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OF

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BY

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Chickasaws, and Creeks, whose experiments in republican government, and the administration of an enlightened system of laws, are now attracting the admiration of mankind.

When we reached the Callabee swamp, usually very bad, the Indians had preceded us, and had laid down poles, and across them heavy transverse logs to prevent them from floating, themselves in the water, and holding down the logs until the procession passed over. They escorted the general to the confines of their territory, evidently regarding him as a great warrior, deserving this spontaneous homage to his fame.

From 1825 to 1828 I served in the Alabama Legislature. In 1831, Colonel George S. Gaines and myself were commissioned by the Secretary of War to remove the Choctaws to their new home on Arkansas and Red Rivers. By the treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek they had ceded all their fine domain in Mississippi and Alabama, except a few special reservations and contingent claims. This treaty was brought about by pressure. The Indian is ever averse to the

surrender of land. Though only tenants in common, they have a superstitious reverence for the soil of their birth and the ashes of their ancestors. The Southern Indians fought long and bravely for their homes; the achievements of the Creeks rival the prodigies of antiquity. At an earlier period, the Chickasaws, single-handed, defied and defeated the science and power of the French of Louisiana, directed by officers trained in the armies of Europe. The Choctaws did not resist the cession of their country by force of arms; their chiefs concerted it, and, appealing to the tradition of their tribe that they had never shed the blood of a white man, silent submission was readily obtained. The Legislature of Mississippi—by an act of consummate policy and of absolute sovereignty, but of controverted constitutionality in respect to her relations with the federal government and its relations to the Indian tribes—had extended her jurisdiction over the Choctaws, attaching their whole territory to her coterminous counties, and taking cognizance of crimes and misdemeanors committed within the same.

This act brought about the treaty. It extinguished the powers and authority of the chiefs, abolished the tribal immunities and penalties, and would have subjected the untutored Indian to the cupidity and cunning of a dominant and instructed race. From the passage of this act—introduced by the Hon. William Haile, who had formerly been in Congress, but was then the representative from Hancock County—opposition ceased, and the treaty was made.

I found the great body of the Choctaws very sad; making no arrangements, until the last moment, to remove; clinging around their humble cabins, and returning again and again to the resting-places of their dead. Even the sternest warriors, trained to suppress every emotion, appeared unmanned, and, when we camped at night, many of them stole back, in the darkness, twenty, thirty, and even forty miles, to take "a last fond look" at the graves of their household, soon to be trampled upon by a more enterprising and less sentimental race. Some, who had not yet buried their dead—for it is the custom of the Choctaws to expose the