

ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS OF AMERICA.

*The Pipe of Peace.*

When America was discovered by Europeans, it was a vast wilderness, inhabited by an ignorant, barbarous, and warlike people, whose principal employment was hunting, fishing, and war. They understood but a few of the arts, and had neither books nor manuscripts. Their literary attainments consisted only of a few Hieroglyphics, *war songs*, and *traditionary tales*, handed down from father to son. Therefore respecting their origin, migrations, or settlements on this continent, nothing could be learned with any degree of certainty.

The *aborigines consisted of several different nations, or tribes, and by the Europeans were named *Indians*, the whole country at the time of its discovery, having received the indefinite appellation of West Indies.

Since the settlement of America by Europeans, the Indians have gradually been destroyed by wars and new diseases, till but a small portion of their original number remains.

The present number of Indians in the territories of the United States is estimated at 470,000, a majority of whom inhabit the country west of the Mississippi. They are, in general, of a large size, of a robust frame, and a well proportioned figure, free from defects of organization, and are distinguished for bravery and native eloquence.

* Ab-o-ridg'e-e-nees.