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Title: Seven and Nine years Among the Camanches and Apaches: An Autobiography

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Release date: November 5, 2008 [eBook #27164]

Language: English

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Mr. Eastman in Costume.

Seven and Nine Years

AMONG THE CAMANCHES AND APACHES.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

JERSEY CITY, N. J.
PUBLISHED BY CLARK JOHNSON, M.D.
1874.

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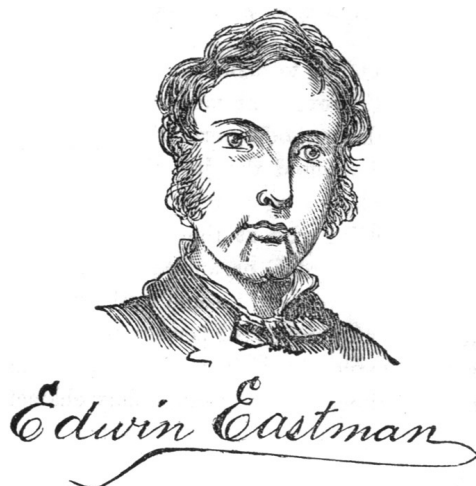
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SEVEN AND NINE YEARS AMONG THE CAMANCHES AND APACHES.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

In making my bow to the public as an author, I feel it incumbent upon me to make a brief explanation of the motives that induced me to attempt this autobiographical sketch of nine years of my life. At intervals during the past decade, the country has been electrified by the recital of some horror perpetrated by Indians on white travelers, and those, who, having journeyed to the Far West, had settled, intending to make the wilderness blossom like the rose. Through the medium of the press, the details of these heart-rending cruelties were widely disseminated, and aroused the just indignation of all peaceful and order-loving citizens. To such an extent did popular feeling rise at times, that farmers and drovers on the border, organized themselves into bands, and on the report of some fresh outrage hastened to the scene, pursued the perpetrators of the deed, and not unfrequently visited upon the Indians a vengeance oftentimes of a very sanguinary character.

In these forays of the savages, they frequently carried off to their mountain fastnesses women and children, who were never heard of more. Thus, when our feelings were harrowed up by the report of butcheries, the tales of life-long suffering of the forlorn captives were scarcely ever known. Snatched ruthlessly from the bosom of their families, they were mourned for a time and then they, by slow degrees, faded from the memory of their friends and relatives, and when thought of at all, it was as of those dead. In these chapters I will detail the trials and sufferings of such as these, believing that the experiences of my wife and myself, during our captivity among the Camanches and Apaches, will serve as a prototype of many similar cases.

It was some time, and with not a little persuasion before I could be induced to overcome the diffidence I felt about making my private history public, and appearing in print. By those who have become authors, my feelings will be understood and appreciated; but to others who constitute the reading public it would be impossible to describe the trepidation with which the tyro puts forth his first literary venture, and had it not been for the earnest entreaties of my esteemed friend, Dr. Clark Johnson, who used naively to say that what was a source of such pleasure to him must be entertaining to the public, I doubt very much if I should have ever put pen to paper in the capacity of an author.

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With this introduction, I will, as briefly as may be, relate my experiences, nothing extenuating, and setting down naught in malice.

My family were originally from Massachusetts, my father being a descendant of the Puritans, he inherited many of the qualities of his ancestors, and, joined to a high integrity, he possessed a dogged will that at times amounted to stubbornness. From childhood he had led the life of a farmer, and my earliest recollections are associated with country life. My father's disposition might be characterized as restless; and after sojourning for a time in one place, he would evince symptoms of uneasiness which would result in the family moving to some new spot, and breaking ground in virgin soil on the confines of civilization. By these successive removals we soon found ourselves far to the west of the home of our ancestors, and at the time my father resolved to go to California, we owned a very nice farm in Missouri, and as far as I could see were very comfortably situated. On returning from the county seat one Saturday, my father electrified us with the intelligence that he thought seriously of going West. Had a bombshell exploded in our midst it could scarcely have created greater consternation; on inquiring what had induced such a sudden determination on his part, he was fain to confess that he had met a gentleman in town who had but just arrived from the new El Dorado, and who spoke so enthusiastically of this marvelous country, that he led my father's too diligent ear captive, and his mind was saturated with the desire to see, without further delay, this wonderful land. The rest of the family stoutly objected to such a hasty resolve, and we finally effected a compromise, and it was agreed that the stranger should be invited to spend a portion of his time at our house, and during his visit we could consult, argue, and finally conclude what action should be taken in the matter.

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I had serious misgivings that our fair home was doomed; knowing too well my father's character, and that any objections we might make to the proposed departure would only strengthen his determination to have his own way. Such was his intense love for the unknown, that any plausible fellow could induce him to see the advantages of owning a thousand acres of wild land to his own well-tilled homestead.

The following week Mr. Terhune made his advent among us. He was a fair type of the adventurer, and seemed a man who could be equal to any emergency circumstances might demand; of robust form, a complexion bronzed by exposure, and with an address so pleasing when he wished to exert himself, that he soon became a favorite, especially with the female portion of the family. He adapted himself to our mode of life with wonderful ease, and apparently was making preparations for a visit that should outlast our expectations. The beauties and advantages of a home in his adopted State was his constant theme; and so pleasantly did he talk, illustrating his arguments with anecdotes so amusing and apposite, that I felt myself being perceptibly influenced by his views, and used to dream of climbing trees of prodigious height, and gathering nuggets from their branches as if they were apples. When lending an assisting hand at our farm labors, he would descant on the fertility of the soil on the Pacific Slope, saying that crops grew almost spontaneously, and related what fortunes could be made raising sheep.

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By such means were we seduced into the conviction that a change of base was not only advantageous, but necessary, and it was finally decided to go. Mr. Terhune said he could negotiate an exchange, by which we could dispose of our farm for California real estate, whereby we would be the gainers; and one Monday morning in April, he left us for St. Louis, to complete the trade and purchase. Our intentions becoming known in the vicinity, our neighbors seemed to take an especial interest in our movements, and many were the staid old farmers who called to offer us their advice and wishes for our future prosperity. Being notified that all was in readiness, and that we could start as soon as it suited our convenience, we lost no time in packing what few articles we required, and bidding our friends adieu, we commenced our journey.

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Arriving in St. Louis, we were greeted by Mr. Terhune who escorted us to the Planters' Hotel, where we were temporarily to reside until the steamboat on which we were to embark was ready to leave. The few days spent in the metropolis of the West, was thoroughly enjoyed by our little party, as under the guidance of our friend we visited all the places of interest in the neighborhood. On Saturday, April 30th, we embarked on the steamboat *Prairie Flower*, bound for Independence, where we were to make the necessary purchases for our outfit in crossing the plains, and were also to join a train that was being formed, and of which we were to become part and parcel. After an uneventful journey we reached Independence, only to find that the train we expected to join had left two days previously; here was a dilemma, and we were at a loss what to do. I was in favor of waiting until another train could be formed, but father objected, stating as his reasons, that it would consume both time and money; neither of which did we possess in vast quantities. Meantime we had become the centre of attraction to quite a motley crowd, who stood looking on, and seemed to take a lively interest in us, criticising our appearance and indulging in various remarks which were not always of a complimentary character. Noticing an old weather-beaten frontiersman, who stood some little distance off, and thinking he could perhaps suggest a way out of our difficulty, I made up to him, and after the usual salutations and a proffer of some tobacco, to which he helped himself in rather large quantities, I asked him his opinion, and what

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he thought we had best do under the circumstances.

Drawing his lank form out of the entanglement it seemed to have been in, he delivered himself in somewhat the following manner:

"Wal stranger, pears to me, I would jist git rite arter that ere party, quicker'n greased lightning, kase you see, they haint been gone long, and if you drive yer animiles rite smart, you will ketch up in jist no time."

This advice struck me as excellent, and returning to our party I communicated it to them. We resolved to adopt it at once, only wondering we had not thought of it before.

Having come to this determination, we busied ourselves with the necessary preparations, and on the third day after the departure of the train, we bade adieu to the few acquaintances made during our brief sojourn at Independence, and struck out upon the almost trackless prairie.

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Our equipment was that in general use among prairie travelers, and consisted of a "Concord" wagon, covered with white canvas, and drawn by six mules, in the management of which rather intractable animals my father was an adept. In the wagon were stored our few household goods and scanty supply of provisions, and in it rode my wife and mother. My brother and myself figured as a mounted guard, and presented a not unpicturesque appearance in our tunics of dressed deerskin, and leggings of the same material; our revolvers in our belts, and rifles slung over our shoulder, or resting on the pommels of our Mexican saddles. Everything seemed propitious; the wagon moved off smoothly, the morning was clear, and the great red disc of the sun just rising in the east had scarcely dispelled the haze that enveloped nature as in a fleecy mantle. We little dreamed, alas, of the dreadful fate soon to overtake us. That fate which was to dis sever a loving and united family, causing three of its members to pass through the valley of the shadow of death, and subjecting the survivors to suffering that often made them cry out in the bitterness of their hearts "why was I spared to suffer such torture, when death would have been such a welcome relief!"

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CHAPTER II.

THE CAPTURE.

We were now fairly started on our journey, and but for a singular feeling of depression which weighed down my spirits and seemed a presentiment of evil to come, I should have had little doubt of our ability to overtake the train and travel safely with it to our destination. This feeling, however, caused me to become taciturn and apprehensive, so much so, that I was frequently rallied upon the subject by my companions.

For many days, however, we followed the trail without special incident; the tracks of wagons giving us an easy guide. We found grass, wood and water in abundance, and traveling light and unimpeded by others, felt confident that we were gaining upon the train and would undoubtedly overtake them shortly.

We crossed several rivers and streams, most of them fordable, but one or two we found wide and deep and were compelled to float our wagon across. We saw some game, antelopes and deer, and shot a few, forming a welcome addition to our larder; but they were generally shy and kept out of reach, without wandering too far from the track. For two days we had been journeying through an entirely different country from that which we had passed. It was almost a barren desert, treeless, without game, and, but little water; on its hard surface the wagon wheels made scarcely an imprint, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we could take up the trail. The evening of the second day found us still on the road, as we could find no water, without which we could not camp. Before sunset we had noticed a low fringe along the horizon which looked like timber, and knowing there must be water there, determined to push on and reach it, if possible, before camping for the night.

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After a weary march we reached the edge of the desert plain, and found a small stream, clear but shallow; its banks lined with tall cottonwood trees. Here we rested, and our tired animals fully appreciated the cool water and the luxuriant "gramma" grass which abounded.

While standing watch, a precaution we never neglected, I fancied I heard a distant rifle shot, and roused my father and brother, fearing Indians might be near at hand, for we were now in very dangerous country and father declared that he had seen "Injun sign" the day previous, but a scout through the cottonwood grove revealed nothing, and as the sound was very faint and was not repeated, we concluded it was only fancy; father muttering as he crawled under his blanket that I was getting too almighty scarey for a backwoodsman.

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This incident however aroused those apprehensive feelings that had before troubled me, but which had been quieted for a time by the uneventful nature of our journey. We were not again disturbed that night, but at sunrise we made a discovery that filled us with dismay—*We had lost the trail!* This we were convinced was the result of our night journey, and father was confident that we could recover it; but, when after several hours spent in a fruitless endeavor to find where it crossed the stream, I urged that we should take our own trail back to the point at which it diverged from that of the train, he positively refused to do so; declaring that he wasn't a greenhorn to get scared at so small a matter, and that he should push on in a southwesterly direction, and take his chance of intersecting the trail, he asserting that we must have strayed to northward of it. My brother and myself protested against so rash an undertaking, but in vain; and we finally started on what was destined to be our last day's journey together.

Our route now lay across a verdant and apparently boundless prairie. Far as the eye could reach it was a level plain, without landmarks, trackless as the sea, covered with a living carpet of emerald green. At another time I could have spent hours in gazing upon its vast expanse, and fancying its changed appearance when its surface should be furrowed by the plow and its fruitful soil reward the farmer's labor; but the presentiment of evil which I found it impossible to shake off, oppressed my spirits rendering me anxious and fearful.

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A few moments took us out of sight of the cottonwood grove, and but for the aid of father's pocket compass we could have had little idea of our direction, but by its assistance we traveled steadily in a southwesterly course, father being confident that we had strayed north of the trail and that by taking this course we must sooner or later regain it. Until nearly noon we kept steadily on, seeing nothing to indicate that we were near the trail. Just before noon we halted to rest and feed the animals and prepare a meal for ourselves.

The morning had been sultry and we were all sufficiently fatigued to find a brief rest very acceptable. Refreshed by half an hour's rest, we were preparing to start, when my brother who had moved off in advance, suddenly exclaimed, "father's right after all, there are mounted men ahead, it must be the train!" Animated by the hope that our solitary wanderings were nearly over and our perils past, we pushed ahead, urging our animals forward with all possible speed.

The distant horsemen were moving parallel to our route, and apparently had not perceived us. We shouted and fired our rifles, a commotion was visible among them, they halted, wheeled, and a number suddenly galloped towards us with the speed of the wind. My brother, who had ridden far ahead of us swinging his cap and hallooing loudly, suddenly pulled up his horse and with a cry of terror rode back to us with his utmost speed. We were not long at a loss to understand the meaning of this proceeding; as he neared us his warning shout of Indians! Indians! was borne to us upon the breeze. But it needed not that to apprise us of our peril; ere he reached us the advancing horsemen had approached so near that we could plainly, see instead of the friends we sought, a horde of hideous savages, naked to the waist, besmeared with war paint in many strange devices, their tall lances waving, their ornaments glittering in the sun—on, on they came, giving vent to the most blood-curdling yells it had ever been my fortune to hear.

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In this desperate strait my father alone preserved his coolness; the warlike spirit of the old frontiersman was roused in an instant. With lightning-like rapidity he had unhitched his team and so disposed them with our horses and the wagon as to form a sort of square, the horses and mules were tied together and to the wagon, thus avoiding the danger of their being stampeded. Inside this square we placed ourselves, and levelling our rifles across the backs of our living bulwark awaited the attack. My poor mother and wife, terrified almost to the verge of insensibility, we compelled to lie down in the bottom of the wagon, and so arranged its cargo as to protect them from any stray shot which might strike it.

At first it seemed that the savages intended to ride us down by sheer force of numbers, which they might easily have done; but our determined aspect and the three shining tubes aimed at them, each ready to send forth its leaden messenger of death, evidently changed their determination; for before getting within range, their headlong gallop became a moderate lope, then a walk, and they finally halted altogether. A short council followed, during which we had an excellent opportunity to observe our foes, and concert our plans for defence. Father cautioned us to hold our fire until absolutely certain of our mark, and that, if possible, but one must fire at a time, as it was of the utmost importance to be prepared for a sudden dash. We examined the loading of our rifles and pistols, put on fresh caps, and with wildly beating hearts and nerves strained to their utmost tension, awaited the onslaught.

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Our enemies now seemed to have arrived at some determination, for their consultation was at an end—an old Indian who, from his dignified bearing and authoritative manner appeared to be their chief, made a sign with his hand, and spoke a few words in a loud tone. The incessant jabbering which they had kept up from the moment they halted instantly ceased, and one after another a number of young warriors, perhaps twenty, rode out in single file upon the prairie. After gaining a distance of about one hundred yards from the main body they increased the intervals separating them to some fifty paces, and then inclining the course so as to form a sort of half circle, they increased their speed and came on with the evident intention of circling round us.

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These manœuvres had not escaped our notice, but neither my brother nor myself understood their import. That my father did so, however, was evident.

"Surround!" he muttered, the instant the movement began. "I thought they'd try it, blame their ugly picters." "Now boys," he continued, "keep cool and keep your eyes skinned, don't throw away a shot, and don't fire 'till I give the word." He then explained the method of this peculiar

stratagem of Indian warfare. The twenty picked men were about to ride around us in a circle, at top speed, delivering flights of arrows as they passed, their object being to disconcert us and draw our fire; our guns once empty, the main body whom we observed held themselves in readiness, would ride in, and by a sudden dash, end the skirmish by our death or captivity.

Father's warning was delivered in far less time than it has taken to write this—and it was barely concluded before the attacking party were circling round us, uttering their vengeful war cries, and gradually drawing nearer and nearer. Standing back to back, we watched their every movement, my brother and myself expecting every moment to have an opportunity to tumble one or more of the bold riders from their horses; but a few seconds showed us the futility of this. As they came within range, each Indian *disappeared behind the body of his horse*. A hand grasping the withers of the horse, and a foot just showing above his back, were all that could be seen—perhaps a painted face would be seen for an instant under the horse's neck, but instantly disappearing—while the hiss of an arrow would tell that the rider had sped the shaft to its mark; the horse all the while going at full gallop. At no moment could any one of us have fired with any chance of hitting an Indian. The horses we could have shot without difficulty, but this was just what our enemies wanted. Could they but induce us to waste our fire upon the horses, we would soon be at their mercy. So, with an effort, we restrained our inclination to risk a shot, and watched their every movement with the cat-like vigilance of men who knew that their lives were trembling in the balance.

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Round and round went the circle of the hunt, flight after flight of arrows whistled past us, or spent their force against the wagon, still we were unharmed; although our escapes were narrow and incessant. The mules and horses were struck repeatedly, but so tightly were they bound together with leathern thongs that not even death could separate them. As our tormentors came around for the fifth time, one of the horses stumbled and fell and rolled completely over, pitching his rider headlong upon the prairie. Before he could regain his horse, father's rifle cracked and the unlucky equestrian rolled prone upon the ground with a bullet in his brain.



The Capture.

"That's one less," muttered father, grimly. "I thought I'd fetch ye, ye painted varmint." "Don't fire for your lives, boys," he continued, "till I'm loaded." They were the last words he ever uttered. Simultaneously with their utterance came the hiss of an Indian arrow, and with a deep groan he sank to the ground. Terror stricken, and with anguished hearts we raised him in our arms. Alas, the deadly aim had been too true; the shaft, entering his right eye had penetrated the brain, and we saw at a glance that our dear father was no more. Racked by contending emotions, we had almost forgotten our imminent peril; as we turned to confront the foe, we saw that our hesitation had been fatal; the red warriors were upon us like a living tide, and for a few seconds a wild melee followed; we battled hand to hand with the desperation of fiends; it was but for an instant; my brave brother fell covered with wounds, and his death shriek was still ringing in my ears, when I received a blow upon the head which stretched me senseless upon the ground. I seemed to experience the sensation of falling from a vast height, then came a sudden shock and all was blank.

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CHAPTER III.

A STRANGE ADVENTURE.

When consciousness returned, I found myself lying on the ground, tied hand and foot with thongs of buffalo hide; I felt very sore and intensely thirsty. I had not quite yet collected my senses, and when my mind reverted to the scenes I had but just passed through, it was with a sickening sense of their horror that made me yearn for insensibility again. If I could only know what had been done with my wife; had she met the same fate as my father and brother, or was she spared—spared, and for what—to be subjected to a captivity even worse than death, perhaps? It would have been a great relief to have moved even so much as a finger, but being bound so tightly it was impossible to stir, and the thongs had in a great measure impeded the circulation, so that as I lay on my back, gazing pathetically at my feet, it seemed as if they were the appendages of another person, and that my tortures had begun by my being deprived of all that part of my body below my knees. By dint of much turning, I managed to get myself partly on my side, which proved a great relief, besides affording an opportunity to look around me and gain an idea of the state of affairs.

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Day was just breaking, and my captors were, with the exception of the sentinel, asleep. We were on the prairie, and I at once concluded that we must have left the scene of the fight and capture; a small fire had been built, and the warrior who mounted guard was sitting with his legs crossed beneath him, seemingly gazing into the smouldering embers; there was just enough light to discern his features, and I shuddered at their repulsiveness; the hideous war paint was streaked most fantastically across his cheeks and forehead and over his body, for, with the exception of a pair of abbreviated leggings he was quite nude. His scalp-lock was adorned with a profusion of eagles' feathers, and his wrists and arms were set off with bracelets. Dangling from his girdle was an object that thrilled me with anguish, as the long white hair covered here and there with dark red splashes, I knew at once to be the scalp of my dear, murdered mother. I had read of the noble red man, and like most romantic people, conceived a very touching picture of his manly beauty and majestic air. One needs but to be among them to have any such illusion dispelled. In my long residence with the tribe, I found some admirable traits, of which I will speak anon, but they had so many counterbalancing vices, that I do not think their best friends can say anything in their praise.

This book is a true narrative of my capture and sufferings, and if my readers do not find running through these pages, that sentimental gush about the noble red man, that we have been taught to believe was as much their attribute as they considered scalping their prerogative, it is because I have been disabused of these ideas, by the stern reality of an existence among them. I trust this digression will be excused, but when I stroke my chin, and feel the traces of their delicate attentions, my feelings are apt to get the better of my desire to entertain.

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Soon, however, the camp was stirring, and my friend at the fire roused himself and advanced toward me; whipping out a knife from its sheath, he cut the thongs by which I was bound, and grasping my shoulder jerked me to an upright position and motioned me to follow him. I had not proceeded far, when, emerging from the coppice on the opposite side of the bivouac, I beheld my wife advancing towards me in the custody of an Indian. Reader, if you can imagine meeting the being you loved best, after having supposed her cruelly butchered, you may have a faint conception of my feelings. With a little cry of joy she rushed into my outstretched arms; sobbing like an infant. This demonstration of affection seemed not to the taste of our guards; and with an ugh, we were admonished to follow them, and we were soon in the midst of a group who were dispatching their breakfast. Food was offered us, of which I ate voraciously, after my long fast; not so my wife, however, who could not as yet accustom her palate to the dried buffalo meat.

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Meantime preparations had been making to resume our journey. The horses were brought up, and in a shorter time than it takes to relate it we were under way, the party moving off in single file. I was allowed to ride my own horse, my wife following behind me on one of the mules. We were, as near as I could judge, about the centre of the party. In this fashion we proceeded during the forenoon. The prairie at this point was a succession of gentle undulations, covered with a rich velvety verdure; and, had not my present circumstances been of such a depressing character, the scene would have been inspiring. Away to the far west, as far as the eye could see, this vast billowy plain extended, broken here and there by a grove of the stately cottonwood tree, whose long trunks, and silvery foliage was a pleasing contrast to the vivid green of the prairie. At intervals I had discerned dark objects on the horizon, but, being unaccustomed to note signs with that care and attention that is characteristic of those whose life is spent on the plains, I had paid no particular attention to them. Soon, however, I did observe a commotion at the head of the column, and after a brief halt and consultation among the chiefs, our speed was accelerated, and we struck into a canter. This "lope" as it is called, seems to be a gait peculiarly adapted to the mustang, as they will break into, and keep it up the entire day; evincing no more distress than our ordinary horse does in trotting leisurely.

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That something important was about to transpire, I felt certain, from the energetic way in which our captors spoke and gesticulated; I was not long left in doubt, as on reaching a slight eminence, a sight disclosed itself that I shall never forget; and my blood thrills even now with the

remembrance of my first buffalo hunt.

It may seem odd to talk of my first buffalo hunt, as the question would naturally be asked, how could a prisoner participate in a hunt; the sequel will explain.

The chiefs had halted, and the rear coming up, we were soon clustered in a group on this rising ground. Directly in front of us, at the distance of about three miles, I should judge, was an immense herd of buffaloes. The plain was positively black, so numerous were they. All unconscious of their foes, they were quietly grazing, while here and there a watchful old bull seemed to have stationed himself as an outpost, being in readiness, if needs were, to instantly communicate the signal of danger to the herd. It was a glorious sight; even the horses shared in the excitement, and evinced as great a desire to participate in the hunt as did their masters. Presently a warrior rode out from the main body a few paces and tossed the feather. This is done to note the direction of the wind, for such is the keenness of scent possessed by these animals, that they will take the alarm and become aware of the approach of an enemy at great distances. If the drove had discovered us at this distance, our visions of fresh hump steak for supper would have resolved themselves into the dried meat of the morning.

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The wind being favorable, we commenced the advance; slowly at first, but gradually increasing our speed, until the horses were straining every muscle in their headlong race. Lances were slung, and bows and arrows got in readiness with an ease and expertness that was truly wonderful, considering our rapid riding. The bridles were dropped on the necks of the mustangs, the riders using their knees both as a steering apparatus and a means of holding on. As near as I could understand, our guard was to keep as close to the hunters as was consistent with our safety, without joining in the fun. Everything went on smoothly, and we had approached to within a half mile of the herd before they noticed us. Soon, however, the old bulls scented the party, and with a snort and plunge they tore headlong towards the head of the drove, communicating the alarm as they ran. With a yell the savages dashed on, horse and rider worked up to the highest pitch of excitement; arrows began to fly, and here and there a cow would fall, or an enraged bull goaded to fury by a wound rush madly at his enemy, evidently bent on revenge of a most sanguinary character. Our little party kept on the flank of the advancing drove, and our escort seemed to find it very irksome doing duty as guards, as with oft-repeated ughs! plainly expressive of disgust, they deprecated the luck that had singled *them* out to perform such womanly duty.

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Suddenly, and with kaleidoscopic rapidity, the aspect of affairs was changed; for some unknown reason and without apparent cause, the buffaloes made a flank movement, and in a twinkling were dashing right toward us; the mustangs, warned by experience, turned and ran as if their lives were at stake, as they certainly were; and the mule on which my wife was mounted, with an imitation that did her great credit, followed their example. My horse, being unused to such scenes, seemed to lose his senses, and stood looking at the advancing animals in the most abject terror. Realizing at a glance my position, and feeling that instant action was demanded, I turned his head, and by word and heel urged him to run. On came these black brutes, sweeping over the ground like an animated hurricane. My poor horse was laboring fearfully, and I knew that our destruction was a matter of a few moments time only. Suddenly my horse stumbled and flung me headlong to the ground, then all was bewilderment. I have an indistinct notion of lying on the prairie, and then like a great black wave, this surging mass of buffaloes seem to hover over me; I was conscious of a sharp and severe pain in my side, and then of being suddenly lifted into space. When sufficiently collected to note my position, I found myself on the back of a huge buffalo bull, who, unaccustomed to this strange weight, was making frantic endeavors to clear himself of the herd, which were wedged together with as much compactness as if they were one animal. If I had chosen to fall to the ground, it would have been impossible to do so; but as such a feat would have been almost instant death, my readers will easily understand I had no intention of trying the experiment. I turned my attention exclusively to seating myself firmly on my novel steed, and grasping my hands into the shaggy hair which covered his shoulders, braced myself for the most thrilling ride I had ever experienced. After a few violent plunges the bull cleared the herd, and tore at tremendous speed; on, on until objects lost their character, and all seemed to be an indistinct haze. The buffalo had by this time carried me some distance from the main body, and was beginning to show signs of fatigue. If I was going to leave him, this was my opportunity; and quietly loosening my hold, I slipped off his rump on to the ground, and betook myself in an opposite direction as fast as I could go, and it was with feelings of relief and thankfulness that I had escaped so luckily from my first and only buffalo ride.

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CHAPTER IV.

AGAIN A PRISONER.

Footsore and weary I wandered over the prairie, straining my eyes in every direction in the vain hope of beholding the white-topped wagons of the train. My late involuntary journey had borne me far to the southward; and, although my rapid progress had given me but little opportunity for observation, still I was convinced that the direction in which I had traveled was likely to bring me in the track of the prairie caravans. I was not without apprehension of again falling in with my late captors, and hardly knew whether I dreaded or desired it; fully realizing that I had nothing to look forward to in that event but torture and death. Still I felt that to see once again the sweet face of my beloved I would risk every peril, even though I was helpless to aid her, and to witness her sufferings would only add to the poignant anguish that tortured me. Racked by these thoughts, and with a despairing heart, I walked steadily on. The day was now far spent, and I was beginning to experience the pangs of hunger, for I had eaten nothing since early morning; but I suffered far more from thirst, and for hours searched eagerly for water; scanning the horizon in every direction for a sight of the fringe-like foliage, of the cottonwood trees. Stiff and sore from my confinement of the night previous, and suffering intensely from the wound on my head, which had been entirely neglected, my progress grew slower, and when night settled over the prairie my search was still unsuccessful; and without food, water, or shelter, I sank exhausted to the earth. After a time sleep gave me a welcome oblivion; but my rest was disturbed by troubled dreams, and the dawn found me but little refreshed.

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It was barely daylight when I again started. I felt weak and dizzy; and the conviction, forced itself upon me that I must find food and water before many hours, or perish—my life depended on my finding water—and notwithstanding my intense suffering, it was absolutely necessary to push forward in my search. My thoughts were momentarily diverted by a number of graceful animals that were advancing towards me; when within about two hundred yards, they became affrighted and wheeling around scampered away, running toward a clump of trees not far distant; entering this grove, they disappeared from sight. I had heard many tales about this graceful little animal, the antelope; and among other things remembered, that to the weary and thirsty hunter traversing these boundless plains, their presence was a sure indication that water was not far distant; if these tales were true, why then there was every probability that I might slake my burning thirst, which now had become agonizing torture, from some rivulet within the recesses of that wood; animated by this thought I limped on with renewed energy. What had seemed so near to my vision was in reality quite distant, as I found in my endeavor to reach it; for the sun had begun to decline behind the horizon when I reached the belt of timber. Entering this leafy solitude, I had not advanced many steps when my ears were gladdened by the sound of running water. With an exclamation of joy I ran to the banks of the arroyo (as by this name these little streams are called), and, falling on my knees, was drinking with that intense eagerness that is known only by those who, like myself, have felt the delirium of thirst.

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I was about to rise refreshed, when my gaze was riveted by a reflected image on the bosom of the creek that curdled the blood in my veins, and paralyzed me with terror; it was the image of a hideous Indian, bending over me with uplifted hand grasping a long, gleaming knife. I jumped up with a terrified scream, only to find myself in the rough grasp of a brawny savage, and completely at his mercy. With a malicious leer he motioned me to accompany him. Feeling sick at heart, and drooping under the weight of my new misfortune, I was led through the tangled undergrowth, and after a walk of about fifteen minutes, we emerged into a small clearing, where I found myself in the midst of a large party of Indians. My advent created no little excitement, and I was soon the centre of a circle of curious savages, who were more persistent than pleasing in their attentions. I saw at once that I had again fallen into the hands of the same party by whom I was first captured; for among those who clustered around me, I recognized the old chief who had directed the attack upon us. He approached me in a menacing manner, and uttered some words in the Indian tongue. From his gestures I could guess at his meaning, and understood that he was threatening me for my supposed attempt to escape. He then gave some order, and I was instantly seized and conducted to the foot of a large tree; my guards then bound me with a lariat and left me to my own reflections.

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My first thought was of my wife; and as I had managed to place myself in a sitting posture against the tree, I was enabled to observe all that was passing, and to scan closely the groups around the camp fires. A few moments satisfied me that if in the camp, she was not visible; and left me a prey to many horrid imaginings.

The savages were mostly seated around the fires, roasting meat over the embers and eating it greedily, an occupation of which they never seemed to tire; some were renewing the paint upon their bodies, and the grotesque striping and mottling showed in fantastic hues in the red and glaring light; some were smoking curious looking pipes of carved stones; all were chattering, laughing and gesticulating like so many children. For a brief period I contemplated this wild scene with interest; but it soon grew monotonous, and my mind painfully reverted to my perilous position.

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In satisfying the greater desire for water, I had for a time forgotten my craving for food, but it now returned upon me with redoubled force. The Indians had evidently forgotten that even prisoners must eat, and I concluded that it was best to call their attention to my necessities; by a shout I attracted the attention of one of the warriors who was passing near me, and when he approached, I succeeded by gestures in making him understand my wants. Uttering a guttural ugh! and slapping his stomach he walked away, but returned in a few moments with a huge chunk of half cooked buffalo meat which he threw down before me, and unbinding my hands motioned me to eat. I did not need a second invitation, but fell to at once, and devoured it with such voracity, that my Indian friend seemed both astonished and amused. When I had finished he

brought me water in a gourd, and again securing my hands, bound me fast to the tree and left me once more to myself.

Fatigued by the hardships of the last two days, I soon fell asleep, and knew no more until I was awakened by a rough hand grasping my shoulder, and on opening my eyes saw that it was daybreak, and the band were preparing to move. Ten minutes later I found myself mounted on a wiry looking mustang, securely tied, and my horse led at the end of a lariat by the same Indian who had brought me food the evening previous. Looking about me, my eyes were soon gladdened by the sight of my wife, mounted behind an Indian warrior; she saw me at the same instant, and with a cry of joy strove to break her bonds and rush to my embrace; it was a vain effort, and only resulted in her receiving a blow from her savage custodian, which cowed her into silence. My feelings at this juncture can be better imagined than described; but I could do nothing but endure as best I might, and hope that a day of reckoning would yet come, in which I should bitterly avenge all the wrongs I had experienced at the hands of the brutal savage, called in books, the "noble red man." For the present, there was nothing but submission and hope.

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I now saw to my surprise that we were not alone in our misfortune, many other captives, principally women and children, were with the party. From their costume I saw that they must be Mexicans, and at once concluded that the Indians had been on one of their periodical raids upon the Mexican frontier, and were on their return when they had accidentally fallen in with our little party. Evidently but a part of the band had taken part in our capture, for the attacking party were less than one hundred in number, while I now counted over four hundred warriors. The chances of escape seemed more unlikely than ever; and my heart sank as I observed their formidable array.

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I must pass briefly over the incidents of our journey for several days following. We passed through a widely diversified country, and in spite of my mental and physical sufferings, I was greatly interested in its strange scenery. We passed over wide stretches of prairie, dotted here and there by mottes of timber, rising like islands from the sea-like plain; we threaded tortuous defiles of the mountains; and crawled, rather than rode, through terrific *cañons*, whose perpendicular walls of many colored rock, rising to the height of thousands of feet, shrouded the narrow pass in majestic gloom. At times we suffered greatly for food and water; making one stretch of sixty miles across the desert, and reaching its border in a state of utter exhaustion.

On the seventh day after my recapture we climbed a low mountain range, and on reaching the crest saw before us a deep valley, walled in on every side by towering cliffs of milk-white-quartz; its surface was level, or nearly so; through its centre a crystal line indicated the presence of a small stream. A dense forest of pine fringed it on three sides; vast herds of horses and cattle roamed over the plain, and cropped its luxuriant herbage. The valley was elliptical in form, and measured perhaps twelve miles in length by four or five in width; at its upper extremity a group of strange looking structures were visible, of many forms and sizes; one towering far above the rest had the appearance of a huge pyramid. From the joyful exclamations of the Indians I felt confident that our journey was nearly at an end. The tired mustangs were urged forward, and half an hour later we entered a defile, passed round the face of the cliff on a narrow ledge of rock, where two could not ride abreast, and emerged upon a platform from whence an easy descent led to the plain below. On reaching its grassy surface, the Indians set forward at full speed, uttering loud yells of delight and exultation; and we could perceive many forms hastening down the valley to meet us. The intervening space was quickly passed, and we soon stood among the strange barbaric structures which form the chief town of the Camanches.

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The captives were halted before the pyramidal building, which, from its great size and peculiar appearance, I supposed to be the council house, or the dwelling of the chief. I afterwards learned that it was the temple, where they worship and sacrifice to the Sun-God; for, like all the southern Indians, descendants of the ancient Aztecs, the Camanches worship the sun and fire.

But little time however, was given me for observation or reflection. I was rudely jerked from my horse, and with the other male captives led into one of the smaller lodges. Descending a rude ladder, we were placed in an underground apartment, and after being supplied with a scanty allowance of food, were again bound and left to silence and darkness.

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Again separated from my wife, and knowing but too well what treatment she would be likely to receive at the hands of the red demons, flushed with victory and spoil, I abandoned myself to the most gloomy reflections, which continued for many hours, until tardy sleep relieved me for a time from my self-imposed torture.

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CHAPTER V.

THE INDIAN TOWN.

How long I should have lain in this semi-comatose state I know not, had I not been aroused by the Indian who seemed to have been appointed my particular guard. Bringing me a portion of *tasajo* and an *olla* of water, he placed them on the ground beside me, and removing the thongs from my wrists left me to dispatch my unpalatable food as best I might; at noon, and in the evening, he repeated the performance. With the exception of this interruption I was left to my thoughts. My reflections were of the bitterest and most gloomy nature. From my previous knowledge of the habits and characteristics of my captors I was assured that my fate was sealed; and my death only a matter of time. These savages only captured male prisoners the better to enjoy their destruction. What astonished me most was that they had not put me to the torture on their arrival at the village. The fate of my poor wife was the profoundest mystery to me, as I had not seen or heard of her since our parting on entering the Indian town. While I was being conducted to my prison she was hurried off to the other end of the village. The darkening gloom of my chamber informed me of the approach of night; and recognizing how important it was for me to secure all the repose possible, I prepared to retire. The preparations were of the simplest character; my feet being bound it was only necessary to stretch my form along the ground and I was in bed. I courted sleep with persistent endeavor; but my mind was a prey to such agonizing reflections that the drowsy god held himself aloof. I counted backwards, rolled my eyes from side to side in their sockets, and resorted to all the devices known to me, but with indifferent success. All through the night the howling of the village dogs, the wild note of the swan, and the dismal whoops of the *gruya*, could be heard; and it is very difficult even under circumstances more favorable than those in which I was then placed to sleep with these noises ringing in one's ears. Later, when a long residence with the tribe had made me familiar with these sounds, and their causes, I was not unfrequently startled by them. My imagination was constantly dwelling on my approaching fate; and I am sure I suffered enough mental agony to suffice for a score of physical deaths. The next morning my keeper made his entry, this time without any food for me, and I was at once struck by his altered looks; he was oiled, and streaked with paint, from the crown of his head to his waist; his head dress was composed of eagles' plumes stained red, and his limbs were encased in buckskin leggings, the seams of which were fringed with long locks of hair, which attested to his prowess, as they were composed of scalp-locks taken from the heads of his enemies slain in battle; the feet were encased in moccasins, embroidered with beads and the quills of the porcupine dyed in various colors; from his neck was suspended a collar, made of the tusks of the javali; his tomahawk hung gracefully from his waist, and a fine robe of jaguar-skins draped his back. Such a costume I felt sure was only worn on state occasions; and his presence filled me with apprehensions. I was not long held in suspense, for stooping over me he quickly cut my fastenings, and motioning me to rise I was presently conducted up the ladder and out into the village street.

