Indian Names

Natalie Merchant

Ye shall say they all have passed away,
That noble race and brave,
That their light canoes have vanish'd
From off the crested wave.
That 'mid the forests where they roam'd
There rings no hunter's shout;
But their name is on your waters,
Ye may not wash it out.
'Tis where Ontario's billow
Like Ocean's surge is curled;
Where strong Niagara's thunders wake
The echo of the world;
Where red Missouri bringeth
Rich tributes from the west,
And Rappahannock sweetly sleeps
On green Virginia's breast.
Ye say, their cone-like cabins,
That cluster'd o'er the vale,
Have fled away like wither'd leaves
Before the autumn gale:

But their memory liveth on your hills,
Their baptism on your shore;
Your everlasting rivers speak
Their dialect of yore.
Old Massachusetts wears it
Within her lordly crown,
And broad Ohio bears it
'mid all her young renown;
Connecticut hath wreathed it
Where her quiet foliage waves,
And bold Kentucky breathed it hoarse
Through all her ancient caves.
Wachuset hides its lingering voice
Within its rocky heart,
And Alleghany graves its tone
Throughout his lofty chart:
Monadnock on his forehead hoar
Doth seal the sacred trust;

Your mountains build their monument,
Though ye destroy their dust

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