remove from their villages and cornfields on the broad prairies of Illinois to the rugged hills of Missouri. This may have been due to the innate perversity of the savage, or possibly to the fact that the new country guaranteed to them was already occupied by their hereditary enemies, the Osage, who outnumbered the Kickapoo three to one. To be sure, these aboriginal proprietors had agreed to surrender the territory to the United States, but they were still at home to all visitors, as the immigrant Cherokee had learned to their cost. Be that as it may, several years passed and it began to be suspected that the Kickapoo were not anxious to go west and grow up with the country. Investigation disclosed the fact that, instead of removing to the reservation on Osage river, one-half of the tribe had gone southward in a body and crossed over to the Spanish side of Red river (now Texas), where they might reasonably hope to be secure from the further advance of the Americans. Others were preparing to follow, and the govern-