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Emerging from the darkness into the bright sunlight, I was at first unable to distinguish objects, but as soon as my eyes became accustomed to the glare, I was struck with astonishment at the scene of bustle and activity that met my gaze. Indian women, children, dogs and braves, were hurrying to and fro, seemingly intent on business of a most pressing and important character. My appearance was the signal for a succession of howls and yah! yahs! from the assembled crowd. The women clustered around me and gave expression to their hate in kicks, pinches and jeers; even the dogs snapped at my heels. After a walk of a few minutes, we cleared the skirts of the village, and shaping our course towards the river that ran through the centre of the valley, I was soon among a crowd of other captives. They were composed of Mexicans, chiefly, and all bore evidence of the struggle they had passed through, before yielding up their liberty; their clothes were torn, disclosing here and there ugly gashes, from which the blood had not yet ceased to ooze. One man among them especially attracted my attention. He was dressed in the costume of the mountain trapper, and his fur cap, fitting closely to his head, was a fit accompaniment to his tunic and leggings of dressed deerskin; his face had a peculiar expression which I could not account for, until I discovered that he had only one eye. At this time an Indian advanced toward us, bearing in his arms a quantity of small stakes; I was at loss to understand what was to transpire, when I heard my one-eyed companion mutter under his breath, "drat 'em, they be a goin' to stake us." Sure enough this was their intention; seizing us one by one, they stretched us on the turf in three files, the heads of one file resting between the feet of the row above him; driving the stakes firmly into the ground, they fastened thongs of raw hide to our wrists and ankles, and passing them around the pins, drew our feet and arms out to their utmost tension, making our joints fairly crack. Pinioned in this way, our heads were the only moveable parts of our bodies, and our upturned faces had the full benefit of the sun's rays, being subjected at the same time to attacks of swarms of insects. This torture was so very painful that many fainted, but the women soon brought the victims to consciousness by dashing an *olla* of water in their faces, and with yells of delight witnessed the renewal of the poor fellows' agonies. I was so completely disguised in dirt, that the flies seemed to pass me by in despair; and being thus in a measure relieved, I turned my attention to my companion on my right, the trapper. He seemed to be taking things very quietly, and evinced great patience and fortitude under his trials. The squaws were particularly attentive to him; and at the time I turned my head in his direction, two hags were amusing themselves sticking sharp pointed sticks into his body; he bore it manfully, but I saw tears of agony streaming from under his eyelids. Presently the air was filled with yells and whoops; our tormentors rushed off pell-mell, the guards only remaining. I asked what was the meaning of this new outbreak; to which the trapper replied that he supposed it was caused by the arrival of a new lot of those "gosh darned red niggers."

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Deeming this a good opportunity, I questioned him as to the intentions of our captors; to which

he replied that we would be kept staked out in this barbarous way until the games and feasting, with which they always celebrated successful forays, had been completed; and then we would be put to torture and death.

"How will they kill us?" I asked.

"O, darn 'em, the varmints have as many ways as I have fingers and toes, to knock the life out of a chap; they most allus makes us run the gantlet, leastwise the Kimanch does; but ye see, they air such mighty unsartin niggers, they does a'most enything but what yer expect them ter."

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"Will we have to remain in this position until the Indians are ready to torture us?" I asked.

"Spect so," briefly answered my neighbor.

The guard was now nearing us, and we remained silent.

The feasting and festivities had now begun. We were unfastened and removed to the centre of the village, where a dance was about to begin. Our feet were still bound, but we could assume a sitting posture; thus situated, I saw for the first time the *mamanchic*. The young girls only take part in this celebration; they go through a number of graceful and intricate evolutions, finishing by forming in a semi-circle around the chief and his queen, who are seated on a terrace of the temple. I was so much more interested in trying to discover my wife among the numerous lookers on, that I paid no special attention to the dance. The performance having come to an end, we were again staked out, and our captors returned to their feasting, slaughtering fresh cattle to satisfy the demands of their appetites. Our wants were not so well supplied.

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The next morning the games were renewed; this time we were taken out on the prairie to witness the feats of horsemanship, performed by the braves and their visitors. These were very fine, and for the time being I forgot my own position in the interest excited in the daring feats of these children of the plains. They rode their horses at top speed; vaulting on their backs and discharging arrows with as much apparent ease as if they stood still. They went through all the evolutions of Indian warfare, and ended with a mock battle; their yells alone would have dismayed an ordinary adversary.

Thirsty and tired, I and my companions were led back to our old position and again securely fastened. Turning to Black, I said that I supposed they would open the festivities to-morrow with our torture and death; to which he replied that he "spected they would." At least I thought, it will only be another species of torture, and we would be quickly released from it by death. Our guard now brought us some water and burnt meat, of which we were allowed to partake.

The thongs are again tightened; our guards move among us to see that all is secure; and the sentinel for the evening watch having been detailed, we are left to silence and our own thoughts—thoughts of our approaching doom, and perhaps of the loved ones far away in some Mexican border town, whose unavailing prayers are being offered up for our safety. Filled with these emotions, some poor fellow would give expression to his pent-up feelings in a long drawn sigh; the only sound that broke upon the stillness of the night. The moon's beams penetrated into the valley; the argent rays shedding a soft and subdued light, as they pierced the mist that was rising from the river. I knew that death was our portion, but little did I dream that on such scenes such awful morn should rise.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE TORTURE.

Another morning dawned; again we were brought forth, and from the information gained from the old trapper, I knew that our time for action had come. Lying in a group on the green sward, we watched the movements of our enemies with painful interest. Our hands and feet were bound, but we were not otherwise secured, and were therefore enabled to sit up and look around us; we saw that the Indians were divested of every superfluous article of dress or ornament, that their movements might be light and unimpeded. We saw them enter the woods and return with clubs freshly cut from the trees, an ominous indication of the fate in store for us. To the number of several hundred the savages had gathered upon the plain, and were arranging the preliminaries for their fiendish sport. We watched their preparations with a peculiar interest; at length all seemed in readiness—two rows of Indians stretched along the plain for a distance of about three hundred yards—all were armed with clubs, and stood facing each other; an interval of three or four paces separating the ranks. Between these lines we had to run and receive blows in passing, from all who were quick enough to hit us. We were told that if any of our number achieved the apparently impossible feat of passing the entire line, and could reach the foot of the cliff without being overtaken that our lives would be spared. I asked the old trapper if he believed this. "Not

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by a durn sight," was his reply; "its all a cussed injun lie, just to make us do our puttiest; they'll roast us all the same, blast 'em." I was satisfied that the promise was of no value, even if they should adhere to it; for the fleetest runner could never pass the lines.

Several of the warriors now approached us, and untied one of the Mexicans; he was to run first. Although an athletic and active specimen of his race, he was quickly disposed of; running barely ten paces before he was stretched senseless, and brought back helpless and bleeding, while the air resounded with the wild yells of the savage bystanders. Three of the other captives soon met the same fate, and then it came my turn; I was unbound and led forward and stood awaiting the signal to begin the terrible race. Within a few moments a wild scheme had formed itself in my mind, and although fully realizing its desperate nature, I had determined to make the effort, even if I perished in the attempt. I had noticed that, with the exception of those forming the lines between which I was to run, the Indians all stood *behind* me; and for a considerable space around me the ground was entirely clear. My plan was to start as if with the intention of entering the lane of savages, but to suddenly diverge to the right or left, as might seem most expedient, and run directly down the valley, with the hope that I might be able to reach the dense and tangled forest which fringed it, and conceal myself in its recesses until I could find some way out of my rock-environed prison. As I look back at it *now*, I can only wonder that I should have had the hardihood to attempt it. Not an Indian among the hundreds around but knew well all the paths and windings of the wooded borders of the valley, even supposing that I were fortunate enough to reach it; but that was improbable. Among so many it was likely there would be several able to outstrip me in speed, fast runner as I deemed myself; and if overtaken, I could expect nothing but more cruel treatment than I had yet experienced. Besides, although I did not know it at the time, the valley had but two entrances, and these were constantly guarded by a watchful picket. But at the time I thought of none of these things—"drowning men will catch at straws," says the old adage—and my hastily formed plan seemed to me to promise success. Having formed my resolution I was necessitated to put it in practice at once. The Indians were already impatient for another victim, and the signal being given I started on my race for life at the top of my speed. At first I ran directly for the living lane, where my enemies waited with poised clubs each eager to strike the first blow, but as I neared it I made a sudden break to the right, and gathering all my energies for one mighty effort, I broke through a group of old men and idlers who were watching the sport. Despite their efforts to intercept me I cleared them in an instant, and ran down the valley with the whole yelling mob at my heels. Some half dozen of my pursuers being swifter of foot forged ahead of their comrades, but they did not seem to gain upon me, and for a time it seemed that I would distance them entirely; but I had overestimated my strength, and to my alarm found myself growing weak, and running heavily and with painful effort.

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I had now, however, nearly reached the timber, and strained every nerve to gain its welcome shadow; looking back, I saw that one of my pursuers was within two hundred yards of me, and gaining rapidly; straining every nerve, I kept up my headlong pace, but when within fifty paces of the woods and with my enemy but little further behind me, I tripped and fell, and had barely time to spring to my feet before he was upon me; he was entirely unarmed, having thrown away his club during the chase. As he rushed upon me, I met him with a blow from my fist, delivered with all the force of which I was capable. Striking him directly under the chin, it knocked him completely off his feet, and he measured his length upon the grass. I turned with a spring, and was about to plunge into the thicket, when the dense undergrowth parted directly before me, and I stood face to face with an Indian of gigantic size and most singular appearance. For a moment I was completely paralyzed; not so my new opponent. Realizing the situation at a glance, he sprang upon me, and bore me to the ground with scarcely an effort. Emerging from the lethargy which had enthralled me for a moment, I struggled frantically to free myself, but in vain. Several others had now come up, and my fallen antagonist, who had been stunned for a moment, recovered himself, with his temper not at all improved by the rough handling he had received, and snatching a knife from the belt of one of the new comers, aimed a blow at me which would have ended my life on the instant, and prevented this narrative from being written. My captor seized his arm, and rebuked him so sternly, that he slunk away abashed. I was then allowed to rise to my feet, and my hands being bound, the huge Indian, who seemed to be in authority, and of whom the others evidently stood in awe consigned me to the custody of two warriors, and dismissing the rest with a wave of his hand, again disappeared in the thicket.

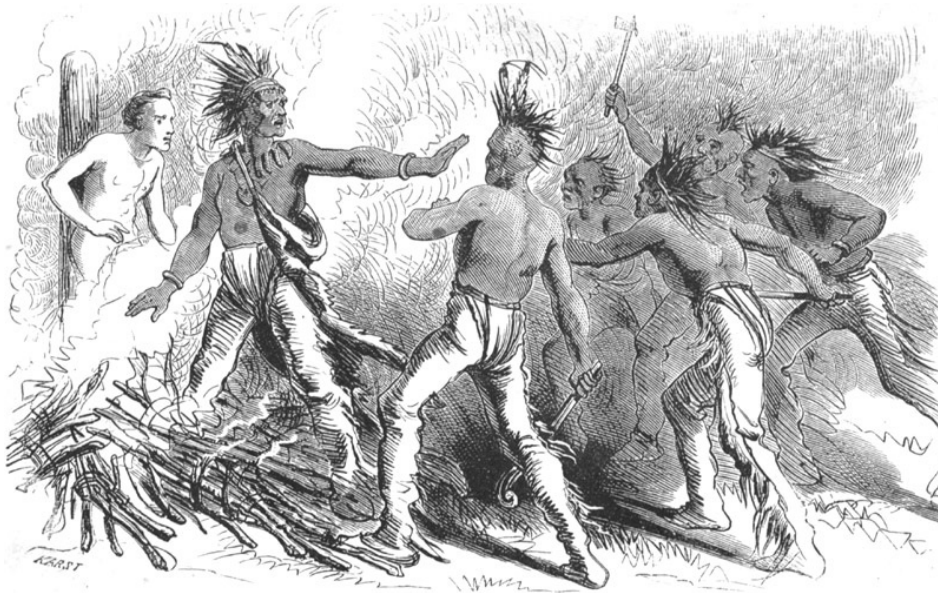
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Led between my two guards, I was soon taken back to the village, followed by an excited crowd of Indians, who showed a disposition to handle me pretty roughly, but their unwelcome attentions were prevented by my conductors who pushed rapidly through the crowd, and soon reached the lodge in which I had previously been confined. I was soon reinstated in my gloomy prison, and after tying me in the usual manner, my attendants left me to solitude and misery.

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Bitterly disappointed by the failure of my daring scheme at the very moment when it seemed to promise success, my thoughts were the reverse of pleasant; and when my mind reverted to the fate of my wife, I suffered such mental agony, as I pray that you, kind reader, may never know.

Another night passed, and remembering the words of the old trapper, I awoke filled with the conviction that it was to be my last day on earth. The usual scanty meal was supplied to me, and about an hour later I was again brought forth upon the plain. I was soon among my companions in misfortune, and like them securely tied to stakes; but allowed to sit upright, as if the red demons wished us to fully observe the preparations now going forward.



The Torture.

Upon the level plain facing the temple, and at a short distance from it, scores of brawny savages were busily engaged planting firmly in the ground a row of massive posts; they were arranged in a semi-circle, and were about twenty in number. We saw many of the Indians go to the woods, tomahawk in hand; we heard the sounds of chopping, and saw them return with bundles of faggots; we saw them fastening curiously fashioned chains of copper to the posts; we observed them painting their faces and bodies in hideous stripes of red and black. It was a scene of fearful import, for we knew but too well that it was the prelude to the torture. What were my companions' reflections I knew not, for they spoke but little. But the set and stern expression that showed itself on every face, told me plainly that they fully realized the terrible drama in which they were to be the principal actors. The appearance of all was ghastly in the extreme. Travel-stained, covered with dust, and with spots of dried blood, some showing fresh and bleeding wounds—souvenirs of yesterday's rough sport—our clothing torn and disarranged, we were indeed objects of pity, calculated to excite commiseration in the breasts of any others than the brutal and sanguinary wretches who were about to put us to a terrible death. As for me, my brain was on fire; and could I but have freed myself from my bonds I would gladly have sought instant death at the hands of the nearest savage, rather than to longer endure the ever present torture of mind, and the not more acute physical suffering which I was soon to undergo.

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At last their preparations seemed completed, and the audience assembled. Camanches and Apaches alike gathered before the temple, forming a vast semi-circle. The terraces of the temple were occupied by the older men, and upon its summit were seated a group of men in strange costumes, the priests of Quetzalcoatl. Directly in front of the temple a sort of throne had been erected, and upon it sat the aged chief, with his subordinates grouped around him. An old Indian of most repulsive aspect, seemed to direct the proceedings, assisted by about a hundred of the younger warriors. A number approached us, we were released from our fastenings and led forward; our ragged garments were soon stripped from our bodies, and with dextrous rapidity we were bound singly to the stakes already prepared for us.

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To the hour of my death I can never forget that scene. For years it haunted me, and even now, at times I start from my sleep with a cry of terror as I fancy I see again that mob of yelling, painted demons, the crowded terraces of the temple gay with the bright colors of barbaric costumes, the little band of doomed captives, the faggots, stakes, and all the terrible instruments of death. Back of all, the snow white cliffs, fringed with the dark green foliage of the pines, and Heaven's sunshine falling over all, as if in mockery of the awful tragedy about to be enacted. I wake—and shuddering, thank God that it is only a dream.

But it was all too real then. At a signal from their leader the savage executioners heaped the faggots around us, placing them at a sufficient distance to insure the prolongation of our sufferings, so that we might die slowly, and afford them ample time to fully enjoy our agonies. The fires were lighted, and the smoke rolled up in volumes, and threatened to suffocate us and put a speedy end to our torments. In a few seconds however, as the wood got fairly blazing, the smoke lifted, and as we began to writhe in agony, a yell of delight went up from more than three thousand savage throats. The heat grew more intense; my skin was scorched and blistered; dizzy and faint, I felt that the end was near, and longed for death as a speedy escape from such terrible pain. Some of my companions, rendered frantic by their sufferings, gave vent to screams of anguish; others endured in silence.

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Mustering all my fortitude, as yet not a sound had escaped me; I had closed my eyes, and was fervently praying for the relief which I knew death must soon give me, when I was startled by a wild cry, followed by a yell of astonishment from the savage spectators. Opening my eyes I saw the same gigantic Indian who had recaptured me on the day previous, making his way rapidly through the crowd, who fell back to right and left with precipitate haste. Rushing directly towards me he scattered the blazing brands, released me as quick as thought, and dragged me to

the front of the temple, while the air resounded with the yells and exclamations of the Indians. Raising his hand he hushed them into silence, and uttered a few words in the Camanche tongue; their meaning was lost upon me; I could only distinguish the word "Quetzalcoatl," which I knew to be the name of their God. But the revulsion of feeling, and the terrible ordeal through which I had passed, proved too much for my exhausted frame; I swooned and sank insensible to the earth.

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CHAPTER VII.

WA-KO-MET-KLA.

The Indian to whom I owed my life a second time, and who had braved the wrath of the fiends to snatch me from a death, in comparison to which all others pale into insignificance, the tried friend, whose friendship stood as a shield between me and petty persecution during my captivity, I shall ever hold in grateful remembrance. To him I owe the only hours of contentment that were vouchsafed me during seven years of existence; seven long years of toil and mental anguish. How can I picture to the imagination of my readers the noble qualities of head and heart with which this child of nature was endowed? He was a rough diamond, and it was only by the attrition of constant intercourse that his best qualities displayed themselves. Physically he was perfect; his movements were instinct with that grace and ease that are the attributes of those alone whose lives have been spent in the cultivation of all exercises that look to the development of the muscles. How vividly his image presents itself to my mind as I write; his body, which was nude to the waist, except on occasions, when religious observances demanded peculiar attire, was streaked most fantastically with different colored pigments. The head-dress, that consisted of two war eagles' plumes, one dyed vermilion, the other its natural hue, served only the more to distinguish a head that would have been conspicuous in any company. Suspended from his neck by a massive chain hung a disc of beaten gold, on which was rudely engraved the figure of a tortoise, the symbol of priesthood. Pendants of gold depended from either ear, and his arms were encircled above the elbow with broad gold bands. The limbs were encased in leggings of dressed fawn skin, ornamented along the seams with a fringe of scalp-locks; a guarantee of his personal bravery. Moccasins worked into grotesque designs with beads and porcupine quills covered his feet. Pervading all like an intangible essence was that ever present frank bearing and dignified courtesy, that at once marked him as a chieftain and ruler among men. Such was the medicine man of the Camanches and the high-priest of Quetzalcoatl, WAKOMETKLA.

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With returning consciousness, I found myself extended along the sward, the Indian kneeling by my side and holding in the palm of his hand some crushed bark, of a peculiarly pungent and aromatic odor. Clustered around me were a group of savages, who, judging by their menacing looks and excited gestures were not wholly pleased with the new turn which affairs had taken. One among them, emboldened perhaps by the unconcern of the chief, approached more nearly, and unsheathing his knife, raised the long, glittering, and murderous looking blade in mid air,

preparatory to burying it hilt deep in my unresisting body. In a moment WAKOMETKLA was on his feet, his proud form dilating with wrath. Grasping the culprit by the throat, he hurled him from him with tremendous force, sending him reeling through the crowd and to the ground; then turning to those that remained, he administered a sharp rebuke and motioned them away; they dispersed without delay, leaving me alone once more; the priest, meantime having entered the temple. I could distinctly hear the crackling of the fagots and the agonizing wail of some poor victim, as the greedy flames, leaping higher and higher devoured his quivering flesh. Intermingling with the groans of the dying captives could be heard the triumphant yells of the blood-thirsty savages, which were echoed by the women that everywhere filled the terraces of the lodges and temple; their bright-hued robes forming a striking contrast with their dark complexions. Over this scene of butchery shone the sun, which had now reached its zenith, in all its unclouded brilliancy; the mountainous walls of milky quartz that enclosed the valley, catching his beams and reflecting them in myriad prismatic hues, that gave one the impression that he was in some enchanted domain.

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The priest soon returned accompanied by a young girl, who bore in her arms a quantity of roots and strips of long bark, and placing them on the ground at my feet commenced applying them, first the leaves, then the bark, to my limbs. Soon I was swathed and bandaged like a mummy; which operation being performed, I was taken in their arms and carried inside the temple.

Descending a ladder we entered a darkened chamber, the walls of which were hung with robes and curious devices; passing through this room I was conducted to an inner apartment which was partitioned off by a curtain of buffalo robes. In the corner of this room was a couch on which I was placed. After giving the girl some brief directions, the priest left us, the girl following him, after having brought me an earthen vessel filled with a dark liquid, which I understood by her gestures I was to drink. Such was the magical effect of the leaves in which my burned limbs were bound, that I no longer felt any pain, and taking a deep draught of the liquid, I was soon asleep.

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I must have slept many hours, for on awakening I found that it had grown quite dark, the only light being supplied by a small bluish flame that was dimly burning on a tripod in the center of the room. My attention was attracted by the peculiar furniture—if such it might be called—of this strange place. The walls are hung with hideous shapes and skins of wild beasts; in which ever way I turn, I am attracted by odd shapes, such as the fierce visage of the grizzly bear, the white buffalo and panther; while interspersed among the horns of the cimmaron, elk and bison, are grim idols carved from the red claystone of the desert. All these, I feel sure, are the symbols of a horrid and mystic religion. The fumes of the charcoal begin to affect me, my head grows hot; the pulse beats quicker; I fancy I hear strange noises; I think there are animals moving on the stone pavement; the fitful flame discloses a shining object, whose sinuous and gliding movements betrays the presence of the dreaded *crotalus*; it approaches my bed; its bead-like eyes glittering with a baleful light. My terror and excitement have now become agonizing; the veins stand out upon my forehead like whip cords; I am bathed in a cold perspiration. Making a mighty endeavor, I free my feet from the thongs that bind them, and springing from the bed, rush wildly towards the center of the room. Once the sacred fire is reached, I can partially protect myself by scattering the glowing coals on the floor, and fight the reptiles with what they dread the most. In leaving the couch my foot becomes entangled, I give a sudden jerk, and to my horror and dismay, pull down a section of the fur-covered wall; a sight discloses itself that curdles the blood in my veins and thrills my frame with a paralyzing horror. *I have disturbed a nest of huge serpents!* They move; uncoil themselves, and join the *crotalus*; suddenly the room seems alive with the venomous creatures. I hear the dreaded rattle and the sibilant hiss; rushing toward the fire, I seize the tripod and dash it to the ground, scattering the glowing embers in every direction. My fright becomes terrible, and I imagine the monsters are crawling over my body. With the frenzy of despair I rush to the door that leads out of this chamber of horrors, all the while uttering the most fearful shrieks. In a twinkling I am confronted by Indians, bearing lighted torches; taking in the situation at a glance, they enter the apartment, chase the serpents back to their hiding places, while I am hurried away to less disagreeable quarters. I have passed through many thrilling adventures, but for unparalleled horror, this one was without its peer.

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The following morning, I was taken into the presence of the priest. That something of unusual moment was about to transpire, I felt sure, from the general air and appearance of those in the room. WAKOMETKLA was seated on a throne, around him were grouped a number of chiefs in all the bravery of war paint, plumes and robes. It was the council chamber, and I was about to go through the ceremony of adoption into the tribe. It might have been interesting had I understood their tongue, but as it was, I played the part of a puppet.

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The profoundest silence reigned throughout the apartment, and the gray dawn, stealing in through the door of the lodge, pervaded the room and made it colder and more desolate than before. A chief advanced to my side, and muttering something in which I could only distinguish the words "Americano" and "Quetzalcoatl," led me to the foot of the dais. WAKOMETKLA arose and addressed me at length; then the warriors formed in a circle and moved around me, accompanying their movements with a wild sort of chant. A young boy and girl, standing on one side supplied the music, using for this purpose an Indian drum, which produced a monotonous but rhythmic sound. This ceremony over, I am again led out and my clothes stripped from my back; substituting in their stead leggings and moccasins only. My body is then besmeared with paint and oil. My hair is shaved with *scalping knives*, leaving only a small ridge on my head, that ran from my forehead to my neck. Thus disguised and regenerated, I am again led into the presence of the chief, who embraces me, and waving his arm a young warrior advances with a necklace, shield, bow and quiver, tomahawk and lance; these are given to me in addition to a

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tobacco pouch filled with *k'neck k'nick*, the Indian substitute for tobacco. Thus accoutered, I am once more placed in the center of a circle, this time outside of the lodge; a small piece of turf is removed and the savages again commence their incantations. The dance is exceedingly grotesque, and consists of a series of yells, jumps and jarring gutturals, which are sometimes truly terrifying. Every step has its meaning, and every dance its peculiar song. When one becomes fatigued by the exercises, he signifies it by bending quite forward and sinking his body towards the ground, then withdraws from the circle; when all have retired in this manner the dance is ended, and all that remains to make me one of them is *branding*. During these ceremonies, I often wondered why I should have been singled out for adoption, when there were others who would, in my opinion have answered their purposes so much better; the Mexicans, for instance, with whose language they were familiar, would have been more serviceable; again, why should they take anyone into the tribe? Later, all this was explained. It seems that the medicine man is averse to initiating any of his *own* people into the secrets and hocus-pocus of his art, as the apprentice, with the knowledge thus gained, might in time become a formidable rival. By adopting a captive this risk is obviated, as under no circumstances could he aspire to the honors of priesthood. In the event of his escape, the only damage would be the loss of an experienced assistant. From this time I was always addressed by my new name TAH-TECK-A-DA-HAIR (the steep wind), probably from the fact that I outstripped my pursuers in my vain effort at escape. I was allowed to roam at will through the village, but I noticed that wherever I went, watchful eyes followed my every motion.

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I was actuated in my rambles solely by the desire to see my wife; vain effort. I entered lodge after lodge, climbed from terrace to terrace, but my patient and loving endeavor was unrewarded. Fatigued, and with a desponding heart, I retraced my steps towards the temple.

Morning once more dawns; it is the hour of worship; groups may be seen at the doors of the different lodges; they separate, some incline their course to the river, where sparkling waters are just discernible, as the blue mist, that during the night had hung over the valley, rises upward. Filling their *ollas* they return, carrying the earthen vessels on their heads. Others may be seen wending their way to the temple; I, among others ascend; arriving at the top, I find a number already congregated there; they make way for me, showing a deference as new as it is unexpected. I have a fine view of the village, and what an odd look it has; what strange structures meet my view; some are one, others two, three, and even four stories in height; they resemble pyramids with a piece of the top cut off; each upper story is smaller than that below it; the lower one serving as a terrace for the one above, and thus up to the top. The clay of which they are built is of a yellowish tinge. Leaning against each terrace is a ladder, that serves as stairs to the story above; no windows are to be seen, but doors lead into the lodge from every terrace. Those lodges occupied by warriors and chiefs are ornamented by long poles projecting from the top of the structure, from which float pennants, bearing various devices; the temple looms up over all. The corrals, in which the cattle are secured during the night, are near the houses of their owners. Close to the staff of the temple stands an altar, on which a fire is burning; and huddled in a small group near its base are a group of female captives; their forms are almost shrouded in the long striped Indian blankets. Impelled by a resistless force I near them; one turns towards me, it is my wife; opening my arms I rush wildly forward, overturning men and women by this sudden and precipitate movement. My wife is apparently as much frightened as the others; then recognizing my voice she breaks from the group and is soon in my arms. We were not long allowed to remain in each others arms; recovering from their surprise, the Indians seized and parted us. During the remainder of the time spent on the top of the temple, Mrs. Eastman was kept guarded and separated from TAHECKADAHAIR, the Indian brave. There is a commotion, the crowd part, and WAKOMETKLA advances to the altar. The drum beats, all prostrate themselves; the drum again beats, and the initiatory ceremony is concluded; the crowd is motionless; all face to the east. The quartz wall that shuts in the valley, and whose pinnacles point heavenward in needle-shaped spires, brighten; the points sparkle like diamonds; a ray penetrates into the valley; the mountain suddenly seems on fire, and, as if by magic, the god of light flashes on our upturned faces, bathing the surrounding objects in a flood of glory. All nature seems jubilant. The birds carol forth their blithest songs; the river sparkles and dances in the sunlight; the drum is heard once more; the devotees prostrate themselves and bend in submissive adoration before the coming of the fiery god, Quetzalcoatl.

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CHAPTER VIII.

A NEW VOCATION.

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This ceremony over, the priests and worshipers withdrew; my wife was led away by her guards, and I was left for a moment alone with WAKOMETKLA; he stood gazing toward the distant mountains

and seemed lost in reverie. At length he roused himself, and turning towards me, approached and taking me by the arm, conducted me once more to the lower part of the temple. We descended to the subterranean apartments, and passing through several, at length entered a room of good size, but so littered with the various utensils of his profession as to be almost impassable. Huge earthen cauldrons, set upon blocks of stone, were ranged across one end, and these were filled with a thick liquid of a dark brown color. Bundles of dried herbs were suspended from the walls and ceiling; the plants seemed to be of many species, but were all strange and unknown to me. A large block of stone standing in the center of the room served as a table, and upon this were a number of piles of bark and small lumps of a thick resinous gum; in one corner, were two or three smaller stone blocks, each with a cavity in the center, and evidently used for the same purpose as a druggist's mortar.



Mrs. Eastman in Costume.

I viewed the strange apartment and its contents with much interest, for I saw that in this place the old man compounded such simple remedies as he had been taught by experience, were necessary for the treatment of the ailments to which his tribe was subject. On entering, he had motioned me to a seat, and I had accordingly placed myself upon a fragment of rock and sat quietly observing his proceedings and reflecting upon the strange situation in which I found myself. My companion, for sometime paid no attention whatever to me; divesting himself of his robes and ornaments, he enveloped himself in a sort of tunic made from the skin of some wild beast; to what particular kind of animal it had once belonged I was unable to form an idea, as the hair had been removed and the surface painted in many colors, with curious designs; it was without sleeves, showing his muscular arms bared to the shoulder, and with bracelets of roughly beaten gold upon the wrists. Taking a piece of wood, shaped something like a paddle, he commenced stirring the contents of the cauldrons and tasting the mixture, occasionally adding small portions of a transparent liquid of a pale yellow color, which he poured from a small earthen vessel. For some time he continued his employment while I watched and meditated, but at length he ceased his labors and beckoned me to approach him. Taking a portion of bark from the table he placed it in one of the stone basins, and seizing a stone utensil, similar in shape to a large gourd, began crushing the bark, motioning me meantime to watch him, and working with great energy. He continued in this manner for some minutes, until he appeared to conclude that I had become sufficiently familiar with the process, and then directed me by gestures to take his place, and I soon found myself busily engaged reducing the bark to powder. At first the change from my hitherto enforced idleness was a pleasant relief, but I soon found that it was hard and exhausting labor; the perspiration rolled down my face in streams, and I felt a strong inclination to cease operations. My new master, however, plainly looked with disfavor upon such an intention, for the moment that I slackened in my toil, he would shake his head gravely and motion me to continue, and to work more rapidly, and I had no alternative but to obey.

Of one thing I was satisfied, my new occupation was likely to be no sinecure; there was evidently work enough to keep me constantly employed, and WAKOMETKLA would no doubt see to it that I wasted no time. For the remainder of the day I was kept hard at it, with the exception of the brief period allowed me for partaking of my food. So far as quantity was concerned, I had no reason to complain of the fair supplied me, but its quality was not so satisfactory, it was a species of *tasajo*, or dried meat, but of what animal it had originally formed a part, I was entirely unable

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to determine.

In place of bread, I was given a sort of cake made from the *piñon* nuts, and not unpalatable, but a poor substitute for the food to which I had been accustomed. When my day's toil was over, WAKOMETKLA, motioning me to follow him, led the way into an adjoining apartment, and pointing to a rude couch of skins, indicated that it was to be my resting place for the night. Wearing by my unaccustomed labor, I threw myself down without the formality of undressing, and was soon buried in deep and dreamless slumber.

At an early hour on the following morning I was awakened by WAKOMETKLA, and found myself much refreshed by the first night's sound sleep I had enjoyed for many days. I was again conducted to the scene of my labors of the day previous and soon found myself at work again. This time, however, I was set at a different employment from that in which I had been hitherto engaged. Seated upon the earthen floor, with a large flat stone before me, I picked over and separated the various strange herbs, sorting them into heaps; the medicine man stood by and directed my operations, uttering a grunt of approval when he saw that I comprehended his pantomimic instructions. At length, seeming satisfied that I could complete the task without further assistance, he left me, and for several hours I worked on alone. About the middle of the forenoon, I had nearly finished my labor, when WAKOMETKLA suddenly entered and motioned me to rise and follow him; we passed through several apartments and entered the mystery room. Approaching a recess in one corner, my master drew back a curtain of skins and disclosed an aperture of considerable size; this he entered and disappeared for a moment, but quickly returned, bearing in his hand a metallic circlet which glittered in the light of the lambent flame that arose from the altar; as he approached me I saw that it was a rudely fashioned collar of silver, its surface covered with engraved lines and strange cabalistic characters; this he speedily fastened around my neck in such a way that I could not displace it, and again motioned me to follow him; leaving me entirely in the dark, as to the object or meaning of this singular proceeding. Reaching the first terrace of the temple, we descended to the plain and passed through the main street of the village until we reached its outskirts.

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Although wondering greatly what new experience I was about to meet with, I could not fail to notice the great respect with which my strange protector was treated, a respect seemingly not unmingled with awe. Many curious glances were cast at me as we passed through the crowd of idlers and "dandies" who lounged about the open space before the temple, but no word was spoken as they drew back to make way for us.

At the edge of the plain, and standing apart from the other structures, I had observed a small lodge; it differed in no respect from the others except in size. We walked directly towards this, and on reaching it WAKOMETKLA entered, motioning me to remain outside. Laying down upon the green turf, I abandoned myself to rest and reflection. Naturally, my thoughts were mainly of my wife; and the mystery as to her whereabouts and probable fate constantly occupied my mind. Had I but known it, my suspense was soon to be at an end; but I little dreamed that I was soon to see her again, to meet only to part for years, and with the certainty that she would be subjected to every degradation; and had I known it, such knowledge would have only caused me additional misery. For over an hour I laid motionless; at times watching the movements of a party of Indians who were engaged in ball play; at times lost in thought. At last my savage master, having finished his visit, the object of which I knew not, emerged from the lodge and signed me to rise. We retraced our steps until we reached the temple, when he indicated by gestures that I might remain without. I concluded from his manner that I was at liberty for a time at least to follow my own inclinations, and accordingly occupied myself in making a tour of the village, thinking it possible that I might see something of my wife. As I strolled about, I was surprised to find that I was entirely unmolested, although many of the red warriors looked at me with an expression that indicated a desire to "lift my hair." I afterward learned that the silver collar I wore was itself a safeguard which the boldest "buck" in the village would not dare to violate.

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My search was for the time unavailing; returning to the vicinity of the temple, I laid down upon the ground and awaited the summons of WAKOMETKLA, which I momentarily expected. It seemed, however, that he had either forgotten me, or was busied with something of more importance, as I was suffered to remain by myself for several hours. Watching the various groups around, I saw many sights, both new and strange to me. A number were engaged in gambling for the various trinkets they had procured in their successful foray. Their implements for this pastime were simple enough. Several Indians who sat quite near me were engaged in this amusement, and by watching them carefully, I was soon able to understand the game. They sat in a circle, with a heap of small stones in the center; one of them, grasping a handful of the pebbles would conceal them behind him, at the same time placing before him the article which he wished to wager. The player on his right would then stake against it any article which he deemed of equal value; and if the leader accepted the bet he would signify it; his opponent had then to *guess* the number of pebbles taken by the first Indian; and if his conjecture was correct, became the possessor of the articles wagered. If he failed to guess the right number, the holder of the stones was the winner; then the next savage seized the pebbles, and so it went round and round the circle, the winners venting their exultation in yells and laughter, while the losers clearly indicated by grunts, expressive of disgust, their disappointment when fortune went against them.

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Suddenly my attention was attracted by a party of Indians who came forth from one of the more pretentious lodges. Among them were a number of the principal warriors including the head chief himself; with them were also several of the Apaches, who seemed, by their dress and bearing, to be men of some rank. They were engaged in a very animated discussion, accompanied with as much gesticulation as if they had been a parcel of Frenchmen. Directly two of the Camanches re-

entered the lodge, and returned leading three women, white captives. Without a moment's warning my wife was before me, and I sprang to my feet and ran towards her, scarcely knowing what I was about. My darling saw me at the same instant and stretched out her arms as if to clasp me in her embrace, but she was firmly held in the grasp of one of the savages and could not stir. Seeing that I would not be permitted to approach her I halted, wondering what new scene of savage cruelty was about to be enacted. I was not long in doubt—from the gestures of the Indians, and the exhibition of some gaudy ornaments by one of the Apaches, I was convinced that a barter or trade of some sort was in progress, and a few moments sufficed to satisfy me that my surmise was correct, and to plunge me into still deeper wretchedness.

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The Camanche head chief, and one who seemed to be the leader of the Apaches conversed apart, the latter frequently pointing to my wife and evidently arguing with great persistence. At length the bargain seemed completed, and Tonsaroyoo the head chief of the Camanches led her to the Apache chieftain and consigned her to his custody; the other women were also taken in charge by the Apaches who delivered a number of ornaments and trinkets and two horses to their Camanche friends. The leader of the Apaches now uttered a peculiar cry, apparently a signal, for immediately the warriors of his party assembled from all parts of the village and ranged themselves before him.

He seemed to give some order, for they ran instantly to where their horses were picketed, and with marvelous celerity prepared for departure. The being I loved best was about to be torn from me, probably forever, and subjected to the most terrible fate that could befall one of her sex. As the fatal truth impressed itself on my mind, I seemed paralyzed in every limb, and stood riveted to the spot, gazing hopelessly upon those dear features, as I then thought, for the last time. My poor wife was quickly mounted behind an Apache warrior, and, as the cavalcade moved off, she uttered a despairing scream, which seemed to rouse me from my lethargy. I endeavored to reach her, animated by a wild desire to clasp her once again to my heart, and welcome death together; but at my first movement I was grasped by a strong arm, and with her cry of anguish sounding in my ears as the party rode away, I found myself drawn within the temple and firmly held by WAKOMETKLA; he did not relax his grasp until we entered the mystery chamber, then releasing me, he regarded me not unkindly, and muttered to himself in his own language. Sinking under this last terrible blow, I threw myself upon the floor, and in the bitterness of my heart prayed for death. But death shuns those who seek it, it is said, and we were destined to suffer for years from the doubts and suspense occasioned by our sudden separation, neither knowing the fate of the other, and each scarcely daring to hope that their loved one could be yet alive.

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After a time WAKOMETKLA raised me to my feet and led me to the room in which I had slept previously; here he left me, and for hours I lay in a sort of stupor, sinking at last into a heavy but unrestful slumber. Following, came many weary days, during which I paid little attention to things passing around me. Absorbed in my sorrow, I took no note of time, until a change in occupation brought forth new plans in my mind, causing me to entertain hope for the future. But of this anon.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE "MYSTERY BAG."

Several months had elapsed since I entered upon my new duties. At first I was stimulated to extra endeavor by that curiosity which impels all novices to take an especially active interest in their profession, but I soon found that pounding bark, and gathering herbs, could become as monotonous as other less novel employments. I envied the women their tasks, as it would have been a change, and consequently a relief. It was a treadmill existence, and day succeeded day with unvarying sameness. I arose before dawn and went to the river; after a plunge in the sparkling water I returned to the temple and renewed the paint on my person, which had been effaced by the water. Constant exposure to wind and weather had tanned my body to the color of leather, and it did not require a great amount of art to enable me to imitate the true Indian complexion. Exposure and coarse wholesome food had made me very hardy, and I found that I could bear fatigue and work that I should have thought I was never capable of performing. To this training I was indebted for the strength that supported me in my arduous journey through the deadly jornada, when in quest of my wife. When my preparations were completed, it was time to ascend to the top of the temple and join in the morning's devotions. These over, I returned to the underground room and commenced the day's work. At first WAKOMETKLA would signify what he required by signs, and later, as I acquired a knowledge of the language, he would more fully detail his wishes, and oftentimes explain the effects and purposes of the drug. In this way I became as familiar with his materia medica, as himself; and from time to time offered suggestions that

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occurred to me, which seemed to please him.

By constant and steady application I amassed a fund of knowledge concerning vegetable medicines that enabled me, on my return to civilization, through the co-operation of DR. CLARK JOHNSON, to make my knowledge available in alleviating suffering humanity.

In my excursions into the woods I was accompanied by the chief, who instructed me how to gather the medicine plants, and where to find them. After a day spent in this manner, we would return to the village each carrying a basket on his back, filled with the results of our labor. By far the most important part of my work, in the estimation of the Indians at least, was the concoction of "medicine," or mystery in which my master and myself were supposed to be all potent.

The red men are slaves to superstition, and in order to gain control over them it is absolutely necessary to profess a thorough intimacy with everything that is mysterious and supernatural. They believe in the power of talismans; and no Indian brave would for a moment suppose that his safety in this world, or happiness in the next, could be secured, did he not possess, and constantly keep about him his "mystery bag." A description of this article, and the manner in which it is made may not prove uninteresting.

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When a youth has arrived at the age of sixteen it becomes necessary for him to "make his medicine;" to this end he leaves his father's lodge, and absents himself for one or two days and nights; entering the woods, where he may be secure from interruption, he seeks some quiet nook, and stretching his length upon the ground, remains in that position until he dreams of his medicine. During this time he abstains from food and water. When in his dreams the bird, reptile, or animal, that is to act as his guardian angel through life appears to him; or rather he imagines it does. As soon as he has learned what to seek for, he retraces his steps and joins his family again, who receive him with demonstrations of great joy; a feast is made in his honor, and he is treated with marked consideration. The festivities having come to an end, he arms himself with bow and arrows, or takes his traps, whichever may be best adapted to secure the animal he seeks, and leaving the village once more goes in pursuit of his quarry, not returning until his hunt has been crowned with success. Great care is to be observed in securing the "medicine" intact. The skin is then stuffed with wool or moss, and religiously sealed; the exterior is ornamented as the fancy of the owner may dictate; the decoration in most instances being of a very elaborate character.

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The bag is usually attached to the person, but is sometimes carried in the hand. Feasts are made, and even dogs and horses sacrificed to a man's medicine, while days of fasting and penance are suffered to appease his medicine, when he fancies he has in some way offended it. The Indian will not sell this charm for any price; indeed, to part with it is considered a disgrace. In battle, he looks to it for protection from death, and if perchance he is killed, it will conduct him safely to the happy hunting grounds, which he contemplates as his inheritance in the world to come. If he should lose it in the fight, let him battle never so bravely for his country, he suffers overwhelming disgrace, and is pointed at by the tribe as "a man without medicine," and remains a pariah among his people until the sacred mystery bag is replaced. This can only be done by rushing into battle, and wresting one from the enemy, whom he slays with his own hand. Once this is accomplished, lost caste is regained, and he is reinstated in the tribe, occupying a position even higher than before he lost the charm. Medicine thus acquired at the risk of life and limb is considered the best, and entitles the wearer to many privileges to which he could never have aspired before. When a brave has captured a mystery bag belonging to his opponent, he has performed a feat of great valor, far surpassing the glory of innumerable scalps.

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It is somewhat singular that a man can institute his medicine but once in a lifetime; and equally curious that he can reinstate himself by the adoption of medicine captured from the enemy. In these regulations are concealed strong inducements to fight: first, to protect himself and his medicine; and again, if the warrior has been unfortunate enough to lose the charm, that he may restore it and his reputation, while in combat with the foes of his community.

I had been for a long time in the village before I was allowed to wander beyond its limits. Indeed, I was kept so constantly employed that I had no opportunity to explore the valley, even if I had been permitted to do so. But the efforts I made to please my Indian master were not without their effect. WAKOMETKLA soon began to place confidence in me, and allow me more freedom of action. I had, it is true, very little spare time, but occasionally my master would dispense with my services while he was occupied with the ceremonies of the temple, and at such times I found myself free to wander where I pleased.

In this way, at odd times, I made myself familiar with the topography of the entire valley. At first I was not without hope, in my solitary rambles, that I might devise some plan of escape; for I had not by any means abandoned all hope of that nature, or resigned myself placidly to my fate. But I was not long in discovering that without a good horse, a supply of provisions, and some weapons of offense or defense, any such idea was entirely futile. The valley was of itself a prison, for it had neither entrance nor exit, except at its two extremities. The one by which I had entered I have already described in a previous chapter, and will not weary the reader by repeating it.

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The pass at the western end of the valley was simply a narrow cañon cut through the mountain, during centuries perhaps, by the action of water; its precipitous walls rose to the height of over two thousand feet, and in its gloomy recesses it was always twilight; its length was nearly a mile; and at its outer extremity it debouched upon a barren plain. At each end a guard of two men was constantly posted, relieving each other at regular intervals, and being changed every third day. To pass these vigilant sentinels, afoot and unarmed, was plainly impossible; and I soon banished the idea from my mind.

I had noticed that WAKOMETKLA sometimes left the village and was absent for two or three days, returning laden with various herbs and plant, freshly gathered. I concluded from this that they were of species which did not grow in the valley, and to procure which he was obliged to ascend the various mountain ranges that barred my vision in every direction. I was anxious to accompany him on some one of these expeditions, thinking that I might thereby gain an opportunity for flight; but many long and weary months were to pass before I was to be granted that privilege. My life at this time was monotonous in the extreme; and so severe was the labor required of me, that I was frequently too tired even to think.

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In his trips to the borders of the valley in search of the materials for his medicines, WAKOMETKLA often took me with him, and by these means I gradually became familiar with many of the ingredients used. It was a source of never-ending wonder to me that this untutored savage should have been able to discover and prepare so wonderful a remedy as I found it to be. I had many opportunities of observing its effects upon the Indians; for the Camanches, although naturally a hardy race, partly from their mode of life, and partly from the fact that few of them are of pure Indian blood, are subject to very many of the same ailments that afflict more civilized communities.

As the assistant of the great medicine man, I found myself treated with far more consideration than I would have supposed possible, and, in fact, it appeared after a time, as if the Indians considered me one of themselves. This state of affairs was not without its advantages. It ensured my freedom from molestation and at the same time gave me complete facilities for becoming familiar with the Indian character, their manners and customs, and mode of life. Of these I shall treat at length in another chapter.

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At the time I was occupied in making the observations and investigations which I shall lay before the reader, I had no expectation of ever placing a record of my experiences before the public. Hence in many things my knowledge of the subject is but superficial. Of those things which interested me, or from their strange nature made a deep impression upon my mind, my recollection is clear and vivid. But many details which might be of interest to those who have never seen, or been among the prairie Indians, have by the lapse of time and the many exciting scenes through which I have passed become in a measure effaced from my mind. But I shall endeavor to relate as fully as possible my checkered experiences; and this narrative, whatever its demerits, will have at least one attribute of excellence, it will adhere strictly to facts.

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CHAPTER X.

INDIAN LIFE.

The Camanches are supposed to be a branch or subdivision of the Shoshone or Snake nation, who, under various names or tribal appellations, dominate the entire area from the borders of British America to the Rio Grande. Although these tribes are known by many different names, such as "Shoshones," "Bonacks," "Utahs," "Lipans," "Apaches," "Navajoes," "Pawnee Picts," "Camanches," or "Cayguas," they vary but little in their general habits of life. Such differences as do exist are mainly the result of variations of climate.

Until within a few years, the Camanches were undoubtedly the most warlike and powerful race of Indians on the continent. With the Apaches, Navajoes, and Lipans, they formed a sort of Indian confederacy; rarely at war among themselves, but always with the whites; and when united, able to put a force in the field which would ride over the Texan frontier like a whirlwind; and without hesitation penetrate hundreds of miles into Mexico, desolating whole provinces, returning sated with slaughter, and burdened with plunder. The Camanches are, or rather were at this time, divided into five bands, usually acting entirely independently of one another, but uniting in case of emergency; or for the purpose of making their annual raid on the Mexican towns. This occurs at the season when the buffaloes have migrated to the north, and is jocularly termed by the savages the "Mexican moon." It was on their return from one of these expeditions that the band of Tonsaroyoo, the head chief of the nation, had intercepted our unlucky party. The band of Tonsaroyoo (Lone Wolf) was the most numerous and powerful of the five, and hence was usually able to undertake their forays without the assistance of the other parties. Twice only during my long residence among them was a general levy or muster of the whole nation deemed necessary; and it was a spectacle not easily forgotten. In the first instance a raid of greater magnitude than usual had been determined upon, and every warrior was assembled to take part in it. Assembled at our village, they were joined by nearly five hundred Apaches, led by Mah-to-chee-ga (Little Bear), their second chief. Thus, when they defiled through the western portal of the valley, Tonsaroyoo rode at the head of nearly seven thousand warriors.

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With the Camanches, as with most other tribes, the chief rank is held by hereditary descent. Thus, the son of a chief usually succeeds his father in the rulership of his tribe or band; there are, of course, exceptions to this; but it is the general rule. The head chief and second chief of the nation, however, are chosen from among the chiefs of each tribe; the selection being made by the council. This body numbers twelve members, and are chosen by the whole nation; holding their positions during life, or until incapacitated by old age. Among them are found the most distinguished warriors of the tribe, and the head priest is also included in their number.

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The installation of a new counselor is considered by the Indians an occasion of great importance; and as it is a very interesting ceremony, I will briefly describe it.

On the occasion in question, Ar-ran-e-jah (Bloody Arm), had announced his determination to retire from the position of first counselor, which he had held for many years. Calling together the chiefs and braves, he addressed them somewhat as follows: "Brothers, warriors of the Hietan; for many winters Bloody Arm has faithfully served you. He is no longer young, his body is weakened by the many wounds he has received in your defence, and he wishes for repose; and to be no longer burdened with the cares of the council. Bloody Arm's medicine is no longer good upon the war path; and he will enter the medicine lodge so that he will not be obliged to go to war, but can end his days in peace. We have many brave young warriors, who are deserving of promotion, let one of these be selected to fill my place; and may his medicine be good and his war-path be fortunate Warriors, I now give up the office of first counselor I have done."

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Tonsaroyoo replied as follows: "Arranejah, our hearts are sorry that you have decided to cease to be our first counselor. You have served the nation long and faithfully; your counsel has been wise; under your guidance we have greatly prospered, and we would rather that you should still direct us. But you say that your body is weak, and that you desire repose. It is well—we know that you have received many wounds at the hands of our enemies; that you were always first in the charge, and never turned your back upon the foe. We honor you, for your bravery, and you will always possess the love and respect of your people.

"Now we must select a twelfth counselor. Will you name him for us?"

"No, Tonsaroyoo," said the old man: "I never had an enemy among my warriors, and I will not begin to make them now. They are all brave, and I should not know whom to choose. Let the nation decide who is to succeed me. I have done."

The form of an election was then gone through with; two braves being named for the position by the counsel, and a vote taken in the following manner: Two heaps of shells, one black, the other white, were placed upon the ground before the temple. Each warrior selected one from either pile, as he preferred, and placed the shells so taken so as to form a third pile. When all had deposited a shell in this heap, they were counted by two of the elder counselors, and the first candidate, who was a protégé of Tonsaroyoo, was declared rejected, having received too many of the black shells; as the rule is that if more than a certain prescribed number (which varies according to the number taking part in the election), are cast against a candidate he must be withdrawn, and another presented for approval.

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On the second ballot, Nau-ce-dah (Strong Shield), was chosen without opposition. He belonged to the band of Ston-ha-won, and was selected as much because of the personal popularity of his chief as from any merit of his own; for, although a daring warrior, he was a reckless fellow, and scarcely fitted to command or advise.

The ceremony of his installation followed, and was conducted within a medicine lodge, erected for that especial purpose. Here were assembled the chiefs, priests, members of the council, and the leading warriors, with as many of the other braves as could possibly crowd into it. The new dignitary was then presented with a *white* buffalo robe, and a head-dress of eagle's plumes, stained red, the insignia of his office. New arms and equipments were given him, and it was formally announced that Naucedah was the twelfth counselor of the Camanche nation; and that the next war party should be led by him. More speech-making followed, some of it decidedly eloquent, but with which I will not weary the reader. Tonsaroyoo presented the new counselor with twenty horses and a magnificent white shield; the assemblage then separated. The remainder of the day was devoted to feasting in honor of the event; the younger warriors amusing themselves as usual with horse racing and ball play.

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Naucedah failed to justify the wisdom of this selection, for his first war party resulted in disaster. Starting with about eighty warriors on a raid into the Utah country to steal horses, he led his unlucky band into an ambush, and barely twenty of them escaped; their leader being among the killed.

The marriage relation can hardly be said to exist among the Camanches. Each chief or warrior, it is true, may have as many wives as he pleases, and they generally please to have a rather liberal number; but the tie is not a sacred one as with us; and no ceremony is required to legalize it. The commerce of the sexes is practically unrestricted. The Camanche procures his wife, or more properly his slave, by purchase, by barter, or as in the case of the white captives, by force of arms; and he disposes of her in an equally summary fashion when wearied of her.

One particularly horrid custom to which their white prisoners are frequently subjected is the following: It sometimes occurs that a dispute will arise as to the ownership of a white captive; in this event it is referred to the council for settlement; and should they be unable to agree upon a decision, she then becomes *common property*, the victim of *all*!

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The Camanche has the same aversion to labor of any kind which characterizes all the aboriginal races. When not on the war path, or engaged in the pursuit of game, his time is about

equally divided between eating, smoking, gambling, and sleeping. All the burdens of life fall upon the women, and they must endure them as best they may. Their duty it is to plant and cultivate the maize, and the few fruits and berries which the Indians deem necessary for food. They gather and prepare the piñon nuts, and *cure* the tasajo, and prepare the food for their brutal masters. In the dressing of skins, and the manufacture of leggings, moccasins, and the few other articles of apparel which are required for comfort or ornament, they are especially skilled; and despite their multifarious duties they manage to accomplish a great deal of this work.

In the matter of diet the Camanches are not by any means particular. Buffalo meat is their staple, and they prefer this to any other food; but when this fails them, there are always horses in plenty; and I found "horse-beef" to be very good eating, although at first the very idea of tasting it was repulsive to me. Before I had returned to civilization, however, I had partaken of so many queer dishes, and strange articles of food, that, if hungry, I do not think I would hesitate at anything short of cannibalism. A sort of stew, of which the flesh of young puppies forms the principal ingredient, is another Camanche luxury, and I learned in time to consider it very palatable; but I fancy most people would rather take it for granted than put it to the test. However, if any of my readers feel disposed to try the experiment, I can assure them that they may do so without fear of unpleasant consequences.

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The Camanches, in common with all the other "horse-Indians," are much addicted to horse racing; and almost every afternoon some sport of this kind would take place on the plain before the village. These trials of speed were for some wager, and the younger warriors would frequently lose all their worldly possessions in backing some unlucky steed, whose powers of speed or endurance they had overrated. At such times the taunts and exultation of the victors would sometimes give rise to a quarrel; knives would be drawn and brandished, and a bloody fight seem imminent, but the "Yau-pa-sai-na," or Indian policemen, would usually succeed in quelling the disturbance before much harm could be done. If his efforts seemed unavailing, the appearance of Tonsaroyoo, battle axe in hand, would be the signal for an immediate dispersion of the crowd; the intending combatants, especially, sneaking off with great precipitation. Knowing the fiery temper of Lone Wolf, and the fact that he looked upon these brawls and affrays with great disfavor, and had strictly prohibited their occurrence, the quarrelsome young warriors fully apprehended that he would have no hesitation in braining the first offender who came within his reach.

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This warlike chieftain was a man of very marked ability, and governed his tribe with admirable skill and judgment. From his severity, however, he was feared rather than liked by his people, and although implicitly obeyed at all times, he did not possess a tithe of the popularity which Stonhawon, the second chief, enjoyed. The latter was a bold, manly fellow; a really brave man and a sagacious leader; unusually successful in war, his parties never returned without either "hair or horses," as was frequently the case with others, and his invariable good nature and lavish generosity rendered him a universal favorite with his people. He was a pure-blooded Camanche, and altogether, one of the finest specimens of his race I ever beheld. To him I am indebted for many acts of kindness, and but for his favor, the opportunity of which I availed myself for making my escape, might never have occurred.

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CHAPTER XI.

MRS. EASTMAN'S STORY.

I had intended to relate the experiences of my wife in such a manner that they might serve as a sequel to my narrative; but on reflection, the better plan seemed to be to portray, as graphically as possible, the events that influenced her life, in separate chapters, so arranged that the account should be distinct, yet in point of time, contemporaneous.

The scene of her captivity, and the treatment she received at the hands of her captors, have made such a vivid and lasting impression on my mind, that in speaking of them, I seem almost to have undergone the torture in my own person. In writing her story therefore, I shall speak in the first person. The reader will, I think, see the superiority of this plan at a glance.

Who has not felt his pulse quicken, and his heart go out in warmest sympathy at the recital of some tale of flood or field, as told by an eye-witness, when the same events related by a third party will only awaken a mild interest in the minds of his hearers. I crave the sympathetic attention of my readers, and this is my explanation for the plan I have adopted.

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After the assault on our party had culminated in the death of my poor father and brother, the Indians surrounded our wagon, and lifting the canvas flaps, discovered my mother and myself

ensconced behind our bulwark of blankets and boxes. They bade us come out by gestures so menacing, and scowls so terrifying, that it had a contrary effect on us than the one they wished to produce; for instead of obeying the command, we only shrank back into corners more remote, vainly thinking that the bales and robes, with which loving hands had surrounded us, would form a sufficient protection against the dreaded savage. At this critical juncture, my poor mother swooned back into my arms, overcome by fright. Seeing that their commands were not obeyed, the foremost Indian climbed into the wagon, and rushing on us with uplifted knife, grasped me by the hair and dragged me over the obstructions and out onto the ground. I cried aloud in my anguish, which only seemed to afford them the more amusement; the savage who had performed the manly deed, displaying for the edification of his comrades, a quantity of my hair, which he still held in his clenched hand. The wagon and the plunder it contained seemed to be the center of attraction. A dozen had entered in as many seconds, and although the canvas top hid them from view, they could be heard quarreling over the division of the spoils.

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During these fearful scenes, the events of years seemed crowding into minutes. Never have I suffered such mental or bodily torture before or since. My faculties succumbed to the severe strain, and I found myself falling into a kind of stupor, in which, though perfectly conscious of all that was transpiring, I seemed not to have been one of the principal actors, but an observer merely. Suddenly I was made aware that something unusual was taking place; the Indians crowded about the wagon, all the time gesticulating wildly, and yelling in a blood-curdling manner. I heard voices raised as if in altercation within the wagon. Rising above the din I distinguished the loved tones of my mother's voice, as if crying for help, and entreating for mercy. The noise grows apace; wild with terror, nerved with the resolution of despair, I rushed towards the wagon; reaching it a sight meets my eyes that petrifies me with horror; I try to move, speak, act; my limbs and tongue refuse to obey my will; this is what I see: A couple of brawny savages, maddened by strong drink, stand over the kneeling figure of my mother, their eyes inflamed with satanic passion. Holding together her torn garments with one hand, she parries with feeble and fast declining strength their revolting advances. With a mighty effort she reaches up and snatches a knife from the belt of the savage nearest her, and with the rapidity of thought plunges it into his body. He reels and falls against his companion. It is her last act on earth. With a yell of rage the tomahawk is lifted above her murderer's head, and descending is buried in her brain with a dull thud. A mist passes over my eyes; my brain reels, and the last thing of which I am conscious is the white tresses of my saintly mother, held high in air by this monster in human guise. God grant that it may never be my fate to pass through such scenes again.

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During the next twenty-four hours, my existence is that of an automaton merely. I know I am being conducted away from the spot where this awful tragedy was enacted. I am mounted behind my guard, to whose waist I am firmly bound by raw hide thongs. We encamp in a belt of cotton woods, near a small stream. Fires are lighted, food prepared; some is offered me, but I turn away from it in disgust; the hand that proffers the smoking meat seems covered with blood.

I am taken from my couch of skins at the foot of a tall tree, and led through the underbrush into an open space, where the main party are assembled. Emerging into this clearing, my eyes fall upon my husband, who is approaching me from the other side of the encampment. It was as if I saw one who had arisen from the dead; with an effort I free myself, rush past the guard, and am in my husband's arms. Leaning my head on his shoulder, I give expression to my feelings in tears; they are the first I have shed, and seem to break the spell which has encircled me like an iron band. I am not long permitted to remain in my husband's embrace, as the Indian with an ugh! expressive of displeasure, grasps Edwin by the arm, and rudely separates us; we are led to opposite corners of the enclosure, there to await our departure, preparations for which are being rapidly completed. The lariats are coiled, blankets adjusted, and at a signal from the chief we mount, and defiling through the wood, emerge on the open prairie, pursuing our journey in Indian file. Before starting, one of our mules is brought up, on which I am mounted, a warrior riding by my side and holding in his hand a hair rope that passes through the bit ring that is attached to my animal. All day we keep up the march. Look in any direction and the eye meets one vast expanse of living verdure, the vision only interrupted by the horizon. North, south, east, and west stretches the prairie meadow, green as the sea, and in many respects not unlike the calm surface of the ocean. As the wind sweeps across its bosom, the silken blades bend in gentle undulations, and they are dappled into lighter and darker shades, like the shadows of summer clouds flitting across the sun. It was a scene of pure enjoyment, and I only realized, on being awakened from my day dreams how miserable was my lot.

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With slight interruptions, notably when my husband was lost in the buffalo hunt, and his recapture, we progressed steadily towards the village. On arriving I was taken at once to the temple, where I found myself among some eight or ten more female captives, who had but recently arrived. They were Mexican women, and, not understanding their language, I felt somewhat constrained. I was attracted to one fragile looking girl, whose age could not have been more than fifteen. She appeared utterly heartbroken and cast down by her misfortunes. I suffered enough, God knows; but my heart yearned towards this little stranger with tender sympathy; and in comforting her I seemed to lessen my own burdens. Although the others were kind to her to a degree, yet she seemed to evince a fondness for my society that was very flattering. The others addressed her as "Zoe," and in this way I learned her name. Henceforth we became inseparable; and as she accompanied me in my captivity, the reader will learn more of the sad history of this heroic girl, whose impulses, both of head and heart, added to her splendid courage, were the salient points in a character of surpassing sweetness.

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We were not allowed to leave the temple, although we were free to wander from terrace to

terrace. Food and water was supplied us by the Indian women, who seemed to have us under their sole control.

How can I describe the scenes of the next few days; the games, festivities, and most horrible of all, the torture; when we were compelled to stand on the lower terrace, and witness the agonies and death struggles of fathers, husbands and lovers; not even the poor consolation of indulging our grief undisturbed was permitted us; the Indian women who surrounded us seemed lost to all feelings of pity and humanity, and when one of our number was suffering tortures of mind, little inferior to the physical pain undergone by the object of her devotion, the fiends would give vent to derisive cries and jeers that were maddening to the poor creature.

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One of the Mexicans, whose father and lover were burned to death before her eyes, suffered such poignant anguish that her reason gave way, and she was borne inside the temple a raving maniac.

After the events just related, nothing of moment occurred to break the monotony of our captivity. We were confined to our quarters under a surveillance that did not relax for a moment. It was understood that we were awaiting the announcement that was to decide what our future lot should be.

The Mexicans learned from our attendants that the chiefs had decided to share the female captives with their Apache visitors; the selection to be made by lot.

I had not seen my husband but once since we entered the village, and that sight was fraught with the most painful emotions. I knew, however, that for the present he was safe; the future I confided to Him whose loving care would protect and aid us in our trials. During this time my mind was in a state of complete despondency; no bright visions of future liberty and happiness came to relieve the dreary forebodings that oppressed me. In my wildest imaginings of the suffering that might be my portion, I did not approach the realities of my future existence. Those dark days of toil and degradation which succeeded each other in unvarying monotony, with blows for a welcome, and kicks as an incentive to labor. Even at this remote period I cannot recall the experiences of those times without a shudder; when the horizon of hope was environed by the dull blank of despair; and as each year dragged its weary length along, it almost seemed as if I was,

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"The world forgetting,
And by the world forgot."

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CHAPTER XII.

MRS. EASTMAN'S STORY CONTINUED.

One morning we were aroused quite early, our guard informing us that the lots had been cast and the captives disposed of. We were divided into equal numbers, the home tribe retaining one half, while their visitors appropriated the remainder.

We quickly descended to the ground floor of the temple, and clustering about the door leading into the village street, awaited the final word from the chief, that was to deliver us into the hands of our new masters. On occasions like the present, the whole community was in a ferment of excitement, and crowded around us in great numbers, each more anxious than the other to have a view of the bartered captives. The Apaches seemed to be particularly anxious to take stock of their new acquisitions, and not a few scimmages occurred between them and the Camanche women on this account. The men elbowed and the women bit and clawed at a furious rate. It might have been very amusing, but unluckily we came in for our share of the blows and objurgations. The mob pushed us against the walls of the temple so violently that we were in imminent danger of suffocation. To escape, and free ourselves from this unpleasant situation, it became necessary to exert ourselves and deal blows at the surging crowd, and in this way keep them back.

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Of course, such measures on our part met with a ready response, and soon we were in the midst of a row that threatened to assume large proportions. A chief who happened to be passing at the time, dashed into the crowd and soon quelled the rioters. Had it not been for this timely assistance we should certainly have been crushed to death. After a time we were left in comparative quiet; most of the idlers betaking themselves to the various groups scattered over the plain. Some of these parties attracted quite a number of spectators, and judging from their animated gestures, something of a very interesting character was taking place. One of the Indian women informed me that they were probably gambling.

My attention was attracted to a small lodge, about one hundred yards to our right. Something of unusual moment seemed to be taking place. Warriors were seen to enter, and others would emerge and go in different directions, as if in great haste, and on urgent business. Pennants were flying from poles on the roof, and altogether the place presented a gala appearance. On inquiry, I learned that this was the council lodge, and that at the present moment, the final negotiations for our barter were being consummated. A short time afterwards, the chiefs and their attendants defiled into the street and approached us. Meantime, the number of horses that had been agreed upon as an equivalent for the captives, were brought up and delivered over to their purchasers.

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Just as I was brought forth to be delivered over to the Apache chief, my glance was arrested by the figure of my husband, who stood upon the outskirts of the circle. The recognition was simultaneous, and with a cry of joy I sprang towards him, but was instantly grasped by a savage and thrown violently back among my companions. The Apache chief put a small whistle to his lips, and blowing a shrill blast, soon assembled his party. I struggled to free myself from my tormentors and rush to my husband, but my efforts were of no avail. Half fainting, and wild with the agony of this rude parting, I was taken out on the plain, where the bulk of the party were making their preparations to depart.

The pickets were drawn, lariats coiled, and the horses brought up. Every warrior had provided himself with an extra horse on which to mount his newly acquired property, but for some reason we were mounted on the horses ridden by our captors, and it was not until the next day that we made use of the "extra" horses.

The Indians rode without saddles, as is their custom when on the war trail, but the women were provided with saddles; these saddles were peculiar contrivances, and the best description of them that occurs to me, is to have the reader picture to himself an ordinary saw-buck with the top cut off, so as to leave an inverted V. There were two of these fastened together by parallel strips of wood about eighteen inches in length; this was placed on the mustang's back, and a buffalo robe thrown over it, and fastened by a girth. Stirrups depended from the lateral sticks that kept the V's in position. The horse's bridles were mostly composed of hair, in some instances, however, they were of leather worked and stamped into elaborate designs; these were, no doubt, the fruits of their foray among the Mexican *pueblas*.

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We were mounted man fashion, each riding by the side of the Indian who claimed us as his property. Farewells having been exchanged, lances were poised, bows and quivers slung, and amid a fearful uproar of voices, intermingled with the howling of dogs, we took our departure. As we passed through the village I strained my eyes to catch a glimpse of my husband, but even this poor consolation was denied me.

Passing up the valley we entered the cañon, traversing its rocky bed for a distance of several hundred yards; on entering this gloomy pass, we formed into single file, each captive falling into line immediately in the rear of her guard; this order was henceforth maintained throughout the journey. Leaving the cañon we debouched upon an arid plain, and continued our line of march along the bank of the stream. The first day's journey was devoid of interest; we traversed long stretches of sandy plain, with scarcely any signs of vegetation, save here and there a clump of sage brush, or the wild pita plant, whose stalk towered into the air like a sign-post to guide the wanderer over these sandy wastes. The cactus and fetid creosote plant lined our path, the latter giving forth a most disagreeable odor as it was crushed beneath the horses' hoofs. Towards night we approached the base of a mountain, and entering a grove of willows and cottonwoods, halted, and dismounting, made preparations to encamp. The horses were staked out on the prairie and allowed to crop the gramma grass. The long lances were firmly planted in the soil, and bow, quiver, and shield, deposited on the ground in close proximity, together with the buffalo robes and bear skins. After watering the stock at the small stream that ran through the grove, wood was collected and fires built.

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Around these fires clustered the dusky warriors cooking the evening meal, which consisted of *tasajo*, and the nuts gathered from the piñon, which were roasted in the ashes. Long into the night the feasting was kept up, and as the fires languished fresh fuel was thrown on until they were blazing and crackling more cheerily than ever. The flames caused the forms of the savages to stand out in bold relief against the dark background of the surrounding gloom, and lighting up their faces displayed in all its fantastic repulsiveness, the war paint with which their bodies were bedaubed.

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Early the next morning the march was resumed. Towards noon the heat became so intense as to be hardly endurable, still we pushed forward with unvarying speed. After journeying in a southerly direction for a few hours we defiled into the bed of a river and followed its course for several hundred yards, when, striking a new trail, our course was laid in a westerly direction. The character of the country underwent a complete change; instead of the sandy desert, we were now passing over a prairie clothed with verdure. At intervals we would enter dense thickets of chaparral, and then emerge into glades, that were veritable flower gardens. At evening a halt was called, but only long enough to water the horses, and partake of a hasty meal; and continuing the march we forged ahead with increased speed. I judged by the animated gestures of the Indians that we were nearing our destination; my conjectures were not ill-founded, as about midnight we entered a valley, and passing through green fields, came in view of the lodges of the Apache encampment. Our approach was heralded by the barking of dogs, and soon we were surrounded by a vast multitude of women and children, who greeted the returning braves with great enthusiasm.

We halted in the center of the village, and presently a large fire was blazing in front of the

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chief's lodge, around which the warriors assembled. The captives were placed in a row to one side, and except to be stared at by the women no further attention was taken of us. Each brave seemed bent on feasting himself, and while we were left to suffer the pangs of hunger and thirst, our masters indulged in gluttony of a most riotous and bestial nature. As the night advanced more fuel was added to the fires, until they crackled and blazed with tremendous fury. It was not long before the remains of the feast were cleared away, and the Indians reassembled, each with tomahawk in one hand, and a rattle in the other; then began the scalp dance, with which these tribes always celebrate their successful forays.

A number of young women are selected who step into the ring, and holding up the recently taken scalps, begin a low chant. The braves circle round, brandishing weapons of various kinds, whilst they distort their faces and bodies into the most horrid shapes. Simultaneously jumping into the air, they come down on both feet with a blow and thrust of their weapons, while it would appear as if they were indulging in the most horrible butchery. Darting about their glaring eyeballs, as if actuated by the most fiendish passions. As the dance continues the excitement grows apace; the bystanders wave their torches and urge the actors on to renewed endeavor. The scene becomes one wild orgy, in which the lowest and most blood-thirsty passions are excited. The drums continue beating, the women shriek, men yell, dogs bark, and the whole scene becomes wild and terrible in the extreme. No description can do justice to this remarkable performance, but once seen it leaves a vivid impress on the mind that time can never efface.

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The dance was continued until the stars gradually disappeared, and the gray streaks of dawn ushered in the new day. Tired, and trembling with nervous excitement, I was conducted within the lodge; and throwing myself on the ground, I sought that repose that my body and mind so much needed.

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CHAPTER XIII.

MRS. EASTMAN'S STORY CONTINUED.

Years have dragged their slow length along; once again I am surrounded by friends, and a husband's love shields me from the persecutions of a cruel captivity: yet, scenes and incidents of that terrible time recur to my memory with a vividness only too real. The capture, torture, and fatiguing marches, have left their imprint on my memory in ineffaceable characters. These were, however, but the overture to the drama. My intense sufferings commenced, and were comprised in the nine years of my life among the Apaches.

I had passed a restless night; my couch was haunted by dreams of ill omen, and it was with a sigh of relief that I saw the morning's rays peeping through the crevices of our lodge of skins. I was enabled to look upon my surroundings, and take stock of my future home. The lodge was circular in form, measuring a circumference of about fifty feet at the base, narrowing as it extended upwards, until a space of about six feet was left open at the top; the framework consisted of poles driven firmly into the ground, and held in position by a covering of dressed buffalo skins. The floor in the center of the lodge was depressed sufficiently to form a fire-place, in which a few glowing embers could yet be seen. Ranged around the walls were the beds, seven in number, which were occupied by the chief and his six wives. I, of course, was included in the number. Some of the beds were tastefully draped with curtains of dressed skins, ornamented in various styles. The bed of the chief was perhaps the most gorgeous; on it could be seen the labor of five jealous women, each more anxious than the other to propitiate her lord by some extravagance of decoration, which would deflect the sunshine of his favor on her head to the envy and exclusion of the remaining members of the family. Suspended from stakes driven into the ground near the head of his couch rested the implements of warfare; lance, shield, bow, and quiver, together with the deadly tomahawk and murderous scalping knife. Extended along a line that bisected the wigwam, at a distance of perhaps twelve feet from the floor, were the scalps of his enemies. Judging from the great quantity of these ghastly trophies, my master was a man of immense valor and shocking brutality.

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Soon there was a movement, the curtains of one of the beds parted, and the head, shoulders and body of a tawny savage appeared. Leaving the lodge for a short time, she again returned with an armful of brush which she threw upon the fire; then falling upon her knees she blew the smoldering embers into a bright flame. The noise of the crackling wood aroused the others, and soon all the women were engaged in their household duties; one busied herself in preparing the morning meal; another was collecting into one pile a number of queer looking instruments, with whose use I was to become acquainted only too soon; still another, was devoting her attention to a young babe. Thus all were occupied. I was not long allowed to remain in undisturbed possession of my quarters. The woman in charge of the cauldron placed over the fire called for

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assistance, all were too busy to lend her aid, and one suggested that I should be aroused. This remark was received with general approbation, and soon I was on the floor, lifting kettles, fetching fresh fuel, and in fact, doing the bidding of my task-makers as best I might. This was the commencement of a life of unceasing toil. I was the pariah of our little community; having no rights that compelled respect, and being looked upon with feelings of suspicion and distrust by the Indian women, I was driven to perform the menial tasks and endure the ill-treatment *they* had to endure from higher quarters.

Breakfast being ready, the chief was aroused and the family clustered around the fire, attacking the contents of the kettle. To have seen them eat, one would have supposed that they had been strangers to food for a very long period; food was not eaten, it was devoured. After having partaken of the cakes of maize and *tasajo*, the work of the day began. Mahtocheega, of course, did nothing but smoke his k'neck k'nick and lounge about the lodge. His favorite pastime was to lie at full length in front of the door, and like any dog, bask in the rays of the sun.

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It was now the planting season, and from morn till night we were in the field, breaking the ground and sowing the grain. The implements used, were of a very rude character, the hoes being fashioned from the shoulder bone of the bison; the earth was broken by these, and all the cultivation that was required was performed with the aid of this article. Such was the great fertility of the soil, that maize and squashes grew almost spontaneously when planted. All through the day, we were compelled to stoop and bend over the ground, while the sun's rays becoming more and more intense, made life intolerable. Did we lag but for a moment, the ever vigilant eye of some adjacent Indian would note the movement, and swooping down on us would urge us to renewed exertion, by word or blow.

My first day's experience in this species of farming, was excruciating agony. Being unskilled in the use of a hoe, I bruised myself severely, for, instead of breaking the soil, I came down with full force on my own limbs and feet; at such times a groan of agony would escape me, which, instead of eliciting sympathy, would only excite laughter. Maimed and bleeding, I toiled on, and wishing, oh! so fervently, that the next blow might be on my head, instead of the inferior parts of my body. Towards evening, my torture became unendurable, and throwing my tired body on the ground, I determined not to work longer, let the consequences be what they may. This conduct was so entirely unexpected, that it took my captors by surprise, and finding blows of no avail, they desisted, and left me to suffer alone. I had to be carried home, much to the disgust of those whose duty it was to bear the burden; arriving at the lodge, ointment was prepared from the juice expressed from the leaves of the *pita* plant, and being applied to my bruised limbs, soon allayed the inflammation and soreness.

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A brief description of this remarkable plant may not be without interest to the reader; what the *zamas* is to the East Indian, the *pita* plant is to the Southern Indian—it is food, medicine, stimulant, and clothing. It is to be found in the greatest abundance along the great American desert, near the base of the Rocky Mountains. In places where it would seem impossible for living plants to thrive, there may be found the *lechuguilla*, its stalk rising to the height of twenty feet, and its thorny leaves branching out in clusters along its length; its fiber is made into rope; the sap expressed from its leaves, when boiled to the consistency of honey is an admirable dressing for wounds, causing light cuts to cicatrice almost immediately, and even ugly gashes will yield to it in time. The juice distilled, produces the fiery *mezcal*, familiarly known among the trappers as "pass whiskey." It is made quite extensively at El Paso, hence the *sobriquet*. The egg-shaped core, when cooked, yields a thick, transparent body, similar to jelly; it is very nutritious, and is used to a great extent by one branch of the Apaches, who bake it with horse-flesh; this tribe is called by the frontiersmen, *mezcaleros* on this account.

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Without the aid of this plant, there are seasons when the Lipans, Apaches, and Camanches would perish from starvation. Too much cannot be said in praise of the wild aloe; it is one of the many striking instances in which an all-wise Providence has furnished man with a medicine and food combined. The laboratory of nature is full of similar plants whose uses are as yet imperfectly known, and have perhaps never been applied to the relief of the suffering.

During my sojourn among the Indians I became familiar with the names and uses of many of these roots and plants, which I believe were never before known to civilized man.

Several months had elapsed, the corn was planted and had nearly ripened. As I became hardened by exposure and toil, my lot seemed somewhat softened; I say seemed mitigated; the work was none the less arduous, only my capacity to bear toil had been strengthened.

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One day, Eeh-nis-kin (the crystal stone), intimated that I was to be branded; this intelligence filled me with terror. I had never seen any one marked in this manner, and I presumed the process was a painful one. After having finished the morning's work I had retired into the lodge, in order to complete some garments I was making, for Eehniskin's little boy, when a messenger arrived, announcing that the medicine man wished to see me, and bade me follow him. Arriving at the lodge in the center of the village, I joined a throng of captives, who like myself had been summoned to appear and receive the mark of bondage. Presently the crowd gave way, and the "hush-sh" that was echoed from mouth to mouth, warned us of the approach of Pa-nis-ka-soo-pa (the two crows), the high priest and great medicine of the nation. We were required to form a ring, leaving a space of some thirty feet in diameter. Silence reigned supreme; nothing was heard save the light tinkling of the rattles upon his dress, as he cautiously and slowly moved through the avenue left for him. He neared us with a slow and tilting step, his body and head entirely covered with the skin of a yellow bear, the head of which served as a mask to his own, which was

inside of it; the huge bear's claws were dangling on his wrists and ankles. In one hand he shook a frightful rattle, with the other he brandished his medicine spear, to the rattling din of which he added the wild and startling yells and jump of the Indian, and the appalling grunts and snarls of the grizzly bear. After prancing around us for a short time, he built a small fire, and threw into it some bits of bluish clay, which turned black when subjected to the fierce heat; these were then pounded into fine powder. Taking a sharp-pointed stick, he pricked our chins in semi-circles with the point of this stick dipped in a lotion of the powdered clay and a blackish gum, which he poured from a stone vial. The sensation was as if one was sticking needles into your face. Soon after the operation was performed the skin began to burn and the punctured portion inflame; it then became very painful, but an application of the never-failing aloe soothed the inflammation. This was the ceremony of branding, and I carry the scar, and will continue to wear it to my latest hours.

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Returning to the lodge, I was greeted with jeers and derisive laughter by the women of my household; the dogs joined in the uproar, barking, perhaps, because others pointed the finger of scorn at me, and to be in sympathy with their masters. Even the filthy little children raised their tiny voices, accompanying their laughter with volleys of stones and sticks, thus

"Catching at little bits of fun and glee,
That's played on dogs enslaved, by dogs that's free."

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CHAPTER XIV.

HOPES AND FEARS—AN ADVENTURE.

For over two years my life was one unvarying monotony; a ceaseless round of toil. Day after day I was occupied with my duties in the laboratory, or in gathering roots and herbs for the preparation of the medicine.

The daily life of the village presented a wearying sameness after I had become accustomed to its more novel peculiarities. There was little of excitement or interest in my surroundings. At first the arrival and departure of war parties, or the bands, who at regular intervals went forth to hunt, or to steal horses, attracted much of my attention; but eventually all these became tiresome; for when you have seen one of these gatherings, you have seen all, so little do they differ.

Many times I accompanied Wakometkla in his trips beyond the valley, in search of those ingredients for his medicine, which could not be procured within its limits. I had not yet abandoned the idea of escape, should an opportunity offer, and I had hoped that in those expeditions beyond the valley, I might find the occasion for which I longed. But in this regard fortune did not favor me; I was always too closely watched to make the attempt with any hope of success; and it was not long before I satisfied myself, that even if I should succeed in getting clear of the valley, there was very little chance of my finding my way back to civilization. Gazing from the summit of one of the "spurs" of the mountain range east of the valley, I found my path to liberty barred by the desert, which stretched for many miles to the north and east. Southward, the prospect was scarcely more inviting; the country was almost equally barren, although more broken, and affording a better chance for concealment. But I knew that the expert Indian "trackers" would find my trail, no matter what course I might take; and an attempt to escape on foot could only result in my being overtaken, brought back, and probably tortured; for not even the influence of the high-priest himself would avail to save me, if detected in an effort to escape. With a good horse, success was possible; although it was an open question, whether I would be able to find my way through a country of which I knew so little. It seemed far more probable that I would either perish in the desert, or only survive its dangers to fall into the hands of other savages, more cruel and relentless than the tribe of which I had become an unwilling member. So I reluctantly concluded that the idea of flight must be abandoned, unless unforeseen circumstances should arise, giving me a far better opportunity than had as yet offered. That I should ever meet with such an occasion, however, was altogether unlikely; and in time, the very thought of escape was almost entirely banished from my mind.

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In the autumn of the second year of my captivity, the monotony of my existence was broken by a rather exciting adventure; and as it is the only experience of the kind I ever met with, I will briefly narrate it.

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In company with Wakometkla, I had gone in the early morning to the lower end of the valley to procure an herb, called by the Camanches "Iakara," which grew in great abundance along the sides of the cliffs. Hitherto we had been able to gather it at a short distance from the village, but

having used it in large quantities, we had stripped the shrubbery on both sides of the valley of all that was fit for use, and were every day compelled to go to a greater distance, in order to obtain it in sufficient quantities. Hence on this occasion we had reached a distance of nearly ten miles from the village, before we were able to collect enough for our purpose. By this time we were considerably fatigued by our exertions, and sat down at the base of the cliff to rest and partake of such simple fare as we had brought with us.

While thus occupied, my attention was attracted by an animal which suddenly appeared upon a ledge far above our heads. A singular animal it was, and would naturally excite the curiosity of any one who beheld it for the first time; to me, however, it was no stranger, as I had frequently seen others of the same species upon the cliffs bordering the valley, although I had never before had so favorable an opportunity for a close examination. Commonly known as the "Big Horn" or "Rocky Mountain Sheep," and found inhabiting all the mountain ranges which divide the continent, it seems a sort of cross between goat and sheep, having much of the appearance of the latter, with more of the habits of the former.

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Standing upon a rocky ledge which jutted out from the face of the cliff, it surveyed me with great apparent curiosity, and without any signs of fear. As soon as I perceived it, I sprang to my feet, and seizing my bow, in the use of which I had become quite expert, I quickly sent an arrow through the unsuspecting animal, and it tumbled headlong from its lofty perch and fell dead at my feet. Wakometkla, who had been rather taken by surprise by the suddenness of my movements, now came up to me, and praised my skill and quickness; he then condescended to assist me in skinning and cutting up the carcass. We then packed in the skin, such portions of the meat as we could carry with us, and hung the rest upon a tree, high enough to be out of the reach of the wolves and coyotes, so that we could return or send for it if we chose to do so.

I supposed that we were to return at once to the village, but my companion directed me to remain, as he wished to proceed down the valley a short distance, in search of a species of bark for which we had been looking during our ramble, but had been unable to obtain. Telling me that he would return in a few minutes, he started off and was soon lost to view in the thicket.

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Reclining upon the ground I filled my pipe with the "k'neck k'nick," or Indian tobacco, and proceeded to make myself as comfortable as possible. Wakometkla's absence was prolonged far beyond what I had expected, and I was considering the advisability of starting in search of him, when a sound reached my ears as of some one breaking through the undergrowth, and concluding that it was my master returning, I laid back and abandoned myself to the contemplation of the blue smoke wreaths that curled above my head. As the sounds came nearer, I began to doubt whether it could be Wakometkla after all, for *his* progress through the thick undergrowth that skirted the valley, was usually comparatively noiseless, but I was so absorbed in my own reflections, that I did not give it a second thought, but lazily awaited the appearance of the new comer, whatever he or it might be. In a few moments the mystery was solved, and in a manner the reverse of pleasant. Emerging from the dense undergrowth through which he had forced his way, the new arrival entered the little clearing near whose center I was reclining, and on turning to discover what had occasioned the noises I had heard, I beheld an object that sent a thrill of terror to my heart, and for a moment rendered me incapable of motion. The object in question, was a large animal, which I at once recognized as the *grizzly bear*; the most dreaded of all creatures that inhabit this region.

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CHAPTER XV.

TREED BY A GRIZZLY.

The bear was one of the largest of his kind, but it was not so much his size that impressed me with fear, as the knowledge of his fierce nature. It is true, that personally I knew but little of the habits of the animal, although this was not my first introduction to "old Ephraim," but from the tales of the Indians, I had learned enough to cause me to feel certain that I was in deadly peril. When my eyes first rested on the monster, he had just emerged from the thicket at the same point at which Wakometkla had entered it. On reaching the open ground he advanced a pace or two, and then halting, reared himself up and stood upon his hind legs, at the same time uttering a sound which resembled the "blowing" of hogs when suddenly startled in the forest. He remained in this upright attitude for some moments, rubbing his head with his fore paws and playing them about like a monkey; in fact, as he stood facing me, he looked not unlike a gigantic ape. He was of a yellowish red color, with legs and feet nearly black, but color is no characteristic among these animals, scarce two of them being alike in this particular.

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To say that I was not terrified by the arrival of this unwelcome intruder, would be to state an

untruth. I was frightened, horribly frightened, and with good reason. To suppose that he would not attack me would have been absurd; I knew that in nine cases out of ten, the grizzly bear is the assailant; that no animal in America will willingly engage in combat with him, and that man himself shuns the encounter, unless well mounted, and even then, the prudent hunter always gives "old Ephraim," as the "mountain men" call him, a "wide berth," and rides on without interfering with him, unless the ground is perfectly open, so that his horse is not likely to be impeded.

The white hunter considers the killing of a grizzly bear a feat of prowess equal to the destruction of *two* Indians; while to the Indian, the destruction of one of these animals is one of the greatest feats in his life's history. Among Indian braves, a necklace of bear's claws is a badge of honor, since they can only be worn by a man who has himself slain the animals from which they have been taken. On the contrary, the grizzly bear fears no antagonist; he attacks the largest animals on sight. The moose, the elk, the buffalo, or wild horse, if caught is instantly killed. A blow from his paw will lay open the flesh as if gashed with an axe, and he can drag the body of a full grown buffalo, to almost any distance. He rushes upon man without the slightest hesitation, and frequently a dozen hunters will retreat at his approach. Nearly twenty bullets have on some occasions been fired into the body of a grizzly, without killing him, and only a shot through the brain or heart is certainly mortal.

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With such sanguinary fierceness of disposition and extraordinary tenacity of life, it is no wonder the grizzly bear is a creature to be dreaded. Had he the swiftness of the lion or tiger, his haunts would be inaccessible by man, and he would be a far more terrible assailant than either. Fortunately, however, he is slow compared with the horse, although he can easily outrun a man, and there is another peculiarity about him, which detracts somewhat from the danger of an encounter with this savage beast, he is not a *tree climber*, and many a life has been saved by this circumstance; for although he does not affect the forest, there is usually some timber in the vicinity of his haunts, and in many instances his intended victim has saved himself by taking refuge in a tree.

Knowing well, by hearsay, all these facts, you can easily imagine my feelings, at finding myself face to face with one of these fierce animals, alone and without weapons, save my bow and arrows and knife. It is true, there was abundance of timber near at hand, but unfortunately the bear was decidedly nearer to me than any tree of sufficient size to promise a safe refuge. On lying down, I had, without thought, placed myself in the very center of the clearing, and I found myself at least one hundred yards from any of the larger trees; the bear had approached before halting, to within about eighty yards, and stood watching me, apparently surprised at our rencontre. Without doubt he would overtake me before I could reach and ascend a tree, and I was fairly bewildered by the utter helplessness of my situation.

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These reflections occupy many minutes of your time to *read*; I *thought* them in as many seconds. Indeed, I had not time to form a plan of either defense or escape, when my antagonist, evidently concluding that I was fair game, dropped upon all fours, uttered a loud roar and rushed upon me with open mouth; simultaneously, I turned and fled with all my speed.

Before I had covered half the distance that separated me from the tree towards which I had directed my flight, he was almost at my heels, and I had about determined to stop and engage in the desperate conflict that seemed inevitable, when his attention was attracted by an object in his path, and although the halt he made was but momentary, it enabled me to gain some ground, and I ran on with redoubled speed. The object in question was none other than the carcass of the "big horn," which lay fresh and bloody, rolled up in the skin, directly in my line of flight. The bear pawed it over, snatched a hasty mouthful, and then resumed the pursuit; but his brief hesitation had been my salvation, and I had reached the tree which I had selected before he could overtake me. My climbing experience gained during my expeditions with Wakometkla, now stood me in good stead, and I "shinned" up the tree with the agility of a monkey. I had no time to spare, however, for my ursine friend reached the base of the tree before I had ascended far enough to be entirely out of reach, and rearing up, succeeded in getting a slight hold of my right foot. I clung to the tree with the desperation of despair, and the moccasin giving way, I soon drew myself above his reach, with no other injury than a severe scratch. In a few seconds I was safely ensconced among the branches, about thirty feet from the ground, while my baffled antagonist was walking round and round it, uttering growls of rage, and stripping the bark from the tree with his terrible claws.

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During my hasty flight I had slung my bow across my back, and had fortunately preserved it safely. My quiver, well filled with arrows, being attached to my person by a belt, I was well supplied with ammunition; and thinking it about time to commence offensive operations, I secured myself to the tree with strips of leather cut from my shoulder belt, and commenced trying my skill as an archer, with the bear as a living and movable target. Owing to my cramped position in the tree, my aim was necessarily uncertain, and many of my shafts went wide of the mark; still, I did succeed in hitting the brute several times, but with no other effect than to increase his rage and apparent determination to watch until he should tire me out, and overcome by fatigue or sleep, I might fall from the tree, and thus become an easy victim. Seeing this, I desisted after a while, and settled myself down to wait as patiently as I might for him to tire of his watch, or for relief of some sort to arrive. Perhaps an hour had elapsed when I heard a noise on the opposite side of the clearing, and on looking in that direction I saw Wakometkla just emerging from the woods. The bear saw him at the same instant, and abandoning his post of sentinel, rushed towards his new enemy. The old Indian waited long enough to discharge three or four arrows with great rapidity, and then ascended the nearest tree with a rapidity quite

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surprising in a man of his age and build. Two of his shots had taken effect—that is, they had hit the bear; but they caused no diminution of his energy or fierceness. He rushed to the base of the tree, and vented his rage in stripping the bark from its trunk. Finding that his intended prey had escaped him, he soon desisted from this occupation, and returning to the carcass of the "big horn," began devouring it, at the same time keeping a constant watch upon our movements, so as to preclude the possibility of our slipping away. In spite of the uncomfortable nature of our position, I could not help laughing at the ludicrous picture we presented, perched in the trees like a couple of monkeys, hardly daring to move lest we might lose our hold and tumble into the clutches of our unpleasant neighbor. The bear soon finished his repast, indeed it was but a mouthful to an animal of his size and appetite, and he commenced walking back and forth between the two trees in which we were severally ensconced, evidently trying to form some plan by which he could get at us. But his cogitations apparently resulted in nothing; and in fact, we were not at all disturbed as to the probability of his being able to reach us. We knew that we were perfectly safe in our lofty retreat, but how long we might have to remain there was another matter, and *I* for one was decidedly wearied of my airy prison. I knew that no search would be made for us for several days, as we frequently remained absent two or three days at a time when on these expeditions. Our only hope was that our self-appointed jailor might tire weary of the task he had set himself, or be compelled to go in search of food or water; and in that case we could improve the opportunity, and get out of reach without difficulty. For hour after hour, however, he kept up his sentinel-like tramp from tree to tree; at times varying the monotony of his proceedings by frantic attacks upon their trunks. The tree to which I had retreated was not more than eighteen inches in diameter, and I was not without fear at one time that he would succeed in demolishing it altogether, and bringing me "down by the run." I was not destined, however, to find out whether he was able to accomplish that feat or not, for after tearing away at it for a while, and making the splinters fly in a rather alarming manner, he seemed to tire of it, and resumed his patrolling between the two trees.

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The day had worn away to near its close, and I was contemplating the unpleasant prospect before me of passing the night in my very uncomfortable quarters, when the sound of hoof-strokes reached my ears. Looking out through the opening, upon the plain, I saw a party of about a dozen Indians riding leisurely up the valley, evidently one of the hunting parties on their return. They were nearly a mile from our position, but in these elevated regions sounds can be heard at almost incredible distances, and I at once shouted at the top of my voice, to attract their attention. Wakometkla did the same, and we were evidently heard, for they halted for a moment, and after a glance in our direction, galloped towards us. As they neared us I expected to see the bear take himself off without ceremony, but to my surprise, he showed no signs of such an intention. On the contrary, when they had passed about half the distance at first separating us, he advanced to the edge of the plain and stood as if inviting attack. The Indians rode up to within a few rods of the grizzly, and then seeing us in our haven of safety they realized the situation at a glance, and burst into uproarious laughter. This seemed to irritate the grizzly, for he uttered a roar of rage and rushed fiercely at them; then ensued an exciting and amusing scene.

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The Indians at first used only the lasso, and in a few seconds three or four of them had "roped him," and by spurring up their horses, he was dragged first one way and then another, making frantic efforts to free himself, and growling savagely all the while. Meanwhile the other horsemen rode up as near as safety would permit, and fairly riddled him with arrows. Overcome by superior numbers, "old Eph," at length succumbed to his fate, and a few lance thrusts soon put an end to his existence.

Wakometkla and myself quickly descended from our tree fortresses and joined the party, who greeted us with exclamations expressive of satisfaction, at having rescued us from our unpleasant predicament: The bear was soon skinned and cut up, and we returned to the village with our rescuers. As far as I was concerned, I felt fully satisfied with my experience as an interviewer of grizzly bears, and had no desire to repeat it, for although hunting the bear may be a pleasing pastime, it is not quite so pleasing when the bear *hunts* you.

However, "all's well that ends well," and if this narrative affords my readers any amusement, I shall never regret my day spent in a tree top.

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CHAPTER XVI.

SOME CURIOUS CUSTOMS.

The winter had been unusually severe, in several instances snow had fallen; a thing of rare occurrence in these latitudes. Not having prepared for such weather, by laying in an unusual supply of provisions, we were reduced to the verge of starvation, having recourse in our dire

extremity to roots and berries, which we dug from the ground. During one week, I lived solely on the juice expressed from the cactus leaves, which I procured by stripping the plant of its thorny excrescences and paring the leaves with my knife. The juice yielded was thick and gummy, and of a sweetish taste. This diet could not sustain life for any length of time. Fortunately I had the good luck to discover some mesquite berries, that had been secreted by one of the tribe. This discovery proved my salvation, as without this timely addition of food, I should certainly have perished.

During this season of hardship, many died of starvation. When a death occurred, the family of the deceased would yield themselves up to the most heart-rending grief. Their lamentations would succeed in attracting a crowd of sympathizing mourners who would join the family, and by indulging in yells, groans, and screeches, convert the whole scene into the most hideous travesty, which did violence to all those feelings of awe and solemnity, that are experienced by viewing the last sad rites of Christian burial.

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When an Indian dies, his body is painted, oiled, and dressed in its best attire, a fresh buffalo skin (if it is to be had), and failing this, a blanket is wound tightly around the body, and bound with thongs, then other blankets are soaked in water until they become very soft and elastic, when they also are wound around the body with great care and exactness, so as to exclude the air. This done, the dead warrior's arms are placed by his side and a liberal supply of food (when the article is plenty); placed on the scaffold.

These scaffolds are constructed by placing three upright posts in the ground in the shape of a parallelogram, and connecting them by lateral bars. Over these bars are placed a number of willow rods, on which the body rests, in such a position that the feet will be towards the rising sun. The scaffolds are placed high enough to be out of the reach of dogs and wolves, yet not so high as to be inaccessible to the family, some portion of whom visit it daily, bringing food and water, which they place near the head of the corpse. The spirit is supposed to be in need of this sustenance on his journey to the happy hunting grounds. Once there, his spear, bow, and arrows will enable him to kill game in plenty.

When the scaffolds decay and fall, the relatives collect the bones and bury them. The skull, which by this time has become perfectly bleached and purified, is taken and placed among a number of others which form a circle, the faces turned inward and facing a large shaft, around which is heaped a quantity of buffalo skulls. In this position they are preserved for years, the objects of religious veneration. The scaffolds of the chiefs are distinguished from the others by pieces of red or blue cloth which are thrown over the bodies.

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A party had been dispatched in search of food, and were expected back hourly. How anxiously we awaited their arrival none may know, who have not suffered the pangs of hunger. At last they made their appearance, bringing with them a quantity of berries called by the Indians oth-to-toa. This berry was pleasanter to taste than the mesquite. The juice, when extracted and mixed with water, tasted very much like the orange.

In one of my strolls I had observed some blackbirds, and in the hope of finding their nests, I was induced to wander to a greater distance from the village than I had been at any previous time. My search was rewarded by a quantity of eggs, and filling my Indian shirt with as many as I could carry, I retraced my steps.

In struggling through the tangled underbrush, I lost my way, and after wandering about for some time in the hope of finding the path, I came to a small spring that was bubbling up from a crevice in the rock.

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The night had closed in rapidly, and, finding it was too dark to prosecute my journey further, I concluded to remain here for the remainder of the night. Gathering a few dried leaves, I soon had a fire lighted, and then securing enough brush to last me until dawn, I set about preparing my supper, which was merely roasted eggs. This frugal meal was soon dispatched, and heaping more wood on the fire, I selected a dry spot, and stretching my tired limbs, was soon in a sound slumber. How long I slept I know not, but I was awakened by peals of thunder and flashes of the most vivid lightning. These sounds were unusual in this country, as rain rarely fell in these latitudes.

Should a storm of any magnitude pour its waters through the gorge in which I then was, I felt my position would be perilous in the extreme. I gathered up my supplies, that were collected at such an expenditure of labor, and scrambled over rocks and through sand towards the side of the mountain. I had not gone far when the rain commenced—first in large drops, and then in a steady patter; before many minutes the storm burst upon the mountain in all its fury. The rain fell in sheets, and literally deluged surrounding objects. My resting place was becoming untenable, and my life was momentarily imperiled by huge masses of falling rock, which had been loosened from its bed and came tearing down the mountain side, carrying all before it. Shielding myself behind trees and boulders, I climbed upwards, in the hope of finding a more permanent shelter than that afforded by the stumps of trees. The rain continued to pour down with increasing fury, and anon the vivid flash quickly followed by the startling roar of the thunder, and the noise of the seething flood, which by this time was bounding through the cañon, conspired to make the scene more terrible. Almost despairing, and thoroughly drenched, I was about yielding myself up to the fury of the tempest, when my eye fell upon what appeared to be a crevice in the rock. Hastily making towards it, I entered. The deeper I penetrated the larger it became, and I found myself at last snugly ensconced within the recesses of a vast cave.

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Congratulating myself on this good fortune, I was about preparing to resume my rudely interrupted slumber, when I was startled by the sight of two glaring eyes that were peering at me

from the depth of the cave. Here was a dilemma. I had certainly intruded on some wild animal, and penetrated its lair. My situation became unpleasant in the extreme. Turn in whichever direction I might, those fiery eyes followed me, and at last I found that I was being subjected to the influence of a horrible fascination.

My unpleasant experience with "old Eph" recurred to me with more force than pleasure; and the thought that I might have to deal with a grizzly, made doubly ferocious by being bearded in his den, caused the cold perspiration to stand out in beads upon my forehead. Suddenly I was startled by a roar that echoed through the cave. Those piercing eyes approached nearer. Mad with fright, I rushed to the mouth of the cave, and began a headlong descent down the steep banks of the cliff. In my wild scramble I dislodged stones and brush, which came tumbling precipitately after me, and I also heard another noise which struck terror to my heart; it was the foot stroke of the infuriated animal that was pursuing me!

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Not knowing whither I was going, but actuated by the sole desire to escape from this new danger, I very shortly found myself nearing the swollen river that was bounding through the cañon. There was no alternative, and, bracing myself for a final effort, I plunged into the swollen stream and breasted the waves, hoping to reach a rock that raised its head above the water, about an hundred yards down the stream; struggle as I might, I felt the rapid current sweeping me on with the rapidity of an avalanche. Should I reach it or be borne down the torrent, and be dashed to pieces against some hidden boulder? Nerving myself for one grand effort, I breasted the current, and, to my joy, found I was nearing the rock; striking out with the strength of despair I reach the refuge—the waves dash me against its sides—I clutch at the jagged ends that project out of the water, and by their aid clamber out of the reach of immediate danger!

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Finding myself safe, I look about me. The first object that attracts my attention is the lithe form of my pursuer who is running up and down the bank lashing his tail in fury, and occasionally breaking forth in the most savage roars. In its yellow coat and cat-like movements I recognize the dreaded cougar—the tiger of the western mountains—an animal that, when once aroused, will not hesitate to attack man or beast. He seemed to be deliberating whether to follow me into the stream. It was plain he disliked entering the water, and after pacing to and fro for some little time, turned abruptly and left the bank. Thinking I had achieved a victory, and finding that now I was safe, my courage was assuming a very bold front; I picked up a stone and threw it in the direction of the beast. Foolish action! It hit the cougar, and turning, he now rushed to the bank, and, bellowing with rage, plunged into the river. My position now became critical in the extreme. Once the rock was gained, I would certainly be mangled by the fierce creature. I could not take flight by water, as he could easily overtake me.

My terror was extreme, and I lost the power of will. Fright had made me imbecile, and I rushed about the crest of the rock like a crazy man. All this time the enraged brute drew nearer; his paws touch the base of the rock; he is in the act of drawing his dripping limbs out of the water.

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Mouth open, tongue extended, and eyes inflamed with rage, the cougar prepares for the deadly spring. But look! the surface of the rock moves, gives way, and slides with a gentle motion towards the river. He makes a desperate effort to free himself from this natural trap, but in vain; the rock moves faster every moment, and with one grand rush this land slide is engulfed in the turbid waters. Instantly the body is thrown back into the seething flood, and my last view of him is as he turns a bend and disappears forever.

After waiting several hours for the waters to subside, I am enabled to wade to the opposite shore, and, discovering my own trail by accident, wend my way back to the village.

My adventure is related to Wakometkla, and soon spreads throughout the village. From this time forth I am regarded in the light of a hero, but on what grounds I was never able to satisfactorily determine, as I could scarcely consider running away from a danger heroic.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE BUFFALO DANCE.

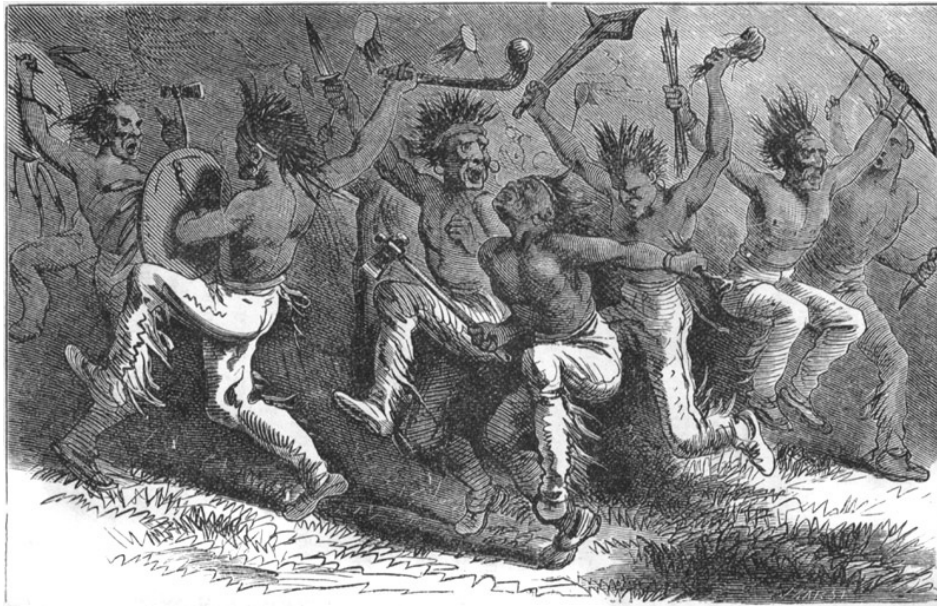
The buffalo being the main dependence of the Camanches for food, it naturally follows that they are fully alive to the importance of securing an abundant supply of meat during the season in which these animals migrate to the southern prairies.

The superstition which forms so large a part of the Indian character is especially noticeable in the ceremonies in which they engage every year for the purpose of securing a successful hunt. This ceremony, although not peculiar to any special tribe, is a very novel one, and may be of interest to the reader. Like all other tribes, the Camanches lead lives of idleness and leisure, and

consequently devote a great deal of time to their sports and amusements, of which they have a great variety.

Of these dancing is one of the principal, and may be seen in a variety of forms.

Among these are the scalp dance, the boasting dance, the buffalo dance, and a dozen other dances, all of which have their peculiar characters and meanings or objects.



The Scalp Dance.

These exercises are extremely grotesque in their appearance, and to the looker-on, who knows not their meaning or importance, they are an uncouth and frightful display of starts, jumps, and yelps, and jarring gutturals, which to a stranger are truly terrifying.

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But when one gives them a little attention, and becomes initiated into their mysterious meaning, they become a subject of the most intense and thrilling interest.

Each dance has its peculiar step, and every step has its meaning. Each dance also has its peculiar song, and that is frequently so intricate and mysterious, that not one in ten of the young men who are dancing and singing it know the meaning of the song they are chanting over. None but the medicine men are allowed to understand them; and even they are generally only initiated into the secret on the payment of a liberal stipend for their instruction, which requires much application and study.

There is evidently a set song and sentiment for every dance, for the songs are perfectly measured and sung in exact time with the beat of the drum; and always with a uniform set of sounds and expressions, which plainly indicate certain sentiments, which are expressed by the voice, though sometimes not given in any language whatever. They have other dances and songs which are not so intricate or mysterious, and which are understood by every person in the tribe, being sung in their own language.

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Some of these have much poetry in them, being perfectly metred, but without rhyme.

It is of the buffalo dance, however, that I propose to treat in this chapter, and of which I will try to give the reader as clear an idea as is possible from a mere description; but no words of mine can enable you to fully realize the strange tumult, scampering, grunting and bellowing with which my ears have been so often assailed.

The buffalo is essentially a wandering creature, congregating at times in huge herds, and roaming from north to south or from east to west, apparently without any directing impulse, but in reality in search of forage. Although their movement to the southward usually takes place at a stated season of the year, it varies greatly in the number who take part in it. Hence it sometimes happens that the Camanches are unable to procure their necessary supply of meat, and in some cases, when the migration occurs at a later period than usual, the Indians find themselves practically without food, and disastrous seasons of famine ensue. This involves the sending forth of expeditions in search of the tardy herds. These hunting parties, having to pass through the country occupied by other tribes, are almost certain to be assailed and harassed by them, and sometimes compelled to return with the loss of many of their number, and without accomplishing the object of the expedition. Hence the Indians are loth to undertake these hunts, and prefer to depend upon the means which their superstition leads them to believe will have the effect of bringing the buffaloes within their hunting grounds.

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This is nothing more than the buffalo dance, and when the emergency arises, every Indian musters and brings out his mask (the skin of a buffalo's head, with the horns on), which he is obliged to keep in readiness for this occasion. Then commences the buffalo dance, which is held for the purpose of making "buffalo come," as the Indians term it, or, in other words, of inducing the buffalo herds to change their feeding grounds, and direct their course towards the vast prairies to the eastward of the Camanche villages, where the young braves can shoot them down,

and the tribe be enabled to procure an abundant supply of food.

During the greater part of the year the hunters can find the buffaloes within twenty miles of the village, and entirely within their own territory; but in some seasons the young men range as far about the country as they can safely venture on account of their enemies, without finding meat. When this intelligence is brought back to the village, the chiefs, medicine men and counselors sit in solemn council until they have decided upon the most practicable expedient for overcoming the difficulty, and they rarely fail to decide upon the old and only expedient, which has never failed. The chief issues his orders to the runners or criers, who quickly proclaim it throughout the village, and in a few moments all are assembled to take part in the dance, which at once begins. The place where this strange performance is carried on is the public area in the center of the village, directly in front of the temple.

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About ten or fifteen Indians join in the dance at a time, each with the skin of the buffalo head, with the horns on, placed on his head, and armed with his lance or bow, with which he is accustomed to kill these animals. I have said that this dance always has the desired effect of making "buffalo come." It never fails, from the simple reason that when it is once begun it cannot be stopped, but is kept up incessantly night and day until the welcome herds are descried by the watchful look-outs. Drums are beaten and rattles shaken, songs and yells are continually shouted, and lookers on stand ready, with masks on their heads and weapons in their hands, to take the place of each dancer who becomes fatigued and falls out of the ring.

A chain of look-outs is established connecting the hills surrounding the village with those to the eastward, and the moment buffaloes are discovered by the distant watchers, they speedily pass the signal from one to another until it reaches the village. It is instantly understood by the whole tribe, and the joyful intelligence is received with shouts of thanks to their strange god and to mystery men and the dancers, who have been the immediate cause of the successful result.

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During my residence in the Camanche village, these dances were sometimes kept up for two or three weeks without intermission, until the buffaloes made their appearance.

Hence the buffalo dance can never fail, and the Indians consider it an infallible means of bringing the herds into their country. Every man in the tribe is obliged to be provided with the mask of the buffalo, which he can use whenever he is called upon to dance to make "buffalo come." The mask is put on over the head, and has a strip of the skin hanging to it of the whole length of the animal, with the tail attached to it, which passes down over the back of the wearer and drags on the ground.

When one of the dancers becomes wearied of the exercise, he indicates it by leaning forward and sinking his body to the ground. One of the lookers-on then draws a bow upon him and hits him with a blunt arrow, and he falls like a buffalo and is immediately dragged out of the ring by the bystanders, who brandish their knives about him, and, having gone through the motions of skinning him and cutting him up, they release him, and his place is at once supplied by another who dances into the ring with his mask on. By thus relieving one another the dance is kept up day and night until they reach the desired end, and make the "buffalo come."

When the signal is given that the buffaloes have made their appearance, the dance is discontinued at once, and a scene of great excitement ensues. The masks are quickly thrown aside; the Indians prepare for the hunt with marvelous rapidity, and mounting their horses, gallop wildly down the valley to pass the eastern entrance.

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In the village, where all had been enduring the utmost privation, with starvation staring them in the face, a scene of feasting and carousal would follow. Each would bring out their private stores, and the provisions that might in an emergency have lasted for several weeks would be consumed in a day. Even the dogs were not forgotten, but received a liberal share of the refuse portions of the feast.

The usual games and amusements followed, and from the deepest gloom and despondency all seemed to pass at once to the other extreme, and joy and exultation to reign supreme.

From the distance required to be traversed, the hunting parties would usually not return until the third day after their departure. Then came another scene of feasting, but this time on a far larger scale. The choicest pieces are sacrificed to appease their mysterious god, without which ceremony the Indians believe that all their future hunts would be unsuccessful. The largest portion of the meat is cured and made into *tasajo*, so that the proceeds of one successful hunt will often provide the entire community with food for many weeks.



The Buffalo Dance.

When I first saw the buffalo dance, I viewed it with much interest, but when continued for days and weeks, it becomes excessively wearisome from the perpetual howling din and clamor kept up, keeping the village in a continual uproar, and usually causing me to offer up most fervent prayers that the buffalo would "come," if it was only to be relieved from the noise and confusion which are occasioned by this curious ceremony.

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Unlike the northern Indians, the Camanches resort to the buffalo dance only on rare occasions, but when they do undertake it, their persistence is admirable; and for this reason, the other tribes have a saying, or sort of proverb, that when the Camanches dance for "buffalo" it is a good moon to hunt, but a bad moon on the war-path. Their meaning probably is, that the buffalo are sure to "come," when the Camanches dance for them, but that the Camanches are equally sure to "go for" any other tribe who encroach upon their hunting grounds at such times.

Such is the buffalo dance; one of the most curious of the many strange customs of the prairie Indians.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

A STRANGE HISTORY.

One of the most noted warriors of Tonsaroyoo's band was a pure blooded Mexican. A man of medium size, but athletic and well-proportioned, and not more than thirty years of age; he was distinguished even among these savages for his cruelty, nay, even ferocity of disposition, and lust for bloodshed.

His position in the tribe was that of a sub-chief, and he had attached to himself a chosen body of about sixty warriors, all men of bad standing and little character in the tribe, but all noted as desperate fighters.

With this party "Hisso-de-cha" (the Spanish Serpent), might be said to be on a perpetual war-path, for he was never contented to remain idly in the village for any length of time, but was continually instituting private forays in all directions. In these operations he was in no wise particular as to the objects of his attacks. Plunder and slaughter being apparently his only motive, he would attack any party he met with that was not too numerous, and in this way had several times embroiled the Camanches in war with friendly tribes, despite the stern reproofs he received from Tonsaroyoo for his lawless conduct; his uniform good fortune in these enterprises, however, had thus far prevented him from falling into entire disrepute with the leaders of the tribe.

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"Success covers a multitude of sins," says the proverb, and so it proved in his case.

Notwithstanding his evil nature, I was for various reasons strongly attracted towards this man. Chief among these was the fact that he spoke English—not very fluently, it is true, but sufficiently

to be able to carry on a conversation without much difficulty. Then, from the time of my first entry into the village he had treated me with uniform kindness; why this was so I know not, but the fact remains that he did so, and it was by his assistance that I was enabled to perfect myself in the Indian language, and also to gain some knowledge of Spanish, which afterwards did me good service. Much of my spare time, when he was not absent with his band, I spent in his company, and in our talks I had gained considerable knowledge of his past history. What I had heard, however, only made me more curious to hear the whole, and one evening I importuned him to give me some account of his past life. After some hesitation he consented, and filling our pipes, we reclined upon a buffalo robe before the entrance to his lodge, while he told me his story.

THE RENEGADE'S HISTORY.

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"My real name is Pedro Vargas—*carra!* it sounds strange enough in my ears now, for it is many years since I have heard it uttered.

"I was born on the banks of the Del Norte, where my father was a *vaquero* on the estate on Don Ramon d'Echeverra. I remember but little of my childhood, except that my life was a hard and unhappy one, for I was one of eleven children, and we were miserably poor. When I reached my eighth year, I was considered old enough to assist my father in his daily duties; under his tuition, I was able in a few months to ride like a Camanche, to fling the lazo with unerring aim, and to perform with credit most of the drudgery which fell to my share. In this manner the time passed until I was about eleven years of age, when the events occurred which separated me from home and friends, and indirectly made me what I am—the boldest warrior of the Hietans—"Hissoo-decha," the renegade, the terror of the frontier.

"The estate of Don Ramon was situated so far down the river as to be out of the track of the Indian raiding parties, and for a generation the red-skinned warriors had never troubled that region. But in the autumn of the year of which I speak, a large party of Camanches had entered Chihuahua, and penetrating almost to the very center of the province, had there met with a severe reverse, and were compelled to retreat without plunder, scalps or captives. Not daring to return to their village empty-handed, for, as you know, the very squaws would have hooted them, they recrossed the Grande above San Vicente, made a wide detour, and coming down the Pecos, again entered Mexican territory, and made a flying raid upon the river towns.

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"From its remoteness from the usual scene of these Indian forays, the inhabitants of this region were resting in fancied security, and had made no preparations to resist such an attack. As a natural consequence, they fell an easy prey to the savage invaders.

"The rancheria of Don Ramon was one of the first attacked, and the proud old Don and his three sons, with most of their rancheros and vaqueros, were surprised and slaughtered. Of my own family, my sister Conchita, a girl of sixteen, and myself, alone escaped death; and we, with many other captives, were hurried off in charge of a small detachment of Camanches. Of the journey to this village I need not tell you, as you have, perhaps, passed through a similar experience.

"On our arrival here, my sister soon became the wife of a chief, and to this circumstance I was indebted for much better treatment than usually falls to the lot of a captive. And here let me tell you that your own escape from torture and death was little less than miraculous. In my long experience with the tribe, I have never known of a similar incident. But Wakometkla is a very singular man, and so greatly is he revered by his nation, that he can do many things which Tonsaroyoo himself would hesitate to undertake.

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"*Carrambo*, but this story-telling is dry work. See if there be not a flask of mezcal within the lodge. *Caval*—you have found it? So—that is better;" and my strange companion, having swallowed a copious draft of the fiery liquid, resumed his narrative:

"The first two years of my captivity were comparatively without incident, but at the beginning of the third year I was formally adopted into the tribe. As you yourself have gone through the ceremony, it is unnecessary to describe it, but as the circumstances in my case were somewhat different from yours, I found myself on an equality with such of the young braves as had never been on the war-path.

"A few months later I joined a war party led by one of the subordinate chiefs, and during the expedition I was fortunate enough to take two scalps. This at once constituted me a warrior, and, liking the excitement and adventurous life, I soon became noted among the young men of the tribe. I joined every war party, and, being singularly fortunate, soon gained distinction as well as scalps and plunder. By the time I was twenty years of age, I was admitted to be one of the first warriors of the nation, and had attracted to myself a number of the more reckless spirits, who would follow anywhere that I would lead.

"I had long been desirous of taking the command of a war party, thinking thereby to gain notoriety, and if fortunate enough to be unusually successful, I might thereafter be entrusted with the leadership of expeditions of more importance.

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"I had frequently importuned Tonsaroyoo, then as now the head chief of the nation, to allow me to undertake such an enterprise, but up to this time he had persistently refused to do so.

"Finding that I could not obtain his permission, I determined to do without it, and secretly

assembled those warriors on whose fidelity and silence I could rely. I made known to them my plans, and succeeded in inducing about thirty braves to take part in the rash undertaking.

"Leaving the village under the pretense of hunting, we crossed the "Llano Estacado," to the head waters of the Pecos; and descending that stream nearly to its mouth, diverged to the west and crossed the Rio Grande. We traveled by night and remained concealed during the day, and by the exercise of the utmost caution, succeeded in evading the Lipans and Cayguas, through whose territory we had to pass. I had laid all my plans before leaving the village, and was quite confident that the raid would be a successful one. It was my intention to attack only the haciendas, and if possible to effect my object by surprise, for I knew that if I could return without the loss of a man, with a few scalps and a moderate amount of plunder, I would receive far more praise than if I had brought back twice as much booty, but with the loss of one or more warriors.

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"After crossing the river, the first hacienda within reach was that which had been my former home. It had passed into the possession of Don Rafael d'Echeverra, the brother of Don Ramon, and presented much the same appearance as in former times. Unfortunately for the success of my project, there was present at the hacienda a small party of American trappers, who had for some reason strayed into this region. These men had known Don Rafael, at Santa Fé, where he had at one time resided, and they had accordingly been made welcome at the hacienda.

"Two of their number, while out on a hunt at a few miles distance, had crossed our trail, for I had led my party as near to the hacienda as I dared; and, having concealed ourselves in a dense chaparral, we were waiting for night, it being my intention to attack in the darkness, when the smallness of my force could not be easily discovered. Scenting danger at once, the hunters returned by a circuitous route to the hacienda, and warned its occupants. As a natural consequence, when we made our assault some hours later, they were fully prepared for us, and instead of surprising them we were ourselves surprised and greeted with a withering volley from the rifles of the trappers. At the first fire I received a severe wound, and fell from my horse with a broken leg. Panic-stricken at the fall of their leader, and demoralized by the unexpected reception they had met with, my followers quickly retreated in confusion, and I was left wounded and a prisoner in the hands of the men I had sought to destroy.

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"Upon discovering that I was a white man, so great was the indignation of the Americans, that I should have been put to death on the spot but for the intercession of Don Rafael. Finding that I was a native Mexican his sympathy was excited, and at his entreaty my life was spared, and the Don's own surgeon attended to my wounds. It was nearly two months before I had sufficiently recovered to be able to go about, and by that time every one on the estate knew my history, or rather that version of it which I saw fit to give them. I had represented to Don Rafael that I had been compelled to accompany the war party against my will, and concealed the fact that I had been the leader of the band. My story was easily credited because of my youth, and I was treated with great kindness. In another month I had entirely regained my health, and Don Rafael proposed to me to enter his employ as a vaquero. To this I assented, although I had fully determined to return to my tribe at the first opportunity. But I had first several objects to accomplish, and I was therefore compelled to bide my time, and wait for a favorable occasion.

"Accordingly I joined the vaqueros of the rancharia, and for two months performed my duties to the entire satisfaction of my master. My object in thus remaining, when I might have made my escape at any time without difficulty, was twofold. In the first place I knew that it would not do for me to return to the Indian village empty-handed. My ill-considered and unauthorized foray having resulted in defeat and disaster, I could not expect a very cordial reception on my return, unless I performed some very daring feat in making my escape, or returned with a more than ordinary share of booty. The last I could not hope to accomplish, but the former was quite possible.

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"My second design was of an entirely different nature, and its successful accomplishment promised to be a very difficult matter.

"Don Rafael's immediate family consisted of a wife and daughter, the latter a girl of fifteen, and one of the most rarely beautiful women it has ever been my fortune to behold. Her I had resolved to possess, and it was this reason more than any other which impelled me to the execution of the bloody deed I am about to relate.

"Guadalupe, as she was called, evidently viewed me with marked disfavor, but this only intensified the passion I felt for her. I was consumed with desire, and determined that no obstacles should prevent me from accomplishing my purpose.

"It was not long before the opportunity I sought presented itself, and the events took place which rendered me doubly an outcast from those of my race and color."

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CHAPTER XIX.

A STRANGE HISTORY CONTINUED.

"The hacienda of Don Rafael was a stone building, or rather a collection of buildings, forming a square. Like nearly all Mexican dwellings it was but one story in height, but covered a large extent of ground. It was flat roofed, with a parapet, breast high, running around the edge. There were few external windows, and these were mere slits in the wall, guarded by heavy iron bars and massive wooden shutters. The interior of the square formed a large court-yard, entrance to which was gained by two archways, one at each extremity. These were closed by great jail-like doors—in fact, the whole structure had some resemblance to a fortress, a style of architecture peculiar to this region, and rendered necessary for security against the annual raids of the Indian warriors.

"On entering the *patio* or court-yard, you saw the real front of the house. Here the windows had glazed sashes reaching to the ground, and opening on curtained verandahs. The surface of the *patio* was paved with brick, and in the center stood a fountain, surrounded by orange trees.

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"Since the attack which had resulted in my becoming an inmate of the hacienda, more care had been taken to guard against future attempts of a like nature. The great gates were closed at sundown, and some attempt was made at keeping a regular watch or guard during the night. At first the sentinels were tolerably vigilant, but the lazy *rancheros* soon wearied of their unaccustomed duties, and before long the detail of a guard was omitted, and affairs subsided into their accustomed quiet.

"The American trappers had departed, and all seeming favorable for the accomplishment of my plan, I was not long in putting it into execution. I had taken pains to become familiar with the internal arrangements of the mansion, and knew exactly where the different members of the household slept. Selecting a night when there was no moon, I picked out two of the fleetest mustangs from the corral, and secured them, fully prepared for flight, among a clump of trees at a short distance from the hacienda.

"During my residence among the *Camanches*, I had become familiar with a certain herb possessing strong narcotic properties. This I had searched for and found without difficulty, and with it I had managed to drug a portion of the food prepared for the evening meal, so that at a comparatively early hour, the entire household was wrapped in profound slumber. My preparations were all completed, and when I deemed that the proper hour had arrived, I descended from the *azotea*, where I had been lying in wait; and noiselessly entered the apartments of the family. Reaching that occupied by Don Rafael, I sought his bedside, and placing one hand over his mouth, I stabbed him to the heart, and he died with scarcely a struggle. Quickly transferring his scalp to my belt, I proceeded with my bloody work, passing from room to room, until eight victims had perished beneath my blows, and eight bleeding scalps garnished my waist.

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"Knowing that I had but little time to spare, I now prepared for flight. Hastily collecting such articles of use or ornament as would be likely to seem of great value in the eyes of the Indians, and such as I could easily carry, I made them into a pack of small compass, and returning to the *azotea*, I lowered them to the ground with a lariat, which I had previously placed there. I then sought the apartment of Guadalupe. Entering it without noise, I beheld her, by the dim light of a night lamp, reclining upon her couch, buried in profound sleep. I quickly bound her hands and feet, and gagged her in the Indian fashion, with a pear-shaped piece of wood secured by a strip of leather. I then raised her to my shoulder, and bore her to the roof, and by the aid of the lariat, which I had secured to the parapet, I easily descended with her to the plain below. A few seconds rapid walking enabled me to gain the horses, and a few minutes later I had fastened her to the saddle, and we were riding at full speed to the northwest. Knowing the route well, I lost no time, and at daybreak had nearly reached the point at which I intended to cross the Rio Grande.

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"Day was just breaking when I rode through a belt of chaparral, and emerging upon the prairie beyond it, came suddenly upon a horseman, whom I at once recognized as one of the Mexican hunters attached to the hacienda d'Echeverra. Before he could recover from his astonishment at our unexpected meeting, I had literally ridden him down, and brained him with a single blow of my steel mace, one of the weapons which I had taken from Don Rafael's armory, and the same one you have frequently seen me carry. Adding his scalp to those I had already taken, and rifling his person of whatever of value he possessed, I resumed my flight, and traveling steadily all day, found myself by nightfall practically beyond pursuit.

"My fair captive had long since recovered consciousness, and I had removed the gag from her mouth. I will spare you a recital of her prayers and entreaties when she realized her position. Suffice it to say that, after a perilous and wearisome journey, I reached this village in safety with my prize, and was greeted as one returned from the dead; for the survivors of my party had brought back the news of my fall, and I had been mourned by my wives and my poor sister as dead. Now all was rejoicing; a feast was made, the scalp dance was performed, and I found that by my bold exploit I had fully recovered my standing among the warriors of the tribe.

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"Guadalupe was added to the number of my wives, and until her death three years later, remained my favorite. About a year after my return my sister sickened and died, during my absence with a war party, thus leaving me without ties, save such as I had made for myself in my tribe.

"I was now completely Indianized, and began a series of expeditions which resulted so

successfully as to cause my advancement to the position of a sub-chief, and to my being frequently entrusted with important enterprises. In fact, the more desperate an undertaking, the more certainly would I be called upon to achieve it. To this state of affairs I made no objection, for I coveted the sort of distinction or notoriety it gave me, and as I rarely failed of success, I steadily gained in prestige and influence. But I have never been able to attain a seat in the council, or to reach any higher rank than that I now hold. This I attributed to the influence of Tonsaroyoo and Wakometkla, both of whom regard me with ill-concealed dislike, although they are compelled to acknowledge me as one of the best warriors of their nation.

"I have led my chosen band in many a daring adventure, and have never returned without some trophy of my prowess. Among the many scenes of this nature through which I have passed, I will recount the following, which will prove to you that in what I have said of myself I have made no idle boast.

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"On one occasion Stonhawon, the second chief, went with about two hundred warriors into the Utah country, with a view of replenishing our stock of horses, as we had lost a large number through the polite attentions of the Utahs and Arapahoes. His party was gone some fifteen days, and returned with only eight horses, and with the loss of five men. This was considered a terrible disgrace, and many of the young warriors begged me to lead them, and by a successful raid remove the shame they felt at the defeat of Stonhawon's party.

"Selecting barely fifty men, but those the most daring braves of the tribe, I left the valley by the eastern entrance, and crossing the desert, struck southward into the Lipan country. With this tribe we were at the time at peace, but I cared little for that, and the warriors of my party were equally unscrupulous. I sent forward a dozen spies, and moved forward cautiously with the main body. My reputation was committed to my present success, and I took more than ordinary pains to sustain it. Every man of my band was well armed and mounted, and I had full confidence in our ability to overcome double our number. One of the spies now returned and informed me that they had discovered a Lipan village of seventeen lodges, situated on the banks of a small stream. I directed them to return and watch them closely, and to apprise me of any movement they might make. The spy went back, but soon returned and informed me that they had moved down the creek, which was a tributary of the Pecos, had passed through a small cañon, and were encamped near its mouth. I ordered him to send in all the spies except three, and direct these to keep a sharp look-out.

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"I then determined to follow them down the cañon, and attack them at its mouth, thus cutting off all chance of their retreating into the cañon; but a spy now brought me word that they had moved further down and encamped on the edge of the timber, with the evident intention of remaining there. I then made a wide circuit, and crossed the ridge lower down with the largest division of my party but left about twenty warriors ambushed in the cañon.

"From the summit of the hill I had an excellent view of the enemy's position, and my plans were quickly formed and executed with almost equal rapidity. Under cover of the timber I led my party until we gained the rear of the encampment. Then spreading out widely, we advanced to the edge of the timber, and shouting our savage war-whoop, rushed upon the Lipans. They were so completely surprised that we were among the lodges before they could make scarcely a semblance of defense, and many of them were cut down as they emerged from the lodges.

"Those who escaped the first attack retreated towards the cañon, but on attempting to enter it were met by my detached party and repulsed with considerable loss. They then retreated to the west and gained the shelter of the woods, while we hastily collected our plunder and prisoners and retraced our steps towards our village, our spoils consisting of thirty-nine scalps, forty-eight captives, women and children, and over two hundred horses; and this notable victory was gained without the loss of a warrior, although we had twenty-three wounded.

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"The Lipans gathered reinforcements from other bands, and followed our trail, but did not succeed in overtaking us before we reached our village; and here we are too strong to be attacked. Great was the rejoicing upon our return; the scalp-dance was performed, feasts prepared in our honor, and I found myself looked upon as a greater brave than ever.

"This expedition was but the prelude to a series of similar ones, and as my luck did not desert me, I soon found that more than half the tribe were anxious to accompany the war parties which I led. It suited me better, however, to operate with comparatively small parties, say of fifty or sixty men, and to take only those who would render unquestioning obedience to my authority. For this reason I selected men of no great prominence in the tribe, but whom I knew to be good fighters, to accompany me on these expeditions, so the victories we achieved might redound mainly to my credit.

"One day I started out to hunt, accompanied by only five young warriors. After five days journey, during which we found no game, we ascended a slight eminence, and saw before us a large prairie. At some distance out a party of about thirty Indians were engaged in killing buffaloes. We could also see their village at about four miles distance. Here was an opportunity not to be lost. We passed along behind the crest of the hill until we had gained a position between them and their village, and then passed through a gully and concealed ourselves in the path they must necessarily take. We were able to discover by their costume that they were Pawnee Picts, a tribe with whom we were generally at peace, but I considered that fact of no importance.

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"The unsuspecting hunters, having finished butchering and dressing the buffaloes they had killed, began to approach us in straggling parties of four or five, their horses loaded with meat

which they were bearing to the village. When the first of them came abreast of us, I made a signal, and five of them fell before our arrows. As the next party came up we brought down three more, and then rushed from our hiding place, and some began scalping the dead, while the remainder were cutting the lashings of the meat in order to secure the horses. Having taken eight scalps, we sprang upon the horses we had freed from the packs, and retreated precipitately, fearing to be overpowered by numbers. We made direct for the timber, and having secreted our horses, took refuge in a rocky place in the mountain, where we felt protected for a while from their attacks. To attack us in front they had to advance right in the face of our fire, while to reach our rear they had to take a circuitous route of several miles around the base of the mountain.

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"The enemy had now gathered in force, and displayed the utmost bravery, for they made repeated assaults nearly up to the position that sheltered us. Their arrows showered around us without injury, but we could bring one man down at each shot. To scalp them, however, was impossible. One of the enemy, who seemed to be a great brave, charged right into our midst and inflicted a severe wound on one of my party. Before he could retire, I cut him down with one stroke of my battle-axe, and added his scalp to those we had already taken. By this time the enemy had nearly surrounded us, which led me to believe that retreat would be our safest course; so when night came we evacuated our fortress unperceived by our enemies.

"They, deeming our escape impossible, were quietly resting, intending to attack us with their whole force in the morning, and take our scalps at all hazards. Moving with the stealth of the cougar, we proceeded along the summit of a rocky cliff until we came to a ravine, through which we descended to the plain below, which was here covered with heavy growth of timber. We reached the spot where we had concealed our horses without difficulty, and made the best of our way home. In order to avoid hostile war parties we were obliged to take a roundabout course, and it was not until the eighteenth day after our departure that we reached the village. The tribe had given us over for lost, but when they saw us returning with nine scalps and with but one of our party hurt, their grief gave way to admiration, and we were greeted with shouts of applause.

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"The years I have spent among the Camanches are filled with such exploits as these, but their recital would weary you, and I will not further prolong my story."

As the renegade finished his narrative, we sat and smoked for some time in silence. Then a sudden thought struck me and I said to him:

"Hisso-de-cha, I have often thought that I should like to go on the war path. Why can you not take me with you when you next go forth with a war party?"

"That I would willingly do," he replied, "but it would never be permitted; or at all events, I never could gain Wakometkla's consent to such a thing; but perhaps you can induce Stonhawon to let you accompany him, and I think he could manage it. He is now preparing to go on an expedition of some sort, as he is anxious to surpass my recent success against the Arapahoes. But come, it is time we were asleep, and if you are not tired of listening to me, I am decidedly tired of talking; so permit me to bid you a *bueno noche*;" and so saying, the renegade arose and retired to his lodge. I was not long in following his example, but sleep did not close my eyelids until nearly dawn.

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Reflecting upon the strange story of my still stranger companion, and seeing in imagination the many bloody scenes through which he had passed, my mind gradually turned to the subject which had so long lain dormant—the hope of escape from my hated bondage. At last there seemed a chance that my intense longing for freedom might be gratified; and I determined to spare no effort towards inducing Stonhawon to consent to my forming one of his war party. Hastily formed plans and wild schemes of all descriptions chased one another through my brain, and it was nearly morning before I fell into a troubled sleep, haunted even in my dreams by visions of blood and slaughter.

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CHAPTER XX.

THE BUFFALO HUNT.

The season was now approaching when the buffalo might be expected in great numbers on the plains to the east of us, and all the warriors were making the most extensive preparations for their grand buffalo hunt. They had commenced the ceremonies by song and dance, as related in another chapter and now, all that was necessary for their happiness, was the actual appearance of the bison. Young men left the camp daily, and scoured the plains, in order to get the first news of the herd; while others stationed themselves on high cliffs, and patiently waited the advent of the animal which was to supply them with food. A signal had been agreed upon, by which the

village would be made aware of their presence as soon as the buffaloes were in sight. Meantime every Indian was busy, perfecting his arrangements for the chase. Lances were re-pointed, arrows headed, and bows strengthened. Most of the time, however, was employed in training the ponies, and the plain, in front of the village, presented a very animated appearance as the horsemen were seen dashing along at top-speed, throwing the lasso, or rushing headlong up to another warrior, who personated a buffalo, go through the motions of killing him.

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These scenes fired me with a desire to see a buffalo hunt myself. I had reason to believe that the Indians trusted me sufficiently to permit of my accompanying them on the proposed expedition; but then I was totally inexperienced in the management of their weapons, on horseback, never having had occasion to use them when mounted. However, I determined to try, and going to Wakometkla, I made known my wishes. He concurred quite heartily in my request, and even went so far as to offer me his own lance and spear.

My determination to accompany the party was soon bruited throughout the village, and many were the offers of advice, ponies, and implements of the chase, that were pressed upon my acceptance. After some hesitation, I selected a pony that pleased me, and arming myself with bow and arrows, sallied forth upon the plain, to put into practice the hints that had been imparted to me in regard to hunting the bison. At first it was up-hill work; and my frantic endeavors to slide on the side of my pony and discharge an arrow from under his neck, caused my instructors no small merriment. After a severe fall—and I had many such—I would be assisted to my horse's back, and recommended to try it again, with as much coolness as if I had merely fallen from a chair.



The Buffalo Hunt.

Notwithstanding the many times I came to grief, in trying to wield bow and arrow, or lance, effectively, I kept persistently at it, and in a week's time I had become a somewhat expert horseman, and could shoot an arrow with tolerable accuracy. I now wished that buffaloes would be signaled as approaching, quite as ardently as did the warriors; but in the meantime, I persevered in my practice. One day it occurred to me that I should like to learn to throw a lasso, and procuring one, I coiled it, mounted, and went in search of some object on which to practice.

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By some mutability of fortune a donkey had strayed into our midst, and had remained with the tribe for many years. No one used him, but all considered it their privilege to tease the poor brute. He bore it calmly and with that fortitude which is a distinguishing trait of his species. Deeming him a very fair substitute for a buffalo, I gave my pony a sharp cut with the whip, and dropping the rein upon his neck, prepared to throw my lasso. My imaginary buffalo seemed to suspect that all was not right, and acting on his suspicions galloped away, not giving my intentions the benefit of the doubt. It was of no avail, however, for, urging my pony to increased speed, I was soon within range, and twirling the lasso around my head a few times, I launched it, directing its course, as nearly as my poor skill would permit, towards the donkey's head. It would certainly never have touched him had he pursued the direction in which he was then running. But his evil genius prompted him to turn, and, shaping his course so as to bisect mine at right angles, he raised his head, and, giving vent to one of those musical neighs (?) for which the animal is somewhat famous, rushed on in his mad career. Poor brute! the noose hovered over him a moment, like some bird of prey about to swoop down on its quarry, and then settled over his head and shoulders.

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My horse knew more about the use of this peculiar instrument than I did, for no sooner had the lasso passed over the head of the donkey than he planted his fore feet firmly on the ground, and braced his body to receive the shock. Before I was aware of anything, I felt a sharp jerk at my wrist, and the next moment I was sailing over my pony's head, and going in the direction of the donkey at a more rapid rate than was agreeable. I soon struck *terra firma*, but with such force that the concussion caused me to see more stars than I thought the heavens were capable of

containing. To add to my embarrassment, the rope had become fastened to my wrist, and in such a manner that I could not free myself. The donkey, recovering from the effect of the shock, started off at headlong speed, dragging my unresisting body after him. How long this novel journey would have continued I have no means of knowing had I not fortunately been rescued by a passing Indian. After an examination, I found that with the exception of torn clothing and a few scratches, I had come out of this adventure safely; but I never more had any desire to run amuck with donkeys.

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The Indian then explained the manner in which the lasso was thrown, and under his tuition I became somewhat of an adept in this novel art.

The following morning the signal from the look-out announced that the herd were in sight. Then there was hurrying to and fro, and mounting in hot haste. Indians were seen rushing frantically in every direction, whilst the greatest hilarity prevailed among the squaws. Horses were driven into the corrals and quickly bridled, whilst those who were to participate in the hunt were busy divesting themselves of all superfluous clothing. Some armed themselves with a bow and a few arrows, while some depended on their lances only. The party had by this time assembled in front of the lodge where Tonsaroyoo was standing giving the final instructions to the band. These were very brief, and as soon as he had finished speaking, everything being in readiness, we mounted our horses, and were off like a whirlwind.

Passing up the valley, we climbed the cliff and defiling around the narrow ledge of rock that guards this entrance to the village soon deployed upon the prairie. As we swept along over the plain on this glorious morning, my spirits rose, the blood coursed through my veins in rapid pulsations, and I felt as if I could have destroyed a herd of buffaloes single handed.

In these latitudes such is the purity of the air that one seems to be taking in at every breath the veritable elixir of life. Your spirits are buoyant, and all nature seems to be smiling and gay. As we journeyed we overtook the scouts, who were returning to apprise us of the exact location of the buffaloes. After making their report, they would wheel into line and sweep on with the main party.

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We had proceeded about twenty miles, when we reached a level stretch of prairie, and directly in front of us, at a distance of perhaps two miles was the herd quietly grazing, all unsuspecting of the danger that menaced them. It was not a very large drove, and they kept quite close together. It was the season when the buffaloes wandered off from the main herd in small bands, and the prairies were dotted for miles with these black clumps, like great dark splashes on a carpet of emerald.

The plan of attack was decided upon in council, and the band disposed of in a manner that would insure the complete and speedy extermination of our game. We were about to make a "surround." The warriors were divided into two columns, and taking opposite directions, drew themselves gradually around the herd at a distance of about a mile from them. We continued to deploy in this manner until a complete circle was formed, and then, at a given signal, we closed in upon the buffaloes, keeping our impatient steeds at a moderate pace.

The herd soon got the wind of the advancing enemy, and fled in a body in the greatest confusion. To the point where the buffaloes were aiming to cross our line, the horsemen were gathering, and forming in column, brandishing their weapons and yelling in the most frightful manner, by which means they turned the surging mass. Seeing themselves baffled at this point, they would rush off in an opposite direction, when they would again be met by a formidable column and again repulsed in utter confusion.

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By this time we had closed in from all directions, forming a continuous line that circled the throng like the deadly coils of the cobra. The buffaloes had become completely demoralized, and were eddying about in a crowded and confused mass, hooking and climbing upon each other. Now was the time for the onslaught. Tonsaroyoo, by whose side I was riding, placed the whistle to his lips and gave the signal.

Then followed a scene of wild confusion. The horsemen dashed upon the bewildered buffaloes with the rapidity of thought almost, using their lances and arrows with murderous effect. In the turmoil a cloud of dust was raised which in part obscured those of the band who did not immediately surround me. The excitement was intense, and soon all became one immense blur, in which hunters and buffaloes were indiscriminately mixed. I could see the Indians galloping their horses around the animals and driving the whizzing arrows or long lances to the hearts of their quarry.

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My own pony had penetrated deep into the herd, and with a sagacity that a long experience alone could develop, was laying his course straight for an enormous bull that was flanking the herd. Had *my* taste been consulted, I should certainly have declined to try conclusions with such an ugly customer, but there was no avoiding the encounter, and, selecting an arrow, I drew my bow and waited a favorable opportunity to send it through the bison.

On sped the pony, and in a few moments I was brushing the flank of the buffalo. At a glance I saw that he had been wounded and was tearing along, blind with rage. I let fly my arrow, which pierced his neck; its effect was only to increase his fury, and, wheeling round, he rushed on me with savage desperation. Never can I forget the sight as he bore down upon us. Infuriated with the wounds already received, his shaggy mane partly concealing his bloodshot eyes, and bellowing fiercely, he poised his head for a final charge. My horse tried to escape the onslaught, but we had penetrated into the main body, and our actions were impeded by the other buffaloes.

I concluded our destruction was inevitable, but, as a last resort, I had determined to leap to the

ground and trust to luck to lead me out of this dilemma.

As I was preparing to dismount, a lance lying upon the ground caught my sight, and I instantly changed my resolution. If I could secure the weapon all might yet be well. I determined to make the effort at all hazards, and throwing my arm into the sling that depended from the neck of my horse, I swung lightly from his back, and hanging by my arm and foot, made ready to grasp the lance with my disengaged arm. As we swept along I succeeded in securing it, and reseating myself, prepared to drive it deep into the side of the enraged bull. I had scarcely time to poise the instrument when the buffalo charged down on us like a whirlwind. Bracing myself as best I might, I pulled violently on the reins and threw my steed to one side, just in time to prevent his being gored to death, at the same time lunging out savagely at the animal. The shock was terrific, and I went whirling from my horse's back some twenty feet on the prairie. I was not so violently stunned but that I was quite conscious of the danger I was in of being trampled to death by the hoofs of the demoralized herd, and, gathered myself up in time to grasp the trailing lasso that was fastened to my pony, I was dragged far out on the prairie. Badly bruised, my skin lacerated and in places bleeding profusely, I felt in no condition to take an active part in the hunt; in fact, my unique experience was, I thought, sufficient to last me a lifetime.

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Riding at some distance from the *melee*, I had an excellent opportunity to watch the progress of the hunt. The slaughter continued with unabated fury. The plain was covered with dead and dying buffaloes. Horses could be seen galloping over the prairie riderless, while their dismounted masters were flying for their lives before the infuriated animals.

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Sometimes the serried ranks would open, and the blinded horsemen, so intent upon their prey, amidst the cloud of dust, were wedged and hemmed in among the crowding beasts, over whose backs they were obliged to leap for security, leaving their horses to the fate that might await them in the results of this wild and desperate war. Many were the bulls that turned upon their assailants and met them with desperate resistance, and many were the warriors who were dismounted and saved themselves by their superior running abilities. Some who were closely pursued by the bulls, would wheel suddenly around, and snatching the part of buffalo robe from their waists, throw it over the horns and eyes of the maddened animal, and darting to one side, drive an arrow or lance to its heart. Others dashed upon the prairies by the side of the affrighted beasts which had escaped from the throng, and closely escorting them for a few rods, bring down their hearts' blood in streams, and their huge carcasses upon the enameled turf.

In this way the whole herd was quickly annihilated. The war lasted perhaps thirty minutes, and resulted in the total destruction of the herd, which, with all their strength and fury, were doomed, like every beast, to fall before the destroying hands of mighty man.

I had sat trembling on my horse, and witnessed this extraordinary scene. Although I was not enabled to accurately estimate the number killed, yet I am sure several hundred buffaloes fell in this grand onslaught.

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After the battle the scene was curious in the extreme. The hunters were moving about amongst the dead and dying animals, leading their horses by their halters, and claiming their slain by the private marks upon their arrows, which they were drawing from the wounds in the animals' sides. A few buffaloes had the good fortune to escape, but, after wandering off on the prairie for some distance, they would stop, stand a while, looking around as if in bewilderment, then turning, as if bent on their own destruction, return to the herd, and mingling with the dead and dying, swell the slaughtered throng with their numbers.

When all was finished, and the arrows had been claimed, a general council was held, the Indians seated in a circle on the ground. The pipe was passed around, each taking a few whiffs.

It was decided to wait until the women and extra horses had arrived from the village, a messenger having been despatched to announce our success, and ordering the squaws to repair to the scene and carry the meat back to the encampment. We had not long to wait for the arrival of the women. They came in a gang, making the air resound with their yells of rejoicing. As soon as they came up they were greeted with disdainful silence by the assembled warriors, and Tonsaroyoo having issued a few directions, they fell to, and were soon deep in the mysteries of skinning and butchering the slain buffaloes. As soon as a carcass had been cut up, it was placed in a covering of the hide, and placed upon the pony's back waiting to receive it. As soon as one was loaded, an Indian boy took him in charge and led him off to the village.

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The plain presented a peculiar appearance, dotted here and there with the laden ponies returning to camp, and reminded me of a caravan on the African deserts, such as I had seen in books, more than anything else. The warriors soon rode off, leaving the women, boys, and dogs to complete the destruction.

Our entry into the village was an ovation. Conquering heroes could not have been more graciously received. During the next week all hands were engaged in a round of feasting and dancing, interspersed with religious ceremonies, and in some instances of self-immolation. No scene of the long series in which I was both actor and spectator, gave me a better idea of the Indian character. To fight, slaughter, prey, eat and sleep, seemed to be the end and aim of their existence. To outnumber his adversary and hence consummate his destruction, was the highest possibility of prowess. To bear torture without evincing the weakness of physical suffering was the sublimity of courage; and when death finally overtook them, to go to the happy hunting grounds well supplied with the implements that would produce carnal enjoyment was the apotheosis of enjoyment!

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CHAPTER XXI.

MRS. EASTMAN'S STORY CONTINUED.

I had now been five years among the Indians, and during that time my life was chiefly trials and hardships. Rest, a word unknown in my vocabulary. It would appear that I owed allegiance to no particular individual, but on the contrary, I was called upon to perform the most arduous tasks by man, woman, and child.

My labors in the field having come to a conclusion, I was inducted into the mysteries of curing and dressing skins of various animals, making moccasins and gathering berries for the winter stock.

During a period of three months rain had not fallen, and this fact gave rise to a peculiar ceremony, which I will briefly relate. The crops were suffering severely from the drought, and it was decided in council that the "rain makers" should invoke the clouds, and by a series of conjugations cause the heavens to open their floodgates. The women had become clamorous and implored the medicine-men to intercede for rain, that their corn patches, which were now turning pale and yellow, might not be withered and they be deprived of the customary annual festivity and the joyful occasion of the "roasting ears" and the "green corn dance."

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The complaints of the women were entertained, but these wise (?) men discreetly recommended caution and deliberation, lest by undue haste the Great Spirit might become incensed and defeat their endeavors. This stratagem was very pellucid, because the longer they delayed the formalities, of course the greater would be the chance of success; but the importunities of the women became daily more persistent, and the council was at length convened. The medicine-men assembled in all the bravery of their grotesque trappings, and the fires being lighted, a large quantity of wild sage and other aromatic herbs was thrown upon the flames, that their savory odors might ascend as a peace-offering to the Great Spirit.

Some twelve or fifteen young warriors volunteered to try their medicine and see if the clouds could not be made to yield their vapor by the charm of their eloquence. It was a dreadful alternative, as, failing to produce any result, they suffered everlasting disgrace at the hands of the entire tribe. The preliminaries having been arranged, the candidates were drawn by lot and a day assigned to each one to lift his voice on high and persuade the rain to descend. The celebrant took up his position on the top of the council lodge, while below the worthy doctors continued to burn their incense, and with song, prayers, and incantations, commanded the clouds to obey them.

Wah-kee (the shield), ascended the wigwam at sunrise and made elaborate preparations to frighten the clouds into obeying him. After indulging in war-whoops, brandishing his lance, shield and tomahawk, and going through various other absurd performances, he subsided and betook himself to counting his mystery beads. The whole village had assembled, and were howling lustily for his success. Not a cloud appeared—the day was calm and hot; and when the sun declined behind the mountains, he descended from his exalted position, and withdrew with a crestfallen air.

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He returned to his lodge a sadder if not a wiser man, disgraced and with no prospect of ever attaining to the dignity of a medicine man.

The next morning the performance was repeated, Om-pah (the Elk), saying that his importunities would certainly be heard. He was quite nude, and his body besmeared with yellow clay. A beautiful shield was displayed on his left arm, and his right hand grasped a long lance. The skin of a raven adorned his head. Shield and lance were flourished, but in vain. Not a cloud obscured the brightness of the noon-day sun. The squaws were crying, and the corn was withering at its roots.

War-rah-pa (the beaver), was the next, but he, like the others, spent his time in vain; and Wak-a-dah-me took the stand the next morning. He was much more gaily attired than any of his predecessors. In addition to a shield ornamented with "red chains of lightning," he carried in his left hand a bow and single arrow. The concourse was as great as on any previous day. Striking an attitude, he tossed up a feather to ascertain the course of the wind, then turning to the mob below, began a lengthy harangue, something after the following manner:

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"Apaches! Children of the Sun!—You behold me here a sacrifice. I shall this day relieve you of your distress and bring joy to your lodges, or I shall live among the dogs and old women for the remainder of my days. My friends, you saw which way my feather flew. I shall hold my shield in that direction, and the lightning will draw a great cloud, and this arrow, which is feathered with the quill of the white swan will make a hole in it.

"Warriors! this opening in the lodge at my feet shows me the medicine-men. They are seated in a circle and are crying to the Great Spirit above who commands the sun and clouds. Three days they have sat there. Have they done aught to relieve your distress? Om-pah tried and failed, because on his head was the raven. It flies *above* the storm. War-rah-pa is the beaver, and he lives *under* the *water*. How could he succeed? My friends, I see you are in great distress, and nothing has yet been done. This shield belonged to my father, the Mad Bull. It was taken from a black cloud, which will come over us to-day. I am the son of my father, and will surely bring you relief. I have done."

Thus flourished Wakadahme, alternately addressing the clouds and the people.

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It so chanced that as he was speaking, a small cloud appeared on the horizon, and as it approached grew larger, until the heavens were overcast. Then drawing his bow to its utmost tension, he let fly the arrow, which sped up into the gathering blackness, and was lost to view. Presently the sky was illumined with a vivid flash, and peal upon peal of thunder followed in rapid succession. The crowd dispersed, running to their lodges in the greatest confusion; but the great warrior who had brought about this happy state of things remained at his post, strutting around the apex of the lodge in all the might and majesty of his new made glory. Even rain could not drive him away from the scene of his triumph. There he stood, the moist cynosure of all eyes.

After this all was joy and gladness. Wakadahme was loaded down with honors, and every chief in the tribe was anxious to have him select one of his daughters for a wife. He accommodated six of them, but prudential reasons interposed between him and the seventh. From this time forth he was an honored and puissant warrior, chief, and mystery man.

Numerous amusements were indulged in by the tribe, and all had for their end and aim some gambling operation. The youths had an exhibition of arrow shooting which they called the "game of the arrow."

Those most distinguished in this exercise assembled on the prairie a little distance from the village, and each one having paid his "entrance fee," such as a shield, robe, pipe, or other article, would step forward to the mark, and, selecting ten arrows, proceed to shoot them in the air in rapid succession. The one who could get the greatest number up before the *first* fell to the ground claimed the "pool" and went away in the best of spirits, displaying his gains as he journeyed through the village.

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The older braves passed their time in horse racing. This species of sport varies but little among the Indians from that which obtains among civilized communities. A track is mapped out upon the level prairie, and a couple of lances, from which pennants are streaming, are planted firmly in the ground at a point which denotes the goal. The riders start from the upper end of the course, and plying the whip with all their vigor, come thundering down the course with the speed of the wind. A judge is appointed whose decision is irrevocable, and grouped around him are the spectators intent on making their bets and watching the progress of this tournament of speed.

Occasionally sham fights are inaugurated, when brave meets brave in all the fierceness of battle array to go through the motions of Indian warfare, circling around the foe, or bunching together, come down on the enemy with startling suddenness, discharging a cloud of arrows, then, wheeling short around, retrace their steps and prepare to receive the shock of their enemy's advance.

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One day a messenger brought the news that buffaloes had made their appearance on the plain, and a numerous party was at once formed to go in their pursuit. After having been gone about two days they returned laden with the fruits of victory, and throwing the meat down in one pile, issued their orders to have it cured at once.

This arduous task was delegated to the women, and in a very short time poles were planted in every direction. The meat was dressed and then cut in long strips of about a quarter of an inch in thickness, and, being hung over the lines, was left to dry in the sunshine. When it is cured the buffalo meat becomes *tasajo*, and in this state may be preserved for a great length of time. It is cured without salt; in fact, the Indians rarely if ever use this condiment, which is so essential to the civilized white. This seems to be accounted for by the fact that they use very little vegetable food. Hence, during my captivity, I became quite reconciled to the absence of salt, and for months after my return to the whites did not feel any desire to use it. So strong is the force of habit.

It had been announced that during the annual religious ceremonies soon to commence, we would have the pleasure of entertaining a band of "club" Apaches, who would participate in the festivities, and preparations of the most elaborate character were made for their reception and entertainment.

Of all my experience in the character of a captive, these were, perhaps, the most shocking. Never shall I forget the terrible ordeal of that bloody week, when human gore ran like water, and it seemed a miracle that such a band of fiends were not swept off the face of the earth!

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CHAPTER XXII.

FEASTS, FASTS, AND FACTS.

This chapter is to be a faithful description of mystery, hocus-pocus, *vou-doo*, and Indian superstition, concrete and abstract. The entire ceremonial of Indian worship has for its groundwork the basest and most groveling superstition. All events in any way out of the ordinary run of human affairs are directly traced to the Good or Evil Spirit.

If their affairs are in any way confused, or do their war parties come to grief, the misfortune is laid at the door of O-kee-hee-de (the Evil Spirit), and when fortune smiles upon them, and bountiful harvests, game, scalps, and victories are theirs, it is directly attributable to the influence of the Great Spirit.

An infant's knowledge begins by the inculcation of this proposition, and during its lifetime, existence is enjoyable or the reverse, according as the Good or Evil Spirit smiles on him. In this fact is displayed the resemblance between a savage *fetich* and the ideal Christian religion. It is the distinction that exists between the bud and full-blown flower,—a wild, barbarous groping after the perfected civilized idea. The Indian has his ideas of a heaven and a purgatory, but they are carnal and material. As he lives in this world, so he proposes to exist in the world hereafter. The happy hunting grounds are merely a repetition of his present life, only in those blissful elysian fields a Good Spirit wills that game shall always be in abundance, and hunting facilities inexhaustible. Contrary to the faith that obtains among Christians, the Indian maintains that the Good Spirit inhabits the realms of the Evil Spirit, while his opposite, the Evil One, haunts the domains of the blest. This curious, not to say absurd state of affairs, is accounted for in the following manner:

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It is maintained that an Indian suffers for his crimes only for a length of time commensurate with the sins committed. Hence, while professing their conviction in a future administration of rewards and punishments, they also maintain that a very Judas of his tribe will, after expiating his sins, enjoy the fullest delights of his more upright companions. Thus it becomes very necessary, in their opinion, that the Good Spirit should meet them in purgatory, and by word and act increase their sufferings and bring them to a realizing sense of the power of him whom they have offended; while, on the other hand, the Bad Spirit roams through their Paradise still tempting the happy. Those who have gone to the regions of punishment, they believe will be tortured for a time proportioned to their offences, and then, being transferred to the land of the happy, they are again liable to the temptations of the Evil Spirit, and answerable again at a future time for their new offences. It will be seen that this scheme of salvation is rather crude and not as satisfactory in its details as one might desire.

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In regard to the topographical positions of these two places—heaven and hell—little can be ascertained. As near as I could learn, the offenders inhabited a county lying far to the north, where snow and ice were the minor concomitants of a bleak and barren land; whilst they suppose the happy hunting grounds to be in the region of perpetual sunshine, where every prospect is of the most charming character, and only the keenest enjoyment is experienced; where buffaloes and other Indian luxuries abound.

To such lengths was superstition carried, that the young warriors of the tribe deemed no tortures, however brutal or sanguinary, too severe that would by their endurance gain them the admittance to this favored region; and to this end, annual feasts and religious ceremonies were instituted, that the appalling cruelty of the rites might well make the stoutest heart tremble, and the most valiant spirit quake with fear.

The Apaches were now on the eve of one of these festivals, and those who aspired to be considered as braves, and to establish a reputation for endurance under pain and suffering, were making minute and careful preparations to endure the infliction creditably.

There was to be a series of performances under the sole supervision of one grand master of ceremonies. This worthy was the head medicine of the nation, and was looked up to with a species of veneration verging upon adoration. The rites were to be inaugurated by a grand dance in the open air. The ground selected for this performance was immediately in front of the medicine lodge, and embraced an area of about half an acre. Previous to the inception of the ceremonies, a number of the women were set at work with large wooden mallets, pounding the turf, which was done in order to make the ground hard, smooth and level. As soon as this was accomplished, a curb was erected in the centre of the space by driving stakes in the ground in the form of a circle, just leaving sufficient space between each one to admit of a free passage of air. The curb rose to a height of about three feet, the top being covered by stretching a buffalo robe over the stakes. Within this enclosure was placed a small stone altar, on which burned the sacred flame. Under no circumstances was the flame allowed to be extinguished. In the event of its ceasing to burn, it would have been considered an ill omen, and in order to propitiate the Good Spirit, it would have become necessary to sacrifice a female captive.

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All was now in readiness, and on the following morning Mahtocheega and the chiefs of the nation assembled in the medicine lodge preparatory to commencing the "death dance." Sixteen young men participated in the dance. They stood to one side in a group, isolated from the crowd.

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They were decked out in the most gorgeous trappings, each one personating some animal which they imitated as closely as possible, both in action and sound.

Beginning by circling around the curb in a measured tramp to the sound of the Indian drums and rattles, they gradually accelerated their pace until they were going at full speed, meanwhile indulging in the most frightful yells, groans, whoops, and cries. This was kept up without intermission for, perhaps, fifteen minutes, when the medicine man sounded a shrill blast on his whistle, and, as if by magic, the performers dropped upon "all fours" and began to practice the distinctive peculiarity of the animals they personated. Their actions were a source of considerable amusement to the bystanders, and each actor was applauded vociferously when by some particular gesture, or trick, he faithfully portrayed the habits of the animal he represented. Some of these actions were of a very gross, not to say revolting character. In the heat of the excitement a wild scream startled the bystanders, and soon the women were rushing in every direction, seemingly in the most abject terror.

Pursuing them was a hideous monster entirely nude, his body being blackened with charcoal and bear's grease until it shone like ebony; his face was marked with a profusion of white rings about an inch in diameter, and around his mouth were frightful indentures which closely resembled canine teeth. In addition to his hideous appearance, he gave the most frightful shrieks as he dashed through the crowd. This unearthly creature carried in his hand a staff of about six feet in length, with a red ball at the end of it, which he pushed along the ground in front of him as he ran. All eyes, save those of the braves engaged in the dance, were upon him as he dashed on in pursuit of the women. They fled in the wildest disorder falling over each other in their frantic endeavors to elude the monster's grasp.

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The master of ceremonies now interfered, and advancing from his position beside the chief, ran up to where the women were struggling with the demon, and, thrusting his medicine pipe before the black monster, held him immovable under its charm. This action enabled the females to get safely out of his reach, and when free from danger, although their hearts still beat with the excitement, they soon became calm, and, seeing that he was ignominiously subjugated by the charm of the all-potent pipe, indulged in the most extravagant laughter, and shouts of applause at his sudden defeat, and at the ridiculous posture in which he was held. They presented a striking picture as they stood there face to face—the old man standing erect, his face tremulous with suppressed emotion, while his eyes gleamed with rage and hatred. The evil spirit on the other hand, cowed, and trembling, seemed transfixed with terror. At intervals he would make an effort to break the spell, and darting to one side attempt to break off in the direction of the prairie; but the ever-vigilant chief was at his side in a twinkling and holding the potent charm *to his nose*, reduce him to instant obedience. Thus they stood, the one with his body painted black and representing the Evil One, frowning everlasting vengeance on the other, who sternly gazed him back with a look of exultation and contempt, as he held him in check and powerless under the influence of his magic charm.

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When the superior power of the chief had been fully tested and acknowledged, and the women had been allowed ample time to remove themselves to a safe distance and place innumerable barriers between themselves and this fiendish monster, the pipe was gradually withdrawn from before him, and he was once more allowed to follow the dictates of his low and bestial mind. No sooner did he feel himself free from this constraining influence than he dashed into the center of the group of dancers, and attacking one of the young men who was dressed in the guise of a buffalo, *hivung ee a wahkstia chee a nahks tammee ung s towa; ee ung ee aht ghwat ee o nungths tcha ho a tummee osct no ah ughstom ah hi en ah nohxt givi aht gahtch gun ne*.

After this performance he visited three others in succession, and indulged in antics of a light character, that elicited shouts of laughter and rounds of applause. The Indians considered the strict observance of this particular ceremony as highly important, and calculated to be of great benefit in attracting game to their vicinity in the coming season.

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During the scene Okeehede had become quite exhausted by his exercise, and seemed to be anxiously looking around for some feasible means of escape. The women had by this time overcome the fear which his entrance had caused, and now gathered about him in shoals, poking him with bits of stick, throwing stones at his body, and giving expression to their dislike in various ways that suggested themselves on the spur of the moment. At length, one more courageous than the rest gathered a handful of yellow clay, and drawing quite near, awaited her opportunity when the fiend's attention was directed to another quarter, then dashing up to him, emptied the contents of her hands over his body. The change was magical; the yellow clay was attracted and held by the grease with which his body was besmeared, turning his color from black to bright yellow. He seemed to become quite heartbroken at this signal disgrace, and losing control of his feelings, commenced crying vehemently, when, as quick as thought, a fearless young maiden made a frantic clutch at the magic, ball-tipped wand. She was successful beyond her most sanguine anticipations, and flew through the crowd, bearing the trophy high above her head. The other women gathered around her, beseeching her to let them break the wand, and thus end the spell. Their entreaties were at last acceded to, and the stick was broken into fine bits, which were hurled at their whilom owner. His power was now gone; his strength also, and, gathering his energies for one grand and final effort, he plunged headlong towards the prairie with a howling mob of women at his heels. As he struggled along his movements were impeded by every known device, and at each fall he was set upon by the enraged and triumphant females, who exulted in his ignominious downfall, supplementing their jeers with blows from sticks, stones and whips, until he at length escaped by diving into the underbrush that grew at the base of the hills, and disappeared from view. The dance had by this time come to an end, and preparations

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were made for the commencement of the cruelties which were about to take place within the lodge.

The medicine chief, who acted as master of ceremonies, approached Mahtocheeega, and made a requisition for musicians, and after a brief consultation he gave orders to have two of the female captives perform this arduous and monotonous task. Zoe and myself were chosen, and we were at once ushered within the sacred precincts of the lodge. We were the only women who were permitted to view the scenes which I am about to relate. Would to God I had been spared the revolting spectacle!

As we entered, the candidates for the cruelties were about taking their places in spaces assigned them, as also the chiefs and doctors of the tribe, whose duty it was to look on, bear witness to, and decide upon the comparative degree of fortitude with which the young men sustain themselves in this most excruciating ordeal. The chiefs situated themselves on one side of the lodge, and opposite them were seated the musicians. The medicine chief took up his position in the center of the circle, near a small fire, with his big pipe in his hands. Gravely filling it with k'neck k'nick, he lighted it at the flame, and began puffing great clouds in the faces of the aspirants, that the Great Spirit might give them strength to bear their tortures manfully. Directly under the aperture in the roof of the lodge was a curious arrangement of buffalo and human skulls, which were divided into two parcels. Placed over them at an elevation of about five feet was a delicate scaffold made of four posts, not larger than a willow rod. In the crotches of these poles were placed lateral rods of about the same thickness, and resting on these transversely were a number of still more delicate sticks. On the center of this frame was a small stone altar, from which issued the sacred fire. Immediately under the frame on the ground was placed a knife and a bundle of splints, which were kept in readiness for the infliction of the cruelties which I shall endeavor to explain.

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From the top of the lodge depended a number of cords, which, passing through the roof, were held by men on the outside, who, on a given signal, were to suspend the victims between heaven and earth.

An attendant now advanced to our side of the structure, bearing in his arms two curious looking objects, which, on investigation, proved to be sacks containing in each about two gallons of water. These were articles of superstitious regard, and held in great veneration by the Indians. They were constructed of the skin of the buffalo's neck, and most elaborately sewed together in the form of a large tortoise, with a bunch of eagle's quills appended to act the part of tail. Accompanying each was a drumstick, and, with a few directions how to use it, he left us.

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After a brief incantation, accompanied by more vigorous puffs at the big pipe, the order was issued to remove the scaffold. The skulls were placed on posts at the back of the lodge, and two stalwart savages took up their positions in the center of the open space, one with the knife in his hand, the other holding the splints.

One by one the candidates advanced; their frames were greatly emaciated by the fasting, thirsting, and wakefulness to which they had subjected themselves during four days. Placing themselves on their hands and feet, or otherwise, as was best suited for the performance of the operation, they were grasped roughly by the attendants, and an inch or more of flesh taken up between the thumb and finger of the man who held the knife.

The knife had been ground sharply on both sides, and then notched, so that the effect of pushing it through the skin might be made as painful as possible. As soon as the incision was made, the attendant ran a skewer through the still quivering flesh. The cord was then lowered from the roof and fastened to the splints, when, the signal being given, the cords were tightened and the victim was suspended in mid-air. More splints were passed through his shoulders, arms, thighs, and legs.

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In some instances, they remained upon the ground until this painful operation was completed. The time consumed in preparing the victims for suspension was about five minutes. As the body dangled in mid-air, and while the blood was streaming down the victim's sides, the bystanders would grasp at the body, and hang upon the splints each man's shield, bow, and quiver. In some instances, a buffalo's skull was attached to his lower limbs, to prevent the struggling which would otherwise have taken place, to the disadvantage of the sufferer.

When these were adjusted, the body was raised higher until the weight swung clear. In this plight they became a fearful sight to look upon. The flesh, to support their bodies with the additional weights attached thereto, was raised some eight inches by the skewers, and their heads sinking forward on their breasts, or thrown backward in a much more frightful condition, was a sight that made one's blood curdle, and the heart turn sick at the ghastly, bloody spectacle. The fortitude with which the victims bore this torture almost surpasses belief. As the knife was thrust through the flesh not a muscle moved, and some even called attention to their faces, and challenged the judges to detect the first symptom of weakness or faint-heartedness.

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Truly it was a fearful sight, and as the knife *ripped* through the flesh, it was more than I could bear, and, throwing down the drumstick, I give way to the most violent grief. It was not until I was severely admonished to continue my task, that I could sufficiently control my emotion and resume the horrid thrum thrum of the monotonous music.

As soon as a victim was thoroughly suspended, a number of demons in human guise clustered around him, devising means that would make this exquisite agony more intense. One would advance with a long pole in his hand and commence turning the bleeding body, slowly at first, but the motion would be gradually accelerated until the victim would cry out in bitterness of spirit

and in tones the most lamentable and heart-rending that the human voice is capable of producing; appealing to the Great Spirit and beseeching him not to forsake his servant in this, his hour of severest agony.

He is turned faster and faster. There is no hope for escape; not the slightest respite, until by fainting he is relieved from his tormentors, and left to hang, apparently a lifeless corpse. When it has been ascertained that he is, as they term it, "entirely dead," his torture ceases, and there hangs suspended by cords, all that remains of a form that a few hours since was instinct with life and vigor. His medicine bag, which he has clung to all through the trying ordeal with the tenacity of despair, has dropped to the ground. Even this potent charm deserts its owner in his hour of greatest need, when, if at any time, its supposed supernatural protection should be most felt.

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The signal is now given to the men on the outside of the lodge to lower the body, and he is gently laid upon the ground. In this helpless condition he lies, looking like some mass of putrefaction that has just been removed from a charnel-house. During this time he is said to be in the keeping of the Great Spirit, whom he trusts will protect, and finally give him strength to get up and walk away. After lying some time on the ground, an attendant removes the splints from the breasts and shoulders, thereby disengaging him from the cords by which he has been suspended, but the others, with the weights attached, are suffered to remain imbedded in the bleeding wounds.

As soon as consciousness returns he attempts to move. No one is allowed to assist him or offer him aid, as he is now in the enjoyment of one of the most exalted privileges that Apaches can lay claim to—that of trusting his life to the keeping of the Great Spirit. Presently he crawls away, dragging his weights after him, which, as they clatter over the hard earthen floor of the lodge, make a mournful accompaniment to his groans and sobs. He creeps to another part of the lodge; where a savage sits in grim silence awaiting his coming. In his hand is a hatchet, and immediately in front of him is a dried buffalo skull. The sufferer draws near, and, holding up the little finger of his left hand, makes a short speech, and calling upon the Great Spirit to witness his self-sacrifice, unflinchingly lays the doomed finger on the skull. One quick, sharp stroke by the Indian who wields the hatchet and the finger drops from the hand—a sacrifice to a fanatic's zeal.

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No bandages are applied to the fingers, nor are any arteries taken up; in fact, no attention whatever of a surgical character is paid to the wounds, lacerations, and bruises. They are left for the "Great Spirit to cure."

It is rather remarkable that the bleeding is not so profuse as might be expected from the severity of the torture, and soon ceases, probably from the fact of their extreme exhaustion and debility; the want of sustenance and sleep, checks the natural circulation, and is at the same time an admirable preparation for the tortures, and enables them to bear the infliction without the same degree of pain that might, under other circumstances, result in inflammation and death. During these cruel scenes, the chiefs and dignitaries of the tribe are looking on unmoved, and by taking mental notes of the way in which the victim bears this terrible torture, decide who are the hardiest and stoutest hearted, who can hang the longest by his flesh without fainting, and who will be the soonest up after he is cut down. In this way they judge of the physical capacity of the young braves to bear hunger, fatigue, and suffering; and to those who acquit themselves the most worthily is entrusted the leadership of "forlorn hopes," war parties resolved on desperate enterprises, etc., etc.

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This scene was enacted during a whole day, and in that time some forty or fifty young men went through the agonies of suspension and amputation. All the while the din and clatter was undiminished. Did we but relax our efforts for a moment, a brawny savage was at our side, and by word and blow commanded us to recommence.

What with the physical and mental fatigue caused by this continuous and seemingly everlasting thrumming, joined to the horrid sights, sounds and emotions to which we were subjected, and the revolting and bloody nature of the drama, it seemed as if we were under the influence of a horrid nightmare. As if we had suddenly been wafted away in the arms of some hideous genii to realms of darkness, and were maliciously compelled to be the unwilling spectators of scenes which even at this day, the bare remembrance of, causes the blood to chill with horror and the frame to vibrate with agony at their recollection. God grant that such cruelties may soon disappear off the face of the earth, *together with the actors and instigators of these horrible rites!*

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CHAPTER XXIII.

THE WAR PARTY.

The following morning found me entirely occupied with my new plan of escape, and I lost no time in gaining such information as I could, concerning Stonhawon's intentions respecting his projected expedition.

By making a few cautious inquiries of some of the warriors whom I knew to be favorably disposed towards me, I learned that the party would probably depart within three days. The first point necessary to the success of my plan was to obtain the consent of Wakometkla, and this I feared would be no easy task. After considering the matter fully, I concluded that my best course would be first to get Stonhawon's permission to accompany the party, and, if possible, induce him to intercede for me with the old medicine man.

To the lodge of this redoubtable chief I accordingly bent my steps, and, on approaching it, found him seated without, engaged in conversation with several of the older warriors. Not daring to interrupt their conference, I remained at a little distance until the interview was ended. From the few sentences I overheard I concluded that the chief was unfolding his plans or some portion of them to the principal warriors of his party. Directly the council seemed to be over, and the warriors separated, leaving the chief seated as before at the entrance to his lodge. I was about to approach him and proffer my request, when Hissodecha, the renegade, suddenly made his appearance, and walking directly up to Stonhawon addressed him as follows:

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"My brother is going on the war-path?"

"Yes, Hissodecha," said the chief; "I am weary of this idleness, and my young men are impatient and clamor to be led against the Arapahoes, who have invaded our territory and cut off several of our hunting parties. I have therefore determined to take out a strong party and strike a blow that will teach these cowardly horse thieves a lesson!"

"Stonhawon," said Hissodecha, "it is my wish that we should be friends, and that the ill-feeling which has existed between us and our young men should cease. For this reason I have come to offer you my services on your expedition as a volunteer, and if you accept my offer, I will join your party with my entire band and serve under your orders. Let my brother speak. I await his decision."

While Hissodecha was speaking, I observed a gratified expression upon the countenance of Stonhawon, and I saw that he would gladly avail himself of the renegade's offer. But why Hissodecha should make so unusual a proposition puzzled me extremely, and I waited anxiously to hear the remainder of their conversation.

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As the renegade ceased speaking, Stonhawon arose in silence, filled and lighted his pipe and passed it to Hissodecha, who took a few whiffs and returned it to the chief. The latter followed his example, and then, emptying the pipe, he returned it to its case of fawn skin, gaily decorated with the quills of the porcupine stained in bright colors, and spoke as follows:

"Hissodecha, your words are good; you are a great brave, and you shall ride with me on the war-path. With your aid I shall surely be successful, and when we return in triumph, who shall deny to the friend of Stonhawon a seat in the council? I know my brother's wish, and it shall yet be gratified. Now, let us assemble our warriors and make ready for departure, as I wish to start before sunrise to-morrow."

To this the renegade yielded a ready assent, adding that his party could be ready to leave in an hour if necessary. He then said:

"I must ask my brother one favor, and that is that Tahteckadahair may accompany our party."

"Why does Hissodecha ask this?" said the chief, looking at me in surprise; for, on hearing my name mentioned, I had drawn nearer. "Does my brother not know that no one but Wakometkla can grant his request?"

"Because," said Hissodecha, "if Stonhawon asks the medicine chief, he will not refuse; but were I to make such a request, it would be in vain."

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Stonhawon reflected for a moment and then addressed me so abruptly that for an instant I was confused and unable to make a reply.

"Tahteckadahair," said he, "why do you wish to join the war party which I am about to take out?"

I was endeavoring to frame a reply when the renegade answered for me.

"The young man is tired," he said, "of being left in the village with the squaws and old men while the other young braves are going to war or to hunt and winning scalps and plunder. He thinks that he should be given the same privileges as others since he has been regularly adopted into the tribe, and I think his request is a reasonable one and should be granted."

I now added my persuasions to those of Hissodecha, and Stonhawon finally said that if Wakometkla's consent could be gained he would have no objection to my forming one of his party. He also said that he would speak to the medicine chief and use his influence to get his consent to my making my first appearance as a warrior.

He was as good as his word, and a few hours later I saw him enter the temple, evidently in search of the old man. Hissodecha was confident that his request would be granted, and I accordingly busied myself, under his direction, in preparing to make my *debût* as a Camanche brave on the war-path. The renegade easily supplied me with the necessary weapons and equipments from his own stock, and I soon found myself provided with a long steel-pointed lance, adorned with a crimson pennon, and a sort of battle-axe of an ancient pattern, evidently the spoil

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of some Mexican hacienda.

Besides these a war bow, a quiver of arrows, their points dipped in the subtle poison used by the Camanches, and a tomahawk and scalping-knife were given me. These completed my offensive equipments.

For defense, besides all these, I received a circular shield made of the tough hide of the buffalo bull stretched upon a wooden frame, and dried and hardened until it was almost of the consistency of iron. To provide me with a horse was the next thing in order, and this did not promise to be very difficult, as more than two thousand mustangs were grazing upon the plain.

The renegade, however, was not easily suited in his choice of a horse. Thorough horse jockeys as all the Camanches are, Hissodecha seemed the sharpest of the tribe in this particular. Of this fact I had become aware long before, for in the races which the Indians so frequently indulged in, he was almost invariably the winner, thus showing that he possessed rare knowledge and judgment of the points of a good horse.

On this occasion I began to think that he would exhaust the supply before he found one to his mind, but after rejecting about forty for one fault or another, most of which blemishes I was entirely unable to discover, he fixed upon a large piebald mustang as the one who should have the honor of bearing me upon my first war-path.

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Leading the horse back towards the village, we soon reached the spot where the warriors who were to form the expedition had already picketed their horses for the night, so as to be ready for an early start on the morrow. Staking my new acquisition out upon the plain, we returned to the lodge, and my strange friend, handing me a hair bridle and a buffalo robe and leathern girth, told me to get some food and return to his lodge in an hour, and he would "paint" me for the war-path. I was too much excited to eat much, and my simple meal was soon dispatched.

On entering the temple, I had looked around apprehensively, expecting to meet Wakometkla, and rather dreading to encounter him, feeling uncertain what sort of a reception I would meet with. The old medicine man, however, was not to be seen, and I wandered through the various apartments with which I had become so familiar during the long years of my captivity, wondering if this was really to be my last look at them, or if my desperate scheme was to result in failure, and end in my being brought back, perhaps to torture and death.

It was now time for me to return to Hissodecha, and I started to leave the temple for that purpose. Crossing the mystery chamber, I was about to ascend the ladder, when a tall form suddenly emerged from the obscurity of a recess in the wall, and Wakometkla stood before me. The old man seemed strangely moved for one of his stern nature and practical stoicism. Taking me by the hand, he led me to the center of the room, where the light of the sacred fire enabled him to more plainly discern my features, and gazed upon me for a moment without speaking. At length he spoke in a low tone, unlike his usual sonorous accents:

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"So my son is not content to remain in peace and safety with me here, but longs to go forth in search of adventure, and to emulate the deeds of the foolish young braves, who imagine that they are already great warriors?"

I was at a loss what to reply, but managed to mutter a few words expressive of my desire to take part in at least one war party, and assured him that I would be certain to return in safety.

"You cannot be sure of that;" said the old man, in what seemed to me a sad tone, "we cannot control our fate; but as you wish to go you shall have your wish. At Stonhawon's request I have given my consent, and I shall sacrifice to Quetzalcoatl for your speedy and safe return. Now go and complete your preparations, for you have no time to lose."

So saying, he turned and left the apartment without another word.

At this moment, despite my ardent longing to escape from an existence that was loathsome to me, and return to my own people, I could not avoid a feeling of regret at the idea of parting from this noble specimen of his race, to whom I was indebted for my life, and for the many acts of kindness which had rendered my captivity endurable. But the measure of regret I felt was not sufficient to turn me from my purpose, and remembering my appointment with Hissodecha, I hastened to fulfill it.

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In crossing the open square before the temple, I met Stonhawon, who informed me that the party would start at daybreak, and warned me to be in readiness. Assuring him that there was no danger of my forgetting it, I hurried to the lodge of the renegade, whom I found in no very amiable humor at my delay. On explaining the cause of my detention, his ill temper was abated, and he quickly proceeded to prepare me for my appearance in my new rôle of an Indian warrior. Stripping me entirely, he invested me with a new pair of leggings and mocassins; leaving me naked to the waist. Producing a number of little packets containing pigments of various colors, he commenced operations by painting my face, neck and breast blood red, and my arms and the rest of my person that was exposed in alternate bands of black and yellow. Upon my breast he delineated with considerable skill the figure of a grizzly bear; upon my forehead a star, and across my face narrow stripes of black. My arms he encircled with black and white rings at regular intervals, and then laying aside his colors, held up before me a small mirror, that I might view the picture I presented. My contemplation of myself satisfied me that I made about as hideous looking a savage as any in the village—but of that the reader can judge for himself from the accompanying picture, which is a very accurate representation of me as I then appeared. Hissodecha finished his work by saturating my hair, which reached nearly to my waist, with a mixture of oil and some black coloring, which rendered my appearance more savage than ever.

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He then bound about my head a narrow fillet or band of scarlet cloth, and placed in it two feathers or plumes stained blue. He then stood off and viewed me for a moment, and pronounced my toilet complete, with the exception of a few ornaments. These he soon provided in the shape of a pair of bracelets of roughly beaten gold. My necklace of silver, which Wakometkla had placed upon my neck when he first took me in charge, I still wore, and the renegade, surveying his work with some complacency, remarked that no young brave of the party would present a finer or more warlike appearance from the Indian point of view than myself. He then presented me with a fine *serape* for protection against the weather, and advising me to get what sleep I could, dismissed me for the night, bidding me lie down in his lodge upon some skins. My excitement, however, was so great, that I found it impossible to sleep, I was impatient for the dawn, that I might be in motion, and leaving my hated valley prison, as I fondly hoped, for the last time.

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The hours dragged wearily away, and it seemed as if the morning would never come; but at last a faint glimmer of light in the east showed that the time for action had come. I started up, and taking my simple horse furniture, made my way to where the horses were picketed. I found many of the warriors already astir and lending their horses to the water. Joining them, I had soon attended to the wants of my charger, bridled him, and snapping the buffalo robe upon his back, I mounted him and rode back to the lodge of Hissodecha. At the same time he emerged from the lodge in all the full glory of his war paint. His horse had already been brought up by one of his band, and advising me to eat as hearty a meal as possible, he mounted and rode down to where the warriors were assembling. Hastily devouring a few mouthfuls of *tasajo*, I speedily followed him, and although but a few moments had elapsed, found the party almost ready to start.

The entire population of the village had by this time assembled to see us off, and I found myself the subject of some very flattering remarks as I rode through the throngs of women, children, and dogs, while immediately surrounding the war-party were grouped all the male members of the community who were not of the expedition. The renegade had directed me to attach myself to his band, and I accordingly did so, being received with great cordiality by the younger braves, who complimented me on my warlike aspect and fine equipments. Stonhawon, who had been holding a hurried consultation with Tonsaroyoo, who stood aloof as though not wishing to compromise his dignity by evincing any interest in an expedition which he did not lead, now rode up and gave the signal for departure. Instantly the band, numbering about five hundred warriors, wheeled, and forming with the rapidity of thought in single file, the only formation used on the march by the prairie Indians, rode off at a rapid pace down the valley, amid the shouts and yells of those we left behind. By this time the sun had fully risen, and on looking back I could see upon the summit of the temple the usual group of priests and their assistants, and among them I could plainly distinguish the tall figure of Wakometkla. I fancied that I could see him wave his hand as if in adieu, but it may have been only fancy, for the distance was too great to decide with certainty.

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As we rode rapidly along, I noted every object rendered familiar by my long residence in the valley with a peculiar interest, for I hoped that I was looking upon the well-known scene for the last time.

It was a glorious morning, and the exhilaration of the rapid motion, as my horse bore me along with proud, springy step, seemed to increase my strength, and I experienced a buoyancy of spirits and a vigor of body I had never known before. I felt strangely hopeful and exultant—in fact it seemed as if I were already free.

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Riding rapidly we soon reached the valley's lower extremity, and passing around the face of the cliff upon the narrow ledge described in a previous chapter, we crossed the crest of the mountain range, and descended by a zig-zag trail to the plain below.

Our route lay directly across the desert to the eastward, and it was well into the afternoon before we had passed it and reached the great grass prairie beyond. On reaching the prairie our course was deflected to the north, and about sundown we halted at a spring known as the "*Ojo Caliente*," which the leaders of the party had evidently selected as our camping ground for the night. The order to halt once given, we went into bivouac with marvelous celerity. Our horses were picketed in a wide circle far out upon the plain, as the gramma grass there is longer and more luxuriant than in the immediate neighborhood of the springs. Stripping our animals of their equipments, we bring them to within about a hundred yards of the spring. Each man strikes his spear into the ground, and rests against it his shield, bow and quiver. He places his robe or skin beside it. There is his tent and bed. The row of spears are soon aligned upon the prairie, forming a front of several hundred yards, and our camp is complete. No drilled troops in the world can equal the rapidity with which these Indians form or break camp; and yet every movement is executed without orders, and as if by intuition. Fires were soon kindled, and strips of *tasajo* brought forth and cooked. Pipes were lighted, and the warriors sit in groups around the red blaze, recounting their adventures, and laughing and chattering incessantly. The paint glitters upon their naked bodies in the glare of the fires; it is a wild and savage scene, and yet grotesque in its very savageness. For two hours we remain about the fires, some cooking and eating, others smoking, others freshening the hideous devices of the war paint with which all are besmeared. Then the horse-guard is detailed, and marches off to the *caballada*, and the Indians, one after another, spread their robes upon the ground, roll themselves in their *serapes* or blankets, and are soon asleep. For a time I found it impossible to sleep, although wearied with the unaccustomed exercise of the journey. Reclining upon my robe in a half sitting posture, I watch the scene around me. The fires have ceased to blaze, but by the light of the moon I can distinguish the prostrate bodies of the savages. White objects are moving among them; they are dogs, prowling about in search of the remains of their supper. These run from point to point, growling at one

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another, and barking at the coyotes that sneak around the outskirts of the camp. Out upon the prairie the horses are still awake and busy. I can hear them stamping their hoofs and cropping the rich pasture. At intervals along the line I can see erect forms standing motionless; these are the guards of the caballada. At length I begin to grow drowsy, and lying down upon my robe, I wrap myself in my *serape*, and in a few moments am asleep.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

MY FIRST SCALP.

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I was roused before dawn by the stir and bustle around me. On rising to my feet, I found the party preparing to march. Every warrior ran out for his horse; the pickets were drawn, and the animals led in and watered. They are bridled; the robes are thrown over them and girthed. We pluck up our lances, sling our quivers, seize our shields and bows, and leap lightly upon horseback. Our line is already formed, and, wheeling in our tracks, we ride off in single file to the northward.

From conversation with my companions the night previous, I had discovered that only the leaders of the party knew our destination. The rank and file were as ignorant of the intentions of their commanders as is usually the case among the armies of more civilized peoples. The young braves who were my chosen companions on the march and in the camp, neither knew nor cared whither we were bound. They expected the expedition to result in our return with an abundance of scalps and plunder, and that was all they cared about. During the forenoon we passed over a "*motte*" of prairie or park. Its surface was nearly level, but it was studded here and there with clumps and coppices of cottonwoods and other trees and shrubs.

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To the north the horizon was shut in by a lofty mountain chain which seemingly barred our pathway, although at a great distance, and between us and this barrier was a range of much less elevation, such as are called "foot hills" in this region.

About noon we came upon a small stream which crossed our line of march, running off to the eastward. Upon its banks we halted for a short period, watering and feeding our horses, and satisfying our own appetites from our supply of dried meat. This done we resumed our march. We now found the timber islands became less frequent, and in half an hour's ride we left them altogether behind, and rode for several miles over an open plain. We saw timber ahead of us, and had approached within about a mile of it when one of the runners or spies, about fifty of whom were scouting ahead, came back and reported to the chief that they had discovered a small herd of buffalo grazing upon a small prairie or sort of natural clearing beyond the belt of woods.

Although we were well provided with dried meat, the prospect of fresh buffalo steak was not unpleasing, and a hunt was at once determined upon.

Halting the party Stonhawon directed the renegade to take his own band and join the scouts ahead. Together the bands would constitute a hunting party of about one hundred warriors, quite large enough for the destruction of the small herd before us. As I had attached myself to the band of Hissodecha, I found myself destined to take part in the enterprise, and anticipated no little amusement and sport.

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Riding forward cautiously until we reached the timber, which was a not very dense chaparral, we rode slowly and silently through the bushes until we encountered a number of scouts *cached* in the thicket, and evidently waiting for us.

"What is it Han-na-ta-mauh?" asked Hissodecha of the leader of the scouts as they rode up.

The scout replied that they had found the fresh tracks of a small herd of buffaloes, and on following them up had found the animals feeding upon a small prairie beyond the chaparral in which we were concealed. The renegade dismounted, and telling me to accompany him, walked forward with the scout to the edge of the thicket. Peering cautiously through the leaves, we had a full view of the open ground. The buffaloes were upon the plain.

It was, as Hanatamauh had said, a small prairie about a mile and a half in width, closed in on all sides by a thick chaparral. Near the center was a *motte* of heavy timber growing up from a dense underwood. A spur of willows running out from the timber denoted the presence of water.

"There's a spring there," said the renegade, turning to me; "I have been here before, and know the ground. How can we get at them?" he continued, turning to the scout; "do you think we can approach them?"

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"No," said Hanatamauh, "there is not cover enough; and besides, they are getting further away from the bushes as they feed."

"What then?" asked Hissodecha; "we can't run them; they would be off through the thicket in a moment, and we would lose them all."

"Yes," replied the scout, "that is certain; but we can get them for all that. I never saw a better place for a 'surround,' and it will take but a short time to get your braves in position."

"True," said Hissodecha, "if the wind is right. How is it?"

"There is none," said the scout taking a feather from his head-dress and tossing it in the air. "You see it falls direct."

"I see," said Hissodecha; "let us divide the men. We have enough to pen them in completely. You can guide one-half of them to their stands. I will go with the rest. You, Tahteckadahair," he continued, "had better bring up your horse and stay where you are. It is about as good a stand as you can get. You will have to wait patiently, as it may be an hour before all are placed. When you hear the signal, which will be the hunter's whistle, you may gallop forward and do your best. If we succeed we shall have plenty of sport and a good supper, and I suppose you are ready for that by this time."

The renegade now left me, followed by the scout, and went back to the rest of the party. Their intention was to separate the band into two equal parties, and each taking an opposite direction, to place men at regular intervals around the prairie. They would keep in the chaparral while on the march, and only discover themselves when the signal was given. In this way, if the buffaloes did not take the alarm, we should be almost certain of securing the entire herd.

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As soon as Hissodecha left me, I selected my hunting arrows, which, unlike those used for war, are not poisoned. Then I brought up my horse, and having nothing else to do, I remained seated upon his back watching the animals as they fed on, unaware of their danger.

The screaming of birds who flew up from the thicket showed that the hunters were proceeding to their stands. Now and then an old bull, standing like a sentinel on the outskirts of the herd, would snuff the wind and strike the ground violently with his hoof as though suspecting that something was wrong; but the others did not seem to mind him and kept on cropping the luxuriant grass. Suddenly an object made its appearance, emerging from the *motte* in the center of the prairie. It looked like a buffalo calf proceeding to join the others. As usual, a pack of coyotes were sneaking around the herd, and these, on perceiving the calf, made an instant attack upon it. To my surprise, it seemed to fight its way through them, and soon joined the herd and was lost to view among them. I thought no more of it, and was wondering how much longer I would have to wait for the signal, when I noticed that the buffaloes were lying down one after another.

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In a few minutes eight or ten were stretched upon the turf, and I observed that they fell suddenly as if shot, and some of them appeared to kick and struggle violently. I had heard of a curious habit of these animals known as "wallowing," and concluded this must be it. As I had never witnessed this manœuvre, I watched them as attentively as possible, but the high grass prevented me from seeing much. At all events, I thought, the "surround" will be complete before they get ready to move, and I waited patiently for the signal.

The buffaloes still continued to lie down one after another, and at length the last one of the herd stretched himself upon the prairie. At this instant the shrill notes of the Indian whistle reached my ears, and a wild yell arose from all sides of the prairie. I urged my horse forward; a hundred others had done the same, all yelling at the top of their voices as they shot out of the thicket. Filled with the wild excitement incident to such a scene, I galloped forward with my bow strung and arrows ready, intent upon having the first shot. To my surprise the buffaloes did not stir. The Indians closed in, yelling as they came, and we pulled up our horses in the very midst of the prostrate herd. I sat upon my horse as if spell-bound, looking about me in consternation and wonder. Before me lay the bodies of the buffaloes, and I seized with a superstitious awe when I perceived that every one of them was dead or dying. Blood flowed from their mouths and nostrils, and from wounds in the side of each the red stream trickled down. The prairie carpet was dyed with it.

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My companions seemed at first as much surprised as myself, but some of the more astute quickly divined the mystery and commenced looking about with keen scrutiny. Suddenly the renegade urged his horse forward, and on turning to see what he had discovered, I saw the buffalo calf, whose existence I had for a time forgotten. The calf had been concealed behind the carcass of one of the buffaloes, but now appeared to be endeavoring to make off into the timber.

Hissodecha rode up to it, evidently intending to pierce it with his lance, when the animal suddenly reared up, uttering a wild human scream. The shaggy hide was thrown aside, and a naked savage appeared, holding up his arms as if pleading for mercy. His appeal was a vain one, however, for the ruthless renegade pinned him to the earth with a thrust of his lance, and, springing from his horse, finished him with his tomahawk. He then scalped him, and, remounting his horse, directed some of the warriors to scour the prairie, as they might find another "calf" concealed in the long grass. With the rest of the party he rode up to the *motte*, and they quickly formed in a circle, around it. Familiar as I had become with Indian cruelty, I felt a sensation of horror and disgust at this cool shedding of blood, and I halted irresolutely by the body of the dead Indian. He lay stretched upon his back, naked to the breech clout, the red stream flowing from the lance wound in his side. His limbs quivered, but it was in the last spasm of departing life.

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The hide in which he had been disguised lay near him, where he had flung it at the moment he was discovered. Beside him were a bow and several arrows. The latter were covered with blood,

the feathers steeped in it and clinging to the shafts. They had pierced the bodies of the buffaloes, passing entirely through. Each arrow had taken many lives.

I was still contemplating the dead man, when a yell from the *motte* attracted my attention, and I rode thither. I reached the spot just in time to see the body of another Indian dragged out from the thick undergrowth, and his fortunate slayer, who happened to be one of the younger braves, took the scalp with great complacency, as it was his first trophy of the kind. The Indians evidently believed that another of the *Coyoters* or Wolf Apaches, for to this tribe the two dead savages were declared to belong, was concealed in the thicket, for they were formed in a sort of irregular circle around the copse, peering into it from every direction. Hissodecha now ordered the warriors to close in from every direction and search the thicket. In this manoeuvre I found myself compelled to take part, as otherwise I would have incurred the stigma of cowardice. We dismounted from our horses and pressed into the thicket from all sides. For a few seconds nothing could be heard but the cracking of the undergrowth as we forced our way through it. Suddenly a yell arose from the side opposite to my position, and almost instantly a third *Coyotero* sprang from a dense clump of willows near the spring, and made for the opening. It chanced that I was directly in his path, and he was rushing upon me with upraised knife. Strong as might be my repugnance to taking human life, the instinct of self-preservation was still stronger, and before he could reach me I had pierced him with an arrow, and he fell dead almost at my feet. In an instant the warriors had gathered around me, and I was being congratulated upon my bravery and skill. Not feeling particularly proud of the achievement, I was about to remount my horse, when Hissodecha reminded me that I had neglected to scalp the fallen foe; so I was compelled to perform that operation, which I did rather clumsily. A thorough search through the thicket and over the prairie having satisfied my savage companions that no more of the *Coyoters* had been present, we returned to the dead buffaloes and began skinning and cutting them up.

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Stonhawon soon arrived with the remainder of the band, and as it was nearly sundown, we encamped upon the spot; the spring furnishing water, and the grass of the prairie an abundance of rich food for the horses. As for ourselves, we feasted in true savage fashion, finding the fresh steaks, tongues, and hump ribs a decided improvement upon the *tasajo* which had previously been our diet.

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I was compelled to listen to many encomiums upon my courage and dexterity, and some of the young braves ventured the opinion that Tahteckadahair would soon be as great a warrior as Hissodecha.

Painfully impressed by the scene of slaughter in which I had been an unwilling participant, I held myself aloof as much as possible from the merry groups around the camp fires, and at an early hour wrapped myself in my blanket, and wearied by the fatigue and excitement of the past two days, I was soon buried in a heavy and dreamless sleep, which continued until the dawn of another morning again compelled me to come forth; and this time it was not as an inexperienced brave, but as an acknowledged warrior; for I had slain an enemy and taken my first scalp. I cannot say, however, that my increase of notoriety was a source of satisfaction to me, but quite the contrary.

Somewhat to my surprise we remained by the *motte* spring for three days. This was necessary in order to convert the buffalo meat into *tasajo*, as we had not a sufficient supply for our purpose.

On the evening of the third day, the meat being sufficiently "cured," we "struck camp" and rode off to the north until we had reached the chain of mountains which crossed our path. Here we turned to the eastward, and journeyed along their base intending to cross at a well known pass about twenty miles above. Reaching it at nightfall we again encamped, designing to pass the mountain range the next morning.

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CHAPTER XXV.

THE FEAST OF THE GREEN CORN.

The fields, or more properly speaking, the patches of corn were quickly ripening, thanks to the arduous efforts of Wakadahme and his wonderful arrow, and the whole tribe was waiting impatiently the time when the signal should announce that the feast of the green corn was about to commence. Next to fighting, your Indian likes eating; about one half of his time is employed in catering to the cravings of his stomach. When not engaged in fighting his enemies, or marauding in the vicinity of the Mexican border-towns, he occupies his energies in the hunt or chase. At the time of my enforced residence among the Apaches, they were not restricted and confined to reservations as at present. They considered themselves masters of the country which they inhabited, and were free to roam in any direction their fancy might dictate. When in search of

game, they would scour the plains to the northward, and on some occasions would penetrate deep into the country of their enemies, the Crows and Blackfeet. Numerous encounters would result from this intrusion on the rights of others. At times they would meet and repulse their opponents, and continue the hunt, return laden with the fruits of the chase, and girdles plentifully garnished with their victim's scalps.

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At such times, their return home partook of the character of an ovation; fires would be lighted, food prepared in abundance, and high revelry be the order of the day. Gathered around the council fires, with an eager and attentive multitude of old men, women and children, constituting themselves an audience, the braves would indulge in the most fantastic and highly colored narratives of their deeds of valor and heroic bearing in the presence of an enemy. Seated in a circle around the blazing fire, and smoking their clay pipes, each one in turn would relate the incidents of his particular case, reciting the most improbable deeds of valor, and ending up, usually, with the oft-told tale, of how he gained his *sobriquet*.

His listeners had doubtless heard the same story on many similar occasions, but repetition has no horror for an Indian, and judging from the flattering silence with which his speech is received, and the many complimentary expressions with which he is greeted at its close, one would at once conclude that the remarks were new and original. Boasting is an Indian's weak point; given a listener, and the amount of bombast and mock heroics which he will inflict on one, simply staggers belief.

If, on the contrary, the hunting party has not been successful, but defeat and misfortune has been their portion, then the scene is changed. In place of feasting and revelry, they are greeted with a death-like silence, and, as the remnant of the party defile through the village, they are objects of the closest scrutiny by anxious mothers and wives. If the keen eyes of love, search in vain for the form of him, who a few weeks before left the village in the glory and vigor of manhood, a heart-rending wail goes up, which is instantly echoed by the assembled women, until the welkin resounds with mournful cries. As on more joyful occasions, a rush is made in the direction of the council lodge, and it then becomes the painful duty of the survivors to relate their mishaps, and how such and such an one met the enemy with his accustomed bravery, and foremost fighting, fell.

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In these recitals, the party in question always meet a foe who vastly outnumbers them, and according to their account, their opponents always suffer terribly in slain, and would have eventually been overcome, and completely routed, had not some trifling accident—which could not be foreseen—occurred to mar the effects of their stunning prowess.

I have never seen an Indian fight, and am not able to judge of their actions on the field of battle, but, if observations of the red man in his home, is any criterion, I should venture the opinion that an Apache would fight valiantly under one condition, namely: when his party were numerically stronger than the opposing force. I think they have a just appreciation of the Falstaffian method of conducting warfare, and are firmly convinced that "he who fights and runs away," has better opportunities for glory, rapacity and booty, another day.

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As these pages are being written, the country is again startled by the news of fresh Indian outrages, this time, against the constituted authority of the country, and close on the heels of the news of the reopening of Indian hostilities, comes the thrilling intelligence that a General has been shot in cold blood, and whilst under the protecting and sacred influence of a flag of truce. Such dastardly and treacherous conduct, thrills one with a righteous indignation, and we are more than ever impressed with the belief that measures, the most rigorous, should be instituted, and that the government should put to one side any feelings of mawkish sentimentality, and mete out to these red-handed savages the retribution their desserts merit.

The case under consideration is only one among many. How many immigrant trains dragging their slow length over the trackless and boundless prairies, have met a similar fate; and their misfortune never so much as heard of. Whole villages on the borders have been attacked, captured and pillaged; their inhabitants murdered in cold blood, or carried off into a captivity that was worse even than the knife of the savage. Who can count the lonely victims who have been waylaid on their toilsome journey, by a party of howling savages, and being surrounded, before they were aware almost of the presence of an enemy, set upon and brained in the most cruel manner, and their bodies left weltering in their own gore, a repast for wolves and coyotes—horrible reflection; to think of the numbers who have suffered this fate, and died unknelt, uncoffined, and unknown; while their murderers were these same gentle red children, of whose interests the government has exercised such a watchful care, guarding them against the rigors of winter by a plentiful supply of food and blankets, and during the spring furnishing them with powder and the most improved fire-arms, that they might thereby be enabled to steal forth from their reservation, prey on helpless travelers, and returning covered with the blood of their white brothers; praise their Great Father at Washington, and thank him, through their agent, for the many inestimable gifts he has placed in their hands, by whose judicious use they have gratified their dominant passions, and turned many a happy home into a chamber of mourning.

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Out upon such a policy! War, to the bitter end, is the only "policy" that should be for a moment entertained, in dealing with these fiends; and when they are at last exterminated off the face of the earth, it may, perhaps, be safe for a man to undertake to travel through his own land. My readers may think I speak with undue heat on this subject, but the memory of my sufferings and trials, during the time that I remained among the Apaches, make it almost imperative that I should speak freely and without reserve.

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Those who are at home, and surrounded by the protecting influence of a father's or husband's

care, cannot fully appreciate the perils and degradation consequent upon a life of bondage, and I sincerely trust that it may never be their misfortune to undergo similar experiences.

I must apologize for this lengthy digression, and will hereafter endeavor to keep more closely to the thread of my narrative.

As before stated, the Indians always made the most extensive preparations for the feast of the green corn; and it was looked forward to with the most eager anticipations.

Several weeks before the corn had fairly ripened, the head chief and medicine men met in conclave, and decided on what measures were to be pursued during the festivities. In most instances, a few of the older women of the tribe were selected, and appointed to watch the patches of corn attentively. Every morning they were required to pick a few ears of corn, and without dividing the husk, bring it to the medicine chief; Eeh-tohk-pah-shee-pee-shah (the black moccasin), who would examine it, and if it was not deemed sufficiently ripe, they would be dismissed with an injunction to appear again on the following morning, with another handful of freshly gathered corn. This performance was continued until the samples examined were considered to have arrived at a stage of sufficient ripeness, when the fact was announced by criers, who went through the village proclaiming the joyful intelligence.

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For several days previous to the announcement of this gratifying news, the Indians had subjected themselves to a thorough purgation, using for this purpose a decoction of various bitter roots and herbs, which they termed *asceola* (the black drink). This course of treatment enabled them to attack the corn with ravenous appetites, and to gorge themselves until they could scarcely move.

On the appointed day the tribe are all assembled, and in the center of the lodge a kettle is hung over a fire, and filled with the coveted grain. This is well boiled, and offered to the Great Spirit as a sacrifice. This is an imperative ceremony, and must be performed before any one can indulge the cravings of his appetite. During the time that the cauldron is boiling, four chiefs and mystery men dance around the steaming kettle. They are painted with white clay, and in one hand they hold a stalk of the corn, while with the other they grasp the rattle. As they move around the fire, they chant a weird song of thanksgiving, taking particular pains to remind the Great Spirit that they are doing all this in his honor, and restraining their appetites that he may be pleased, and propitiated, to the extent of furnishing them with a bountiful supply during the ensuing season.

Whilst the medicine men are performing in this manner, a number of others form in a circle, outside of the inner one, and with stalks of corn in each hand, go through a somewhat similar ceremony. Wooden bowls are placed on the ground immediately under a tripod, formed by joining together three poles, of about twelve feet in length, which are also ornamented with ears of corn. In each of the bowls is placed a spoon, made of the horn of the buffalo, or mountain sheep, in which the feast is to be served. The dance is continued until the chiefs decide the corn is sufficiently boiled; when, at a given signal, the dance is stopped for a few minutes, and again resumed, this time to a different tune. Then the master of ceremonies removes the smoking vegetable and places it upon a small scaffold of sticks, which they erect over the fire.

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Having done this, the *first* fire is removed, and the ashes are gathered and buried. A new fire is then made in the place occupied by the old one. The new one is started by a very painful process.

Three men seat themselves on the ground, facing each other, and procuring a hard block of wood, commence drilling violently with a stick, by rolling it between the palms of the hand. Each one catches it in turn from the other, without allowing the motion to stop, until smoke, and at last, a spark of fire is seen, and caught in a piece of punk, whereat there is great rejoicing among the bystanders. When this fire is kindled, the kettle is again placed over the fire, and refilled with the vegetable.

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Now the feast begins, an onslaught is made on the contents of the pot, and the Indians rush off in all directions to devour the corn. Soon fires are blazing in every lodge, and all are indulging in the grossest gluttony. This feast lasts until the corn is exhausted, or becomes too hard to eat with any degree of comfort. When an Indian has gorged himself to the fullest capacity, he has recourse to his *asceola*, and is soon in a condition to recommence with as much vigor as at first.

These scenes filled me with disgust, and I often thought how happy those brutes would be if they were only endowed with the wonderful attributes of that little sea monster, the polyp, who, when his body is cut in half, suffers no inconvenience, but gormandizes as much as ever, with this advantage, that the food, instead of remaining in his stomach, passes out at the other end; thus allowing him to indulge in the pleasure of gluttony, without the inconvenience of being gorged.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

DANGER AHEAD.

We started again at early dawn, and commenced the passage of the defile through the mountain. The pass was tortuous and rugged, but as we rode in single file we experienced but little difficulty, and after about three hours of alternate ascents and descents, we gained its outlet and debouched upon the plain beyond. It was a timber prairie, studded with *mottes* of tall cottonwoods, and bisected near its center by a small stream. A heavy belt of timber fringed the northern horizon, and towards this we directed our course.

As we were now liable to come in contact with hostile parties of other tribes, Stonhawon exercised great caution. Nearly a hundred runners or spies were sent in advance, while the main body advanced slowly; the chief receiving frequent reports from the scouts.

About ten o'clock we halted on the banks of the *arroyo*, and while watering our animals, one of the scouts returned and made some communication to our leader. In a few moments it became known to the entire band that a large war party of Arrapahoes had been discovered ahead. Beyond the belt of timber was a large grass prairie, a favorite haunt of the buffalo and upon this the Arrapahoes had halted to hunt, and after getting a good supply of meat, were engaged in converting it into *tasajo*, preparatory to an extended raid upon the tribes to the southward.

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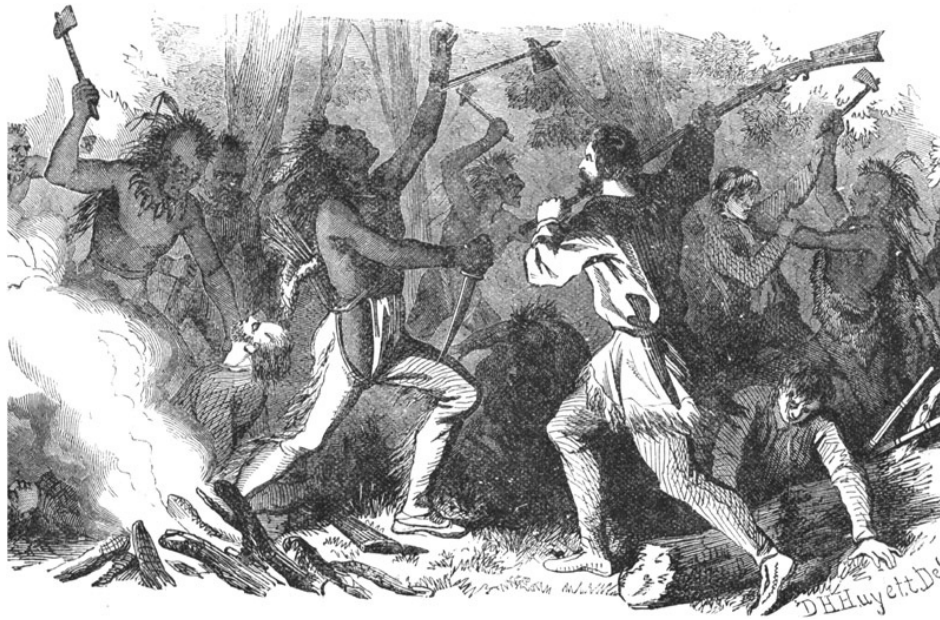
It is probable that we, ourselves, were intended to receive their polite attentions, but if this had been their object it was frustrated by the fact that we were out upon the same errand as regarded themselves.

At the eastern extremity of the prairie, a mountain rose from the plain; it was an isolated peak of small altitude, its height being but a few hundred feet, and in shape almost a perfect "sugar loaf." The belt of timber which formed the southern boundary of the prairie, extended to the mountain, and fringed its base. Near the foot of the mountain the Arrapahoes were in bivouac, their horses grazing upon the plain. Long rows of stakes and lines were erected, and upon these the buffalo meat was hung in strips, and was fast blackening in the hot sun. Evidently a few more hours would complete the process of its conversion into *tasajo*. A number of fires were kindled near the base of the mountain, and around these were grouped the Arrapahoe warriors, engaged in the usual Indian pastime of eating. A more favorable opportunity for attack could not be wished, provided we could approach near enough to take them by surprise; but to effect that, promised to be difficult, as we would certainly be seen the instant we passed the timber; and in that case, surprise would, of course, be out of the question.

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Our leaders, Stonhawon and Hissodecha, stood apart, apparently holding a sort of "council of war." Their conference, however, was quickly ended; the renegade made some proposition to which Stonhawon seemed to assent, for he signed us to mount, and we instantly resumed our march. In a few minutes I was able to fathom their design from the course taken. Skirting the belt of timber, and screened by it from the views of the Arrapahoes, we directed our course towards the lone peak. The timber belt was perhaps two hundred yards in width, and filled with a dense undergrowth. In its shadow the spies crept along its northern margin, moving parallel to our course, and keeping a close watch upon the enemy. The renegade's plan seemed to be to approach them as closely as possible under cover of the forest, and then make a sudden dash, taking them by surprise, and effecting their utter rout. As events showed, I had judged correctly of the intentions of our leaders, or at least partially so; but there was one detail of the plan, which I had not thought of, which was presently put in execution. After riding slowly for about two hours we reached the point, trended off to the north, and encircled the mountain. Here Stonhawon halted the main body, but the band of Hissodecha, which numbered about sixty warriors, was reinforced by about the same number detailed from the chief's party and sent round the mountain to attack the enemy in the rear. I was about running off with this party, when Stonhawon beckoned to me, and on my riding up to him, directed me to remain with him. I was quite surprised at this, and looked towards Hissodecha, expecting that he would urge that I be permitted to accompany him; but to my still greater surprise, he did not seem to notice me at all, and with his band soon disappeared behind a spur of the mountain. I had little opportunity, however, to reflect upon this circumstance, for our party was quickly put in motion, and passing through the wood, were soon ranged along its outer margin, sheltered from view by the thicket, and awaiting the signal to charge upon the foe.

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Massacre of Whites on the Western Frontier.

We were barely two hundred yards from their position, and could plainly distinguish the varied hues and designs of the war paint upon their persons. Their number was about equal to our own, and with the advantage of a surprise, it seemed probable that we might utterly destroy them.

Like hounds held in the leash, we awaited the signal—at last it came—the shrill notes of the war whistle pierced the air, and it was instantly followed by the wild intonation of the Camanche war whoop as we burst forth from the timber and charged with headlong fury upon the foe. For a moment I thought that the surprise would be complete, for our sudden appearance seemed likely to completely demoralize the enemy.

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But the Arrapahoes, although greatly surprised and alarmed at our sudden onslaught, showed no signs of panic, indeed, it is next to impossible to really surprise an Indian. A few of those that were nearest to us were ridden down, transfixed with lances, or brained by blows from our war clubs and battle axes; but the larger number, hastily plucking up their lances and seizing their other weapons, rushed for their horses, and before we could reach them were mounted and forming to receive us. Riding at a headlong pace, a few seconds brought us upon them, and we closed at full speed. A confused and deadly *melee* followed, the combat being mainly hand to hand. Blows and lance thrusts were exchanged, arrows whistled through the air, ghastly wounds were given and received; the air resounded with the groans of wounded and dying men, and the wild war cries of the contending warriors. Exactly what I did I hardly know, so great was the excitement and confusion. I know that I gave and received blows, and mechanically defended myself from the attacks made upon me; but the incidents of that brief yet terrible struggle seem like a dream to me now.

The impetus of our first charge had carried us entirely through the enemies line. We then wheeled and charged them anew; and this manoeuvre was repeated many times.

Our adversaries seemed to be getting decidedly the worse of the conflict, and we could see unmistakable signs of an inclination on their part to take refuge in flight, when something seemed to suddenly change their determination, and they again assaulted us with renewed fury. We were not long in discovering the cause; during the fight we had many times changed positions with our adversaries, and we were now facing towards the mountain. Attracted by a noise in our rear, we glanced in that direction, to behold a sight that filled us with dismay.

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Approaching us at full speed was a party of fully one hundred Arrapahoes, evidently a detachment from the band we were fighting. Coming from the north, they had got within a quarter of a mile of us before we had discovered them, the tumult and confusion of the conflict preventing us from perceiving them sooner.

As Hissodecha and his party, from some unaccountable delay, had not arrived upon the ground, our position was a perilous one. In a moment, the new enemies would be upon us, and without doubt we would be overwhelmed. Instant action on our part was imperative, and our leader, with ready perception of that fact, gave the signal to close in together and charge upon our immediate opponents.

With a wild yell we rushed upon them, breaking through their line, and retreating rapidly towards the base of the mountain. Here a number of large rocks had fallen upon the plain from the cliffs above, and laid in such positions as to form a sort of natural breastwork. Indeed, the masses of rock, from their peculiar formation and grouping, had a striking resemblance to the ruins of some vast building.

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Behind these rocky bulwarks, we sheltered ourselves, and prepared to receive the attack which we felt sure the Arrapahoes, strengthened by their opportune reinforcement, would certainly make upon us. Indeed, we could see that they were preparing to do so, and I, having by this time

had quite enough of fighting, was awaiting the assault with dread, when I was suddenly called by Stonhawon. Hastening to his side, as he sat on his horse, he directed me to accompany one of the young braves who was standing by him, and had apparently received his instructions. These the chief repeated for my benefit. We were to ascend the mountain, with all possible speed, and send up from its summit a "signal smoke," to hasten the arrival of Hissodecha and his party, still unaccountably delayed.

Leaving our horses and most of our weapons with the party, we set off at once; the wild yells of the Arrapahoes, as they advanced to the attack, ringing in our ears, and being echoed by the defiant war-cry of the Camanches, as the latter prepared to receive the onslaught.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

THE ESCAPE.

Turning in the direction of the mountain, we put our horses into a hard run, and in a few moments were tearing our way through the mezquite bushes that fringed its base. The undergrowth became denser as we advanced, and it was found advisable to abandon the ponies and forge ahead on foot. The safety of our party depended in a great measure on the celerity of our movements. Hastily dismounting, and tying the cattle to some sturdy sage bushes, we continued our ascent, and it was not many minutes before we had reached a portion of the mountain that shelved out over the ravine, thus forming an admirable position for the signal operations. My companion briefly explained the method of smoke signals, which were made by gathering a quantity of very dry underbrush for the fire, and green twigs, boughs of pine, balsam, and hemlock, being placed upon the blazing wood, covers the flame and throws off a dense smoke that may be seen at great distances. After ascertaining his views, and receiving my instructions, I plunged into the wood and busied myself collecting materials for our telegraph operations. It was not long before we had a sufficient quantity of material gathered, and placing the dry wood in such a manner that it might be easily ignited, my companion produced his tinder apparatus, and was soon at work drilling the block of hard wood, and frantically endeavoring to coax a spark that might set the pile in a blaze.

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As few, if any, of my readers understand the method by which Indians light their fires, I will hastily describe it. The Indian is unfamiliar with the use of matches; even the more primitive flint and steel is a sealed book to him; hence he resorts to a very simple but laborious contrivance. Each Indian supplies himself with two dried stalks of the Mexican soap plant, about three-fourths of an inch in diameter. One is made flat on one side; near the edge of the flat surface a small indentation is made to receive the point of the other stick, and a groove cut from this down the side. The other stick is made with a rounded end, and placed upright upon the first. Placing the stick with a flat surface between the feet, the point of the other is placed in the hole made to receive it, and turning it between the palms with a backward and forward motion, and pressing the point forcibly into the lower stick, a fine powder is made, which runs through the groove and falls on the ground. By constant and rapid motion the wood begins to smoke, and at length the fine particles take fire; the spark is soon nursed into a flame, and the brushwood ignited.

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In this manner our fire was lighted, and heaping up the pine and hemlock boughs, the surrounding atmosphere was one dense cloud of smoke. Stealing to the very edge of the cliff, I peered over and anxiously scanned the plain below. I could see Stonhawon's band fighting desperately with their foes, who, by their superior numbers, were overpowering the Camanches. Immediately behind the belt of timber, and to the left of the contending factions, was the party comprising the band under the leadership of Hissodecha. They were moving cautiously around the timber, and had not as yet observed the signal. Once more the signal was worked, this time sending up a denser cloud than before. It was observed by the ambushed party; they drew rein, and after a hasty consultation, turned and retraced their steps. The movement was not executed any too soon, as the main party were retreating before the successful assault of the enemy, and endeavoring to gain the friendly cover of the wood. Hissodecha pressed rapidly forward, and emerging on the plain, swooped down upon the flank of the victorious Arrapahoes. This sudden movement entirely changed the aspect of affairs. The Arrapahoes fell back precipitately in the direction of the ravine, hoping by this means to gain shelter, and if the worst came to the worst, disband and scatter over the mountain.

It was a thrilling scene, and I almost wished I was one among them.

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Our mission was accomplished, and my companion intimated that we should descend the mountain and join the war-party. As we descended, the Camanche preceded me, pushing his way through the bushes with a rapidity only acquired by long practice.

Suddenly the thought flashed across my mind that now, if ever, was my golden opportunity. What would there be to prevent my braining the Indian in his tracks and then escape? It was a savage and brutal alternative, to be sure; but it was my only chance, and I might wait years in vain before another opportunity would present itself. As I revolved the scheme in my mind, my hand went instinctively to my belt and grasped the tomahawk. I trembled with excitement, and as if to keep pace with my thoughts, my steps quickened, and a few strides brought me close upon my victim. My quick and labored breathing must have attracted his attention, as, suddenly wheeling, he confronted me, and evidently read the murderous intention in my eye, he sprang lightly to one side, and unsheathing his knife, stood as if expecting an attack. Simultaneously with this action, I drew my tomahawk and rushed upon him, aiming a blow at his head. He adroitly parried it with his arm, but in so doing received a severe wound in the shoulder. Darting at me, he clutched my arm, and twining his limbs about my person, made a desperate endeavor to bring me to the ground. The tomahawk was of no use now; I allowed it to fall from my grasp, and with the disengaged hand clutched my knife.

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My antagonist's superior strength began to tell. I felt powerless, and his eyes gleamed with fiendish triumph. He raised the shining blade preparatory to sheathing it in my body, when I suddenly felt the ground giving way beneath my feet, and in less time than it takes to relate it, we were rolling over a precipice with a sheer fall of about ten feet. The savage clung to me with a death-like grip, and encircling my neck with his arm, grasped my throat *with his teeth*. Those were fearful moments. I struggled to disengage my hand from his vice-like grip. The blood gurgled from my mouth, my tongue protruded, and I was gasping for breath in the last throes of strangulation, when we came to the ground with a terrific shock.

The savage gave one yell that curdled my blood, and instantly relaxed his hold, falling limp and lifeless by my side. I was not many minutes in disengaging myself from my antagonist, and in doing so I was made aware of the cause of the sudden turn of events that had saved me from a horrible death. It would appear, that during the struggle and fall, the hand that grasped my knife was encircled around the body of my foe, and when we struck the ground, my body being uppermost, the knife had been driven to the hilt into his back by the force of the concussion.

Everything now depended on the celerity of my movements. The remainder of the party would no doubt wonder at our long absence, and despatch runners to seek the missing "signal" makers. It would require but a glance at the prostrate form of their comrade to enable them to realize the true state of affairs, and to make instant preparation to follow, overtake the fugitive, and mete out to him the reward of his perfidy. Hastily possessing myself of what few arms I needed, and taking the bag of parched corn that was suspended from the girdle of the fallen savage, I made my way to where the ponies were *cached*, and springing on my animal, urged him forward at the top of his speed, leading the Indian's pony by the lariat attached to his bridle.

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My plan was to strike out over the prairie in a southerly direction, and by traveling without cessation, endeavor to put a wide gap between pursuer and pursued, and thus be enabled to reach in safety some of the Mexican frontier towns. I was certain that this plan was feasible, from the conversation I had heard from time to time among the warriors of our band. Indeed, it was proposed by Hissodecha, to raid on some one of the *pueblas*, if they were unsuccessful in their attack on the Arrapahoes, as by this means they would avoid the ignominy of returning to the lodges of their people, without being able to display the fruits of a successful foray; such as scalps, horses, captives, etc.

By riding my pony until he dropped from exhaustion and then availing myself of the fresh lead horse, I could travel an immense distance without drawing rein. It was growing dark when I started, and I had not traveled far before the night closed in, and I had to trust to the instinct of my horse to carry me safely over the prairie. My course was shaped by a certain star that would keep me on the right trail if I held it steadily in view. About midnight I halted at a small stream to water the horses, and hastily prepare for myself a small portion of the parched corn, which was done by mixing a handful in a gourd filled with water. This corn is invaluable to those who wish to traverse long distances, without being hampered with unnecessary luggage. With a sack or gourd of this article, containing about an half bushel, one can travel fifteen or twenty days without other sustenance.

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On we sped, the animals straining every muscle and nerve, their flanks heaving and flecked with foam. No sound broke upon the stillness of the night, save the rapid hoof-strokes of the mustangs, and occasionally the yelp of a coyote that was startled in his midnight prowlings by our sudden and rapid advance. Directly in my course loomed up a huge mound, and further on the dark forms of a range of low hills were outlined upon the horizon. I concluded to push on and gain their shelter. Once within their protecting shadow, I could pursue my course more leisurely, and without the fear of immediate detection. My grand anxiety was to hide or blind the trail, and by this means baffle the sleuth hounds, who were by this time in full pursuit.

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I had not proceeded far when the pony came to a sudden halt, which almost unseated me. I tried to urge him forward by word and action, but it was of no avail; he refused to move, and stood trembling like an aspen. Leaning forward and peering over his neck, I discovered, to my dismay, a wide chasm, which fully explained why the mustang had refused to be urged forward. The banks on either side were quite level, and no indentations or ruggedness marked the line of separation. One could ride up to its very brink without being aware of a break in the prairie level. I had thus come upon one of those *barancas*, the result of volcanic action, that are so frequently met with in this country. There was no alternative but to ride along its edge until I came to a point where its sides were depressed to the level of the plain. This, of course, involved a long detour, and a consequent loss of valuable time. My only consolation was in the reflection that my

enemies, in following the trail, would be compelled to resort to the same tactics.

I had journeyed down its banks about three miles, before I found an opportunity to cross. As I reached the opposite side, I turned and looked back. Away to my right, and in the direction from whence I came, I discerned a number of dark specks on the horizon, which filled me with the direst apprehensions. These dark objects were, doubtless, the forms of my pursuers, who had, it would seem, traveled with a celerity almost equaling my own. The chase now assumed a desperate aspect; before me lay life, hope, and freedom; behind was a nemesis that represented captivity, torture, and death. I plied the whip vigorously to the flank of my jaded steed, in the frantic endeavor to reach the cover of the mountain. I had not proceeded far on my course, when my pony showed unmistakable signs of giving out. Indeed, I had not made more than a mile on my course, when the animal stopped abruptly. I could feel him tremble under my weight; and dropping on his knees, I had scarcely time to leap to the ground before he fell, and drawing a deep sigh, he turned on his side and died, being absolutely ridden to death. I had no time to waste in mourning the brave little animal that had carried me thus far so faithfully. My robe was quickly transferred to the other horse, and the flight resumed. Reaching the base of the hills, I was so fortunate as to find water; and throwing myself at the foot of a tall cottonwood, with the lariat of the mustang attached to my wrist, I determined to snatch an hour's rest, of which both my mustang and myself were very much in need, after our long and arduous ride.

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I was awakened by a violent pulling at my wrist, caused by the horse, in trying to reach fresh grass. In a few moments I was up, mounted, and away once more in the direction of the Mexican towns. Towards evening I came to a river of some magnitude. It was now the dry season, and the stream was only a rivulet compared to what I judged it must be, when swollen by the rains and melting snows from adjacent mountains.

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I had, during the latter part of my journey, been casting about in my mind a series of plans, which would enable me to blind my trail, when lo! here was an opportunity that surpassed my most sanguine expectations. To urge my horse into the stream was the work of a moment, and then turning his head with the current, I continued the journey. At times the water would brush the animal's flanks; again, it would suddenly shallow, and scarcely cover his fetlocks; occasionally I would strike a deep hole, and be obliged to swim the animal some rods, before reaching *terra firma*.

These irregularities in the river-bed were due to its quicksand formation, which was constantly shifting, shallowing here, deepening there, and it would have been sure destruction to horse and rider, if we stopped for a moment in our tracks.

After journeying in this manner for about a mile, I entered a cañon, whose walls ascended to a height of thousands of feet, perpendicularly. On emerging from this gloomy pass, a sight met my gaze that made me shout for joy. Gaining the bank of the stream, I saw extended before me, waving fields of grain, and in the background, the modest spire of a little church, which was surmounted by a gilt cross, that fairly scintillated under the rays of the noon-day sun.

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I had arrived then, at last, within the confines of civilization, and my career as a savage, was about to be abruptly terminated. As I pushed forward, along the road that skirted the grain fields, and the familiar sounds of former days fell upon my ears—the tinkle of the cow bells, the busy hum, that filled the air like the whisper of early recollections, wafted down through the airy halls of time—made the scenes, trials and sufferings, appear but as a horrid dream, and I seemed to be just waking to reality. A glance at my tattooed and painted form, however, soon brought me back to a realizing sense of my position, and set me to reflecting how I should explain my presence in this hostile guise, to any chance inhabitant whom I might meet.

After much cogitation on the subject, I concluded it would be best to ride boldly into the village, and seeking the *Alcaid*, explain my situation in as good Spanish as my limited knowledge of the tongue, would permit. I had not gone far, when I was encircled by a crowd of bewildered and frantic Mexicans, who were shouting, "*Indios!*" "*Los Indios!*" at the top of their squeaky voices; while I made a running accompaniment to their remarks, by holding up my hands, with the palm outstretched towards them, and shouting in my turn, "*Amigo!*"

Reaching the *plaza*, I dismounted, entered the *cantina* and called for a basin of water. Stripping the plumage from my head, and relieving my body of its meretricious adornment, I plunged into the bath prepared for me, and came out, an entirely different looking individual.

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The news of my arrival had collected an eager and enthusiastic multitude, who filled the *patio*. I said enthusiastic, but all due allowance must be made for the natural and inherited indolence of the Mexican.

On emerging from the inn, I was greeted with several shouts, and fifty people were asking me questions in one breath, all bent on having them answered in less than no time. I finally succeeded in relating my history, adventures and escape, and wound up with an appeal to their charity; setting forth my utterly destitute condition, in the most glowing terms my execrable Spanish would permit. It was an animated scene; the men in the checkered serape, or stripped blankets, conical sombreros, with broad brims, calzoneros of velveteen, with rows of shining buttons, and a sash of gaudy color, encircling their waists. The women were no less conspicuous; draped in the graceful sebazo, the short vogna, and the finely embroidered chemisette.

My appeal was not met with that spontaneous generosity that I could have wished; in fact, they contributed nothing, and as a last resort, I was compelled to offer my horse for sale; which venture was more successful, and I soon disposed of him at a very fair price. I was now enabled

to buy the few articles of clothing that I was most in need of, and after lingering a few hours in the village, I concluded to push on towards Santa Fé, in the hope of falling in with some party of traders, or miners, and then trust to the chapter of accidents for the rest.

Fortune favored me in my designs, as I soon had an opportunity to join a party of Mexicans, who were *en route* for the Capital of New Mexico, on trading schemes intent. I accompanied them in the capacity of muleteer.

Arriving in Santa Fé, I immediately repaired to the largest inn, being attracted thither by a number of uncouth characters, in hunting shirts, and slouch hats. I entered unobtrusively, and took a quiet survey of the scene. The room was the *cantina*, and all were indulging in potations, more or less deep, of El Paso whiskey. The atmosphere was redolent of the fumes of tobacco, and commingled with the shouts and coarse language of the men, was the shrill treble of the women, who darted here and there, through the throng, like sunbeams.

I was attracted by one rude specimen, who seemed bent on getting up a fight. This great rough fellow, of six feet and over, called a trim little *poblana* to him, with, "hyar, my little muchacha! vamous, and git me some of that'er Pass, good now, and clar!" Then, as the liquor was produced, he offered the waiter a quantity of money, which was unhesitatingly accepted, with a "*mucho bueno, señor.*"

"Hooraw for you! come along, let's lick'er up all round, and have a dance; you're the gal for my beaver; bully for old Missouri!" Suddenly, a pistol was discharged in a remote corner of the room, and there was an instantaneous rush in that quarter, succeeded by loud cries, oaths, blows, shooting, din, and confusion.

Sick and weary of such scenes, I left the *cantina*, and sallying forth into the *plaza*, wandered down the street, not knowing where to go, or what was to become of me. I cared less.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A NEW DEPARTURE.

Glad to escape from such a scene of riot and violence, I walked rapidly along the narrow street, without any definite idea of where I was going. I soon passed the low and squalid looking rows of *adobe* buildings, which compose the greater part of the famous "Cuidad de Santa Fé," and came out upon the open plain beyond.

My attention was attracted by a small group of wagons parked upon the plain a short distance off, and I walked towards them, thinking perhaps, to fall in with some of my own countrymen, of a different class from the brutal roughs I had lately met. The wagons were but four in number, and the party to which they belonged comprised only twelve or fifteen persons. They were mostly Americans, and from their dress and manner I took them to be a party of miners. All were stout, hardy looking men, with an air that bespoke familiarity with hardships and adventure. They had just struck camp, and were evidently preparing for departure. One, who seemed to act as their leader, was directing operations, and apparently exercised a degree of authority unusual among men of this class. He was a stout, broad-shouldered man, with a good natured expression of countenance, and from his voice and features, easily distinguishable as an Englishman. The others addressed him as "Harding," or "Ned." One or two giving him the familiar appellation of "Hard Pan," which seemed a sort of *sobriquet* by which he was known. There was something in his appearance which inspired me with the belief that in him I might find a friend; and impelled by this feeling I approached him, and addressed him as "Mr." Harding, explained that I was a stranger and destitute, in what was to me a strange land, and implored him to give me employment of some kind with his party, so that I might in time be enabled to return to my home in the distant East.

"Where do ye come from, lad?" said he, looking at me with some interest, and noticing the ineffaceable marks upon my face—my legacy from the Camanches, and which I am destined to carry to my grave.

In as few words as possible I told him my story, interrupted by many exclamations of wonder and sympathy from my simple-minded listener. As I concluded he slapped me on the back, and declared that I should join his party, and should never want for a bite or sup while Ned Harding was to the fore. By this time the other men of the party had gathered around, and I was compelled to repeat my tale, which excited both pity and interest in the breasts of the kind-hearted miners, who declared that the "cussed Kimanch ought to be wiped out." "Aye, every mother's son of them," added Ned, "for playing such tricks upon travelers, the bloody-minded heathen."

It was soon agreed upon that I should accompany the party, who were on their way to the old Spanish mine of San Ildefonso, formerly noted as one of the richest in the province of New Mexico, but for many years deserted by the Mexicans from terror of the savage Apache and Navajo. The men composing the party of which I had now become a member, were not to be deterred in their search for a golden harvest by any fears of such a nature, and had determined to visit the old mine and "prospect" in its vicinity, with the hope of finding a paying lead. They had with them all the necessary utensils for their purpose, were well-armed, and with an abundant stock of provision, and seemed one and all to be confident of success in their enterprise.

I will spare the reader unnecessary details, and merely state that we started within an hour on our journey, and after a wearisome and uninteresting trip of eighteen days, reached the scene of our future operations, and which was destined to be my abiding place for nearly two years. A suitable spot was selected, convenient to both wood and water; a few rude huts were erected, and the town of "Harding" sprang into being.

After getting fairly settled, and resting somewhat from the fatigue incident to our journey and our labors in preparing our camp, we divided in parties of three and four, and went to "prospecting" in various directions for the precious metal, which was the object of our expedition. In this we were moderately successful and we soon had our mining operations in full blast. I always worked in company with "Ned," as I had learned to call him, and although he favored me to a degree, assigning to me all the lighter portions of the work, I soon found that it was the most severe labor I had ever undertaken, although I had been inured to toil and hardship of almost every kind during my long residence with the Camanches.

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The old mine was situated at the base of a precipitous cliff of quartz rock. A number of rude shafts pierced the mountain side. Some had penetrated to a considerable depth; others more shallow, showing that the *lead* had proved unprofitable, and been speedily abandoned.

On the banks of a little stream which wound around the base of the cliff, stood the old smelting house and ruined ranches of the Mexican miners. Most of them were roofless and crumbling to decay. The ground about them was shaggy and choked up. There were briars, mezcal plants, and many varieties of cactus; all luxuriant, hirsute, and thorny. These we speedily cleared away, and selecting one of the largest of the old smelting houses, we soon put in order for work. Besides our "quartz" mining in the old shafts and in new ones which we opened we also engaged in "gulch" and "surface" mining in the vicinity.

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As some account of the different modes employed to get at the precious metals, with which the rocks and soils of the far western states are so richly stored, may not be uninteresting to the reader, I will briefly give it.

Mining for gold alone is divided into two general classes: that which seeks the metal from the solid rock or quartz, and that which finds it in sand, gravel, or soil. The former process is the universal and familiar one of all rock mining, following the rich veins into the bowels of the earth with pick and powder, crushing the rock and separating the infinitesimal atoms of metal from the dusty, powdered mass.

The theory of the geologists is, that this is the original form or deposit of the precious metals; that the gold found in gravel, sand, or soil, lying as it does almost universally in the beds of rivers, or under the caves of the mountains, has been washed or ground out of the hard hills by the action of the elements through long years. Washing with water is the universal means of getting at these deposits of the gold. But the scale on which this work is done, and the instrumentalities of application vary from the simple hand-pan, pick, and shovel of the original miner, operating along the banks of a little stream, to grand combination enterprises for changing the entire course of a river, running shafts down hundreds of feet to get into the beds of long ago streams, and bringing water through ditches and flumes, and great pipes for ten or twenty miles, and withall to wash down a hillside of golden gravel, and extract its precious particles. The simple individual pan-washers are the first in the field, but it soon ceases to be profitable to this class of operators, and they soon move on in search of richer "diggings." The other means are employed on greater or less scales of magnitude, by combinations of men and capital. All the forms of gold-washing run into each other, indeed; and companies, sometimes consisting of only two or three persons, with capitals of a few hundred dollars merely, buy a sluice claim, or seize a deserted bed, and with shovel and pick, and a small stream of water, run the sands over and over through the sluiceways, and at the end of the day, or week, or month, gather up the deposits of gold in the bottoms and at the ends of their sluices. From this, operations ascend to a magnitude involving hundreds of thousands, and employing hundreds of men as partners or day laborers for the managers. Sometimes, too, the enterprise is divided, and companies are organized that furnish the water alone, and sell it out to the miners or washers, according to their wants.

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The raising of auriferous sands and gravel from the deeply covered beds of old streams, by running down shafts and tunnels into and through such beds, is called "deep diggings," or "bed rock diggings;" and in their pursuit, the bottoms of ancient rivers will be followed through the country for mile after mile, and many feet below the present surface of the earth. The miners in this fashion go down until they reach the bed rock along which the water originally ran, and here they find the richest deposits.

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The other sort of heavy gold washing, employing powerful streams of water to tear down and wash out the soil of hillsides that cover or hold golden deposits, is known as "hydraulic mining." This is the most unique and extensive process, involving the largest capital and risk. The water is

brought from mountain lakes and rivers, through ditches and flumes, sometimes supported by trestle work, fifty or one hundred feet high, to near the scene of operations. Then it is let from the flumes into large and stout iron pipes, which grow gradually smaller and smaller. Out of these it is passed into hose, like that of a fire engine; and through this it is discharged with terrific force into the bank or bed of earth, which is speedily torn down and washed with resistless separating power into narrow beds or sluices in the lower valleys; and as it goes along these, the more solid gold particles deposit themselves in the rifts or slight barriers placed for that purpose across its path.

Usually, in large operations of this kind, the main stream of water is divided in the final discharging hose into two or more streams, which spout out into the hillside as if from so many fire engines, but with immensely more force. One of these streams would instantly kill man or animal that should get before it; and fatal accidents frequently happen from this source. Sometimes a water company taps lakes fifteen or twenty miles off in the mountains, and turns whole rivers into its ditches. There are in some localities supposed rich gold banks and beds, which only require water for development, but to get which would require an outlay for ditches of many hundred thousand dollars. It is probable that it would be richly paying investment, however, and the principal reason why it is not undertaken is the lack of certain laws, regulating mining claims, and the conflicts and doubts that are occasioned by the neglect of the government to establish the terms of ownership in mining lands. As it is now, possession is the principal title to mining properties; prospectors and miners have established a few general rules for determining the rights of each other, and they can occupy the properties that they discover or purchase to a certain limited extent. No one person is permitted to take up more than a certain amount in feet or acres. The government so far has done nothing with these mineral lands, whose real ownership is still in itself, and derives no revenue from them.

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Whenever difficulties arise and are brought before the courts, the regulations of the miners of the district where the properties are located has generally been sustained. But the apprehension that the government will yet assume its rights and establish different rules for the possession and use of these lands, and the uncertainty and controversies growing out of the present loose ways of making and holding claims, are a serious obstacle to large enterprises, and a hindrance to the best sort of mining progress and prosperity throughout all the western mining country. The profits obtained in some cases of extensive deep diggings and hydraulic mining are very great. A thousand dollars a day is often washed out by a company holding rich soil and employing a large force; and a run of several weeks, averaging from fifty to one hundred dollars a day for each man employed is frequently recorded. A single "cleaning up" after a few weeks' washing in a rich place has produced fifty thousand dollars in gold dust and nuggets; and in some cases, even one hundred thousand dollars has been reported. These are the extreme cases of good fortune, however; other enterprises are run at a loss, or with varying result; but the gold washing, as a general thing pay good wages, and a fair return to the capital invested.

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It is hardly possible to imagine, and wholly impossible to describe the ruin and wreck to be seen everywhere in the path of the larger gold washing operations. Streams naturally pure as crystal, become changed to a thick, yellow mud, from this cause, early in their passage out from the hills. Many of them are turned out of their original channels, either directly for mining purposes, or in consequence of the great masses of soil and gravel that come down from the gold washings above. Thousands of acres of fine lands along their banks are ruined forever, by deposits of this character. The mining interest respects no rights but its own. A farmer may have his whole estate changed to a barren waste, by a flood of sand and gravel from some hydraulic mining up the stream. If a fine orchard or garden stands in the way of the working of a rich gulch or bank, orchard and garden are doomed. They are torn down, dug out, washed to pieces, and then washed over side hills. Where the process of hydraulic mining has been, or is being carried on, the country presents an appearance of devastation and ruin that is scarcely imaginable; forming a frightful blot upon the face of nature.

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For this sort of mining on a large scale, we had no facilities, so we were compelled to work in a very small way, and be satisfied with correspondingly small results. News of our successful establishment of the old mine, in some way reached Santa Fé, and, rushing to the conclusion that we had found a new Eldorado, all the floating population of that decaying city swooped down upon us, and we soon found quite a populous settlement growing up around us.

A very decided change in our situation resulted from this, and some rather exciting events transpired, but these I will leave for another chapter. Soon after the accessions to our community had become so numerous, my friend and partner, Ned Harding, fell ill. This put a sudden stop to our mining operations, and for several weeks I was compelled to remain by the side of his rude couch, attending to his wants, and doing all that I could to facilitate his recovery.

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Among the new arrivals at our "diggings" was a Mexican, who had followed the profession of a *medico* in former times, but who was now an inveterate gold hunter; one of the sort who are perpetually on the move from place to place, seeking placers of fabulous richness, but never working any claim long enough to fairly develop it. Perhaps they have no sooner commenced operations in one place, when a rumor comes of rich finds at some far distant point, and off they go, to repeat the same performance indefinitely.

When Ned was first taken sick, I thought of this Mexican doctor, and at once went in search of him. With some difficulty I persuaded him to get out of the hole in which he was working, and go to see my friend. We had a few simple medicines among our supplies, and from some of these the ex-doctor prepared a potion for Ned, which he declared would be "*mucho bueno*," and that the patient would be all right in "*tres dias*," at the most. The result, however, failed so justify his

expectations, for Ned became no better, although there was no marked change for the worse. It went on in this way for several weeks; I continuing to give the medicines prescribed by the Mexican physician, but without any apparent result.

Ned seemed to be in a kind of low fever, and to constantly lose strength. The stomach seemed to entirely refuse its office, and it was almost impossible to give him any food, however light, that he could keep down much longer than while eating it. He complained greatly of pain in the back and head, and a constant feeling of nausea at the stomach, or, as he expressed it, "I tell ye, lad, there's something thear as wants to come up and can't." Finally, seeing no signs of improvement from the treatment pursued by our Mexican friend, and becoming greatly alarmed at Ned's condition, I was sitting one day, in great despondency, upon a stump in front of our hut, when it suddenly flashed upon my mind that I had never tried the Indian remedy, in the preparation and administration of which I had spent so great a part of my life. For some reason it had never occurred to me to use it, and indeed, I did not know whether it was possible to procure the necessary ingredients, in my present location, although I judged it probable that I might do so. At all events, I determined to make the attempt, and accordingly I went "prospecting" for the required herbs, roots, etc., that very day. After two days spent in this way, I succeeded in procuring all the ingredients which I had so many times compounded under Wakometkla's direction, and lost no time in preparing the medicine. I then commenced giving it to my patient in small doses, at intervals of four or five hours, through the day, and was soon gratified to find an almost immediate improvement in his condition.

The second day after commencing this treatment, the fever left him; he broke out into a profuse perspiration, and fell into a deep sleep, which lasted for many hours. When he awoke he complained of feeling very hungry; and when I prepared some food he ate quite heartily, and retained it on his stomach without difficulty. Encouraged by these favorable indications, I continued the medicine, and with surprising results. His recovery was so rapid that it seemed almost miraculous. In eight days he declared himself entirely well, and almost overwhelmed me with expressions of gratitude, declaring that I had saved his life. I told him that his thanks were due not to me, but to Wakometkla, the strange old medicine-man of the Camanches, or, more properly, to that higher Power, which had enabled this uneducated savage to discover and prepare from the simple growths of the forest and mountain, so wonderful a remedy for "all the ills that flesh is heir to." Ned was so universal a favorite among the miners, that his illness had excited great sympathy and commiseration. As he went about, trumpeting forth my praise as a medical practitioner, I soon found that I had gained considerable notoriety. The miners dubbed me "Doctor," and called for my services in all cases requiring medical assistance. With Wakometkla's remedy alone as my entire pharmacopœia, I battled with many forms of disease incident to our rough and exposed life, and met with almost unvarying success. In fact, in that region I expect I shall never be known by any other title than "Doctor," although I do not claim or fancy such a designation. It would be well for the people if the old school mineral physicians, who are rapidly ruining the health of the entire nation by the free use of deleterious and poisonous drugs, would take a leaf from the book of nature, and re-study their profession in the same school from which I graduated—the school of nature.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE "VIGILANTS."

With the influx of population to our settlement came adventurers of all classes; desperadoes, gamblers, broken down professional men, *nymphs du pave* of the coarse and vulgar sort, gentlemen who "had interests" in "wild-cat" mines in half the counties of the Pacific States, *greasers*, or Mexicans, Indians (*pueblas*)—in short, a conglomerate mass of humanity; or, judging by later events, one might rather say *inhumanity*—such as is nowhere to be seen but in the mining towns of the far West. Under the instructions of Ned Harding, we had on our first arrival "located" all the "claims" that there was any probability of our working, and we were therefore secured against interference on the part of the new comers, who went prospecting all over the adjacent country, locating claims by the hundred.

As the process of "locating" claims may be new to the reader, I will give a brief description of it.

The first thing is to find your "lead," for this precious metal is not found indiscriminately in every rock or ledge you may chance upon. It is found only in the quartz rock, a ledge of which, say twenty feet in thickness, may run like a curbstone set on edge for many miles across hills and in valleys. It may be a mile in depth, and maintain a nearly uniform thickness, being perfectly distinct from the casing rock on each side of it, and keeping its distinctive character always, no matter how deep or how far into the earth it extends. Wherever it is bored into, gold and silver

are found; but none in the meaner rock surrounding it. This peculiar rock formation is called a "lead;" and one of these you must first find before you have anything to "locate" a claim upon. When your prospecting has resulted in the discovery of a "lead," you write out and put up a "notice" as follows:

NOTICE.

I (or we), the undersigned, claim one (or more, according to the number of the party) claim of three hundred feet, and one for discovery, on this silver—(or gold) bearing quartz lead, or lode, extending east and west from this notice, with all its dips, spurs, and angles, extensions and sinuosities, together with fifty feet of ground on each side for working the same.

Then you file a copy of the same with the Mining Recorder in the town, and your claim is "entered." In order to secure it, however, you must, within ten days, do a certain amount of work upon the property, or any one may re-enter it at the expiration of that time.

Among the most important citizens in every mining community are the assayers, of whom there are generally a swarm to be found about every new strike; some of them the veriest charlatans that ever disgraced an honorable profession.

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When you have located your claim, the next thing is to select some specimens and subject them to the test of the "fire assay." For this purpose it is customary to select the richest lump you can find, and take it to the assayer. On the result of his assay, he will predicate that a ton of such ore would yield hundreds, perhaps thousands of dollars; and in this way many a worthless mine has been sold for a large price. In fact, I think, as a rule, the speculators made far more than the miners themselves.

We had at one time an assayer in our camp, who obtained such rich results from every specimen of rock brought to him, that he soon had a virtual monopoly of the business. No matter what specimen might be brought to him, he would demonstrate that it contained so large a portion of gold or silver, that the development of the mine could not fail to be profitable. Some of his rivals in the trade, becoming jealous of his superior success, conspired together and concocted a plan for his overthrow. One of them procured somewhere an old lapstone, and breaking it into small fragments, selected one as the specimen to be subjected to the intended victim for testing. They let several of the principal miners into the secret, and as there had been some doubts of the reliability of the reports of the assayer in question, they readily assented to assist in proving the truth of the matter. So one of them brought him the "specimen" and left it for assay. The result was encouraging in the extreme; for in the course of an hour the assayer sent in his report, from which it appeared that a ton of rock equal to the sample, would yield \$1,324.80 in silver, and \$214.58 in gold. The whole matter was at once made public, and the discomfited charlatan immediately found that important business called him elsewhere, and departed between two days. It was well for him that he did so; for so great was the popular indignation, that it is probable he would have found a *permanent* residence in the vicinity, could the excited miners have laid hands on him at this time.

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The town of "Harding" had now developed into an embryo city. We had nearly two thousand inhabitants, representing every grade of civilization and barbarism, principally the latter. At night the place presented an animated spectacle; for about every third shanty was either a drinking den or a gambling hell. All were brilliantly lighted and wide open to the street, from which you could see the excited groups around the gaming tables, or before the bars. Every man went armed to the teeth. Fights and affrays were of almost daily—nay, hourly—occurrence. The crack of the pistol became a very familiar sound in my ears, and so frequent were the scenes of violence and murder, that I began to think that the men I was among were worse than the savages with whom my lot had been cast in former years.

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To such a pass did the insolence and brutality of these desperadoes come at last, that the better class of the miners began to talk among themselves of the necessity for doing something to check it; but none seemed disposed to take the lead, and things went on from bad to worse, until the arrival of a new actor upon the scene brought them to a climax, and disorder and violence culminated in a sudden and severe spasm of justice.

The new arrival, who was destined to be the principal figure in the tragic scenes about to be enacted, was a Kentuckian, named Reid. He was some twenty-eight or thirty years of age, of medium size and finely proportioned, but very athletic. He had a frank and engaging expression of countenance, and nothing in his appearance would seem to indicate the hardened ruffian; yet he was reported to have slain thirty-two men in affrays or personal difficulties since he came into the mining country. From the very day of his arrival, this man became the acknowledged leader of all the lawless elements of our community; and as he seemed to be thirsting for notoriety, outrage followed outrage in rapid succession.

Among our own original party was a quiet, inoffensive German, named Schaeffer, than whom a more peaceable man could nowhere be found. Against him Reid seemed to have a special spite from the moment he first encountered him; and finally, meeting him one evening in the "El Dorado" saloon, he forced a quarrel on him, and then shot poor Schaeffer dead, before the latter had time to make a movement in his own defense. He apparently supposed that this would be passed over in the same manner as his previous ill deeds; but for once he was mistaken. In killing Schaeffer he had roused against him a determined and bitter enemy, none other than Ned Harding himself, who was now acting as mayor, or alcalde, of the town named in his honor. Ned quickly gathered together our own party, and some twenty-five of the leading men in the place, and announced his determination to form a "Vigilance Committee," and rid the town of the

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desperadoes who infested it. The entire party acquiesced in the wisdom of the proposal, and the committee was organized then and there. After some consultation, a plan of operations was agreed upon, and at once put in practice.

The next morning a neatly written note appeared posted in several prominent places in the camp, warning all objectionable characters to leave town within twenty-four hours, or their lives would be forfeited. This document was signed, "The Vigilants," and naturally created considerable stir and excitement among the parties at whom it was directed, and many of them took the warning and departed; but some of the more desperate, in all about twenty in number, banded themselves together under the leadership of Reid, and swore that they would never leave town, except of their own free will, and defied the Vigilants to touch any one of their number.

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At the expiration of the twenty-four hours, we determined to arrest all the members of Reid's party, and deal with them as they deserved. Accordingly, we mustered our forces, and at the same time made known our intentions to most of the more prominent men in the camp. When all our arrangements were completed, we proceeded in search of our *game*, and in a couple of hours had caught and caged every member of the gang, with two exceptions. One of these had in some way become aware of our intentions, and he found it convenient to seek another locality without delay. The other man was no less a person than Reid himself; and he went about boasting that no man dare arrest him, and threatening with instant death any man who should attempt it. This duty Ned Harding had reserved for himself, and when all was in readiness, he set out to accomplish it. As he was not known to be a "Vigilant," and was noted as a man of very quiet and peaceable character, no suspicion attached to him of being concerned in the matter. Arming himself, he went into the main street of the village, and entering one of the principal saloons, confronted the desperado. The latter must have seen in Ned's eye that he meant mischief, for he made a motion as if to draw a weapon; but before he could do so, he was seized by the throat, and thrown to the ground with the full force of Ned's muscular arm. Other "vigilants," to the number of about twenty, closed in around the fallen man and his captor, with drawn revolvers, and guarded against any attempt at rescue. Reid was securely bound, lifted to his feet, and placed in close confinement in one of the shanties belonging to our party, under the guard of two well-armed and determined men.

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Two hours later all the prisoners were brought up for execution. The miners turned out in large numbers, and forming in solid column, armed to the teeth, they marched up the principal street and halted in front of the building where most of the prisoners were confined. The doomed men were quickly brought out, and informed of the fate in store for them, at the same time Ned Harding made his appearance, leading Reid, and the same announcement was made to the latter. Such a scene as ensued, I hope never to see again. These apparently fearless desperadoes, who had repeatedly imbrued their hands in human blood without an instant's hesitation, were transformed on the moment, into a pack of whining cowards; begging and entreating in the most abject manner, that their lives might be spared.

Reid, the ringleader of all, was the most utter craven of the whole number, and shrieks, curses and prayers for mercy rolled unceasingly from his lips, until the rope choked his utterance. Just outside the camp, stood a considerable grove of trees; to this we repaired with our prisoners, and in ten minutes more they were run up, one after another, and each hung convulsed in the death agony, at the end of a lariat.

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To me, the utter cowardice displayed by these ruffians was surprising—but there is something about the desperado nature that is unaccountable—at least, it seems unaccountable, and it is this. The true desperado is gifted with splendid courage, and yet he will take the most infamous advantage of his enemy; armed and free, he will stand up before a host and fight until he is cut to pieces, and yet, when brought under the gallows, he will plead and cry like a child. The case of Reid, was especially notable, from his bloody reputation, and the many instances of courage he had shown in his conflicts with other outlaws. Yet, when brought face to face with death, in a different form, he seemed the veriest poltroon that ever walked.

Words cost nothing, and it is easy to call him a coward (as all executed men, who fail to die "game" are invariably called by unreasoning people), and when a man like Reid, so exhausts himself by tears, prayers and lamentations, that he has scarcely strength enough to stand under the gallows, it seems hardly possible that he could be otherwise. Yet he had frequently defied and invited the vengeance of banded Rocky Mountain cut-throats, by shooting down their comrades or leaders, and never offering to hide or fly; he had shown himself to be a man of unquestioned bravery, for no coward would dare do such things.

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We often read of the most brutal and cowardly murderers, who, when on the gallows, make their last dying speeches without a tremor of the voice, and are swung off, into eternity, with what seems like the calmest fortitude. Hence, it seems clear, that in such low and degraded natures, it cannot be *moral* courage that sustains them. But if moral courage is not the requisite quality, what is it that such men as Reid, lack? Bloody, desperate, reckless, and yet kindly mannered and urbane gentlemen, who never hesitate to warn their enemies of their intention to kill them on sight, when next they meet. It seems to me a question worthy of study and solution.

The executions over, we returned to the town, first detaching a party to remove and bury the bodies. Then the assemblage quietly dispersed, and that night our little community saw the first peace and quiet it had known for many a day.

The condition of affairs in the new mining districts was peculiar. One reason why murder and outrage were so prevalent, was, that the rough element generally predominated, and among this class a person is not respected until he has "killed his man," as they express it. When any new

arrival came into camp, no one thought of inquiring if he was honest or industrious, but, had he killed his man? If not, he was a person of small consequence, and unworthy of further notice; if he had, the cordiality of his reception, and his standing in the community was graduated according to the number of his victories.

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No man could rise to any position of influence, with bloodless hands, without long and weary labor, but if he were known to have killed half a dozen men, his worth was at once appreciated, and he became a man of note in the community.

Hence, it is not surprising that many men were killed without the pretext of provocation; so impatient were these persons to achieve distinction and emerge from their obscurity, and become shining lights among the fraternity of desperadoes. "There goes the man that killed Jack Smith," was the sort of celebrity mostly coveted by this class of people; and I know of several cases, where persons tried to "kill their men," for no other reason, and in some instances were successful, in others, got killed themselves for their pains.

In such communities it is utterly impossible to convict a man of murder, arising from one of these public brawls or affrays, and it is only when patience ceases to be a virtue, and the long-suffering miners and others of the law-abiding classes, rise in their might, and by an indiscriminate execution of all persons of bad character, clear the atmosphere for a time, that such crimes are ever punished.

The desperado stalked the streets with a swagger, graded according to the number of his homicides, and a nod of recognition from him, was sufficient to make an humble admirer happy for the rest of the day.

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The deference that was paid to a desperado of wide reputation and who kept his "private graveyard," as the phrase went, was marked and cheerfully accorded. When he moved along the sidewalk in his excessively long-tailed frock coat, shiny stump-toed boots, and with dainty little slouch hat, tipped over his left eye, the small-fry roughs made room for his majesty; when he entered the restaurant, the waiters deserted bankers and merchants, to overwhelm him with obsequious attention; when he shouldered his way to the bar, the shouldered parties wheeled indignantly, recognized him, and—apologized. They got a look in reply, that made them tremble in their boots, and by this time, a gorgeous barkeeper was leaning over the counter, proud of a degree of acquaintance that enabled him to use such familiarity as "how are yer Jack, old feller; glad to see you; what'll you take? the old thing?" meaning his usual drink of course.

The best known names in the mining towns, were those belonging to these bloodstained heroes of the revolver. Governors, politicians, capitalists, leaders of the legislature, and men who had made big strikes, enjoyed some degree of fame, but it seemed local and insignificant, when compared with the celebrity of such men as these. There was a long list of them. They were brave, reckless men, and carried their lives in their own hands.

To do them justice, they did their killing principally among themselves, and seldom molested peaceable citizens, for they considered it small credit to add to their trophies so small an affair as the life of a man who was not "on the shoot," as they termed it. They killed each other on slight provocation, and hoped and expected to be killed themselves, for they considered it almost disgraceful for a man not to die "with his boots on," as they expressed it.

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Gradually their ranks were thinned by the ever ready pistol, but it was not so much this, as the change in public sentiment, that caused them mainly to disappear from the older mining communities. Now, except in newly opened diggings, the genuine desperado is a thing of the past.

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CHAPTER XXX.

CONCLUSION.

About this time rumors were rife that the Indians were contemplating a raid on the mine, and operations were temporarily suspended. Meetings were called, and a committee of defence organized, with a view to taking such measures as would place the settlement in a position to successfully resist all, or any attempts of the savages. Those who had had any experience in Indian warfare were called to the council, and consulted on the best means to avert the impending calamity. The panic was more painfully apparent among those who had come upon the scene hampered with goods and chattels of various kinds. These worthies were brimful of wrath and whiskey, and gave free vent to the expression of their opinions regarding the outside world generally, and Indians in particular. They were fertile in suggestion; and the many schemes they advanced for the total destruction of all who threatened their private interests would have

reflected credit, not to say renown, on a Don Quixote.

The thought of my enslaved wife was never absent from my mind. Day and night, sleeping and waking, her image haunted me. I fancied her suffering every degree of misery; and the consciousness that I was powerless to snatch her from the toils of relentless captors, caused me the most poignant anguish. I had a vague, half formed notion of seeking her unaided, and by once more assuming my Indian trappings and cognomen, advance in to the Apache country, penetrate to their villages, and by a bold dash, seize my wife and bear her defiantly off in the very teeth of my adversaries. This would have been very spirited and chivalrous, no doubt, but unfortunately, the obstacles that opposed themselves to this plan were legion. No sooner did I convince myself of the impracticability of such a mode of procedure, than other plans would present themselves, which, in their turn would have to be relinquished when submitted to the rigorous test of practicability. This constant strain on my mind interposed stumbling blocks to my material prosperity, as I had no heart for my work, and wandered about the diggings aimlessly. I was rallied by my comrades on my morose temper, and recommended to try work as an effectual antidote for the causes that were preying on my health.

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One balmy afternoon, as I sauntered among the working parties, gazing abstractedly at their operations, my attention was attracted to a group, who seemed to be very much excited by some event. A few had gathered about an object lying upon the ground, while others were running frantically in different directions as if they were possessed. My curiosity being excited I approached the group, and found that the cause of this alarm was one of their comrades, who had been bitten by a snake. The poor fellow was moaning piteously; and so sure was he that his death was only a matter of a few hours time, that he had begun to make the few bequests that would dispose of all his worldly goods, including the little hoard of "dust," so long and patiently sought for. One of his friends knelt at his side, and was endeavoring to pour the contents of a flask of whiskey down his throat. The poison had taken immediate effect, and he doubtless would have been a corpse in a few hours. I was immediately recognized, and one of the miners accosted me with "Hullo! Eastman, just the man we want; now is your time to produce some of those marvelous herbs you have told us about, and see what you can do for this poor fellow."

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My sympathies were awakened; my mind threw off its semi-stupor; and hastily glancing about me on the ground, I sought for some of those simple herbs and plants, that I had seen so effectually used in similar cases. Hastily gathering what I needed, I soon had leaves bandaged about the swollen parts, and then turned my attention to making a decoction of the herbs. This I forced the patient to take, and after caring for him assiduously during a few hours, I had the satisfaction of noting a marked change for the better. I was deluged with congratulations, and in a short time the fame of this new exploit in the healing art was noised abroad throughout the mine.

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My new friends were not miners, in the proper sense of the term, but a party of "mountain men," who had been allured hither by exaggerated reports of the immense wealth that was represented as scattered broadcast over the surface of the earth, and was only waiting for a claimant. Arriving on the ground they had staked out a claim, and fell to work without any delay. It is needless to add that they did not realize the immense riches they had so fondly anticipated. The result was that they had sickened of their bargain, and many were for pulling up stakes and returning to the free and easy life among the mountains.

A short time after the episode just related, there came to our camp one day, a trapper, who had but just returned from his traps, and was on his way to the nearest trading post, to exchange his peltries for powder, wearing apparel, etc. From him we learned that the Indians were preparing for some extensive raid, as he had seen numerous parties who were in their war paint. Among other items, he related how he had been captured by a hand of Apaches, and had remained among them eight days before he succeeded in eluding the vigilance of his guard. From him I gained the first information concerning my wife. He had been captured by some of Mahtocheega's band, and by the description he gave of the white captives at that time in the village, I felt sure that my wife was one of the number. Learning that on his return he would proceed to the same locality in quest of "beaver plew," I determined to accompany him. About half a dozen signified their intention of following my example, and a party was soon made up. The trapper bade us adieu, promising to return as soon as his skins were traded for the supplies of which he stood in need. Gathering together what little money I had, I purchased a horse, rifle and pistol, and prepared to go in search of my lost wife.

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We had not long to wait for our new friend; he returned in less than a week's time, and all being in readiness, we gathered up our traps, and took a final leave of the mine of San Ildefonso.

Passing out at the northern end of the settlement, we struck the Santa Fé road, and followed its sinuous windings for some days. We passed through the sleepy Mexican towns, that were situated along the route, without disturbing in the least degree the habitual drowsiness of their inhabitants. On the fourth day we made a stretch of sixty miles through that terror of travelers in this section—the "jornado del muerto." After having crossed in safety, we rested one day to recuperate the animals, and soon after arrived in Santa Fé, halting at the inn that had been the scene of the shooting affray on my former visit. Our stay in the capital of New Mexico was not of long duration, and once more we resumed our journey, striking out in a westerly direction towards the mountains.

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Our first encampment was on the banks of one of the tributaries of the Rio Colorado. Staking our horses out, as is the custom, we gathered around the camp fire, discussing our evening meal of fresh antelope steaks. Many were the stories told of trapper life, and as we filled our pipes for

a smoke before retiring, the subject of conversation was upon food. All had some anecdote to relate and after each had spun his yarn, Harding, who up to the present had been silent, drawled out, "Wal, I 'spect as how yer have had some tol'rabable bad jints in yer time, but I think I kin jest lay over anything in this yer party in the way o' supper. Howsumever, I will give yer a chance to hear how this nigger once got his supper up on the Yallerstone, last season.

"Yer see, I had been in them parts arter beaver, which war plenty, an' no mistake; an' one day, when I had gone to *cache* some skins, I left my rifle in the grass near my traps, like a gosh darned fool. Who should come along but a party of them black niggers, the Crows; and the first thing they sot eyes upon was my shootin' iron. In course, I seed it all, and jist had to lay low and cuss my tarnal stupidity, while them 'ere Crows hopped around like mad at finding my rifle and things. They was so pleased, 'peared like they forgot theirselves, and didn't foller up my trail, but galloped off, carryin' my plunder along with them. He! he! they mount a did as well, and let ole Harding alone."

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"I reckon that, too," remarked one; "'taint like they made much out of that spekalashun."

"Yer see, I war cleaned out, an' left with jest a pair o' leggins, better than two hunderd miles from anywhur. The company's post war the nearest, so I jest took down the river in that direcshun. I never seed varmint so shy. They wouldn't a been, blast 'em, if I had er had my traps, but there wa'n't a critter, from the minners to the buffler, that didn't take on as if they knowed how this nigger war fixed. I could get nothing for two days but lizard, an' scarce at that. I chewed up the old leggins, until I was as naked as Pike's Peak."

"Golly! was it winter?"

"No, 'twur calf time, and warm enuff for that matter. I didn't mind the want o' garments in that way, but I kud a eat more o' it. I soon struck a town of sand rats, and I made snares of my hair, and trapped some on 'em, but *they* grow shy, too, cuss 'em, and I had to give up that claim. This war the third day, and I wur gettin' powerful weak. I 'gin to think this child's time had come, and I would have ter pass in my chips. 'Twur a little arter sun up, an' I war sittin' on the bank, when I seed something cur'ous like floatin' down stream. When it kim closer, I seed it wur the karkidge of a buffler, and a couple of buzzards floppin' about on the thing, pickin' its peepers out. 'Twur far out, an' the water deep; but I said I was goin' to fetch it ashore, an' I did. I took to the water an' swum out. I could smell the animal afore I wur half way. I wur soon close up, and seen at a glimpse that the calf wur as rotten as punk. The birds, they mizzled. I wa'n't agoin' to have my swim for nothin', so I tuk the tail atween my teeth, and wagged my flippers for the shore. I hadn't made three strokes When the tail pulled out. I then swum round and pushed that 'ere thing afore me, until I had got it high and dry on a sandbar. 'Twur like to melt when I pulled it out o' the water. 'Twa'n't eatable nohow. I see the buzzards still flying about, and fresh ones comin', an' I took a idee that I might get some, so I laid down close to the buffler, and played possum. I wa'n't long there 'fore a big cock com a floppin' up, and lit on the karkidge. I grabbed him by the leg. The cussed thing wur nearly as stinkin' as the other; but it wur die dog, buzzard, or buffler; so I skinned the buzzard."

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"And ate it?" inquired one.

"No-o" slowly drawled the trapper, "it ate me." A general laugh followed this remark.

"The rest o' the birds got shy, and kept away on t'other side. 'Twa'n't no use tryin' *that* dodge over again. Jest then I 'spied a coyoat comin' lopin' down the bank, an' another follerin' upon his heels, an' two or three more on the same trail. I know'd it would be no joke grippin' one o' them by the leg, but I made up my mind to try it, an' I laid down jist as afore, 'side the calf. 'Twur no go! they smelt a rat, an' kep' cl'ar. Then I tuk a fresh idee in my head. I went for some o' the driftwood an' made a pen around the buffler; an' in the wink o' my eye I had six o' the varmints in the traps."

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"Then you had 'em, eh, old boy?" said one.

"You bet; I jest took a lot of stones, clomb up on the pen, an' killed the hull kit o' them. Such a jumpin' an' yowlin, as when I peppered them varmints; he! he! he! ho! ho! Arter this I had some 'at to eat; an' in a few days reached the company's post."

"Did you ever see any of those redskins again?" I inquired.

"Wal, you jest better believe I did. Yer see those five notches on this ere rifle? wal, they stand for Crows, they do."

A general laugh followed this yarn, and all averred that his experience in the eating line was unequalled. After the trapper had finished his story, we wrapped ourselves in our blankets, and were with the exception of the horse guard, soon in a deep slumber.

The next morning we were up and moving at sunrise; and after a march of twenty miles, came to a small stream heading in the Piñon range. It was fringed with cottonwood trees, and there was grass in abundance for our horses. We made a halt for an hour, and then proceeded on our journey. We had not gone far when we made a discovery that changed all our plans. Harding had been riding about a hundred yards ahead of the main party, when we observed him suddenly stop, bend down, and then throwing up his hands, beckon us on. We were soon up to the spot, asking in a breath what was the matter. He pointed to the ground, and sententiously replied, "*fresh Injun sign*." A consultation was held, and after an interchange of opinions, it was agreed that the trail was made by Apaches, and that from the trampled nature of the ground, it indicated the presence of a large party. We had no doubt as to their intentions. They were evidently bound south on their annual foray. Now was my time beyond peradventure. Never could I have had such

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another opportunity; perhaps even if I waited patiently for years.

I briefly related to my companions the circumstances of my capture, captivity, and subsequent escape, and asked their aid in rescuing my wife. Each grasped me cordially by the hand, and expressed their willingness to "see me through;" and after a few moments more spent in consultation, we agreed on the following plan: To push on at once and as speedily as possible for the Indian village, secrete ourselves in the adjacent mountains until nightfall, and then leaving the horses concealed in the bushes that fringe the base of the mountain, advance on foot to the chief's lodge. Once within its portal, it would be the work of a moment to seek out my wife, apprise her of what was transpiring, and quietly leading her out, hasten to our animals, mount, and ride away. This plan seemed feasible, and as moments were precious, we resumed the march.

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About noon we debouched through the mountain pass into a country of "openings;" small prairies bounded by jungly forests, and interspersed with timber islands. These prairies were covered with tall grass; and buffalo signs appeared as we rode into them. We saw their "roads," "chips," and "wallows." These signs filled us with pleasurable anticipations; as who has not longed for the delicious "hump ribs," which, when once tasted in all their juicy richness, are never to be forgotten. The full-grown forms of the cacti were around us, bearing red and yellow fruit in abundance. We plucked the pears of the pita-haya, and ate them greedily; in short, we dined on fruits and vegetables of many varieties, indigenous only to this wild region. But our stomachs longed for the favorite food, and we pushed on through the openings. We had ridden about an hour among the chaparral, when Harding, who was riding in advance, pointed downward, and intimated by signs that he had struck fresh buffalo tracks. Very soon after the animals came in view, and by using the bushes as cover, we made a very effectual "surround," killing some three or four. That night we regaled ourselves on buffalo, and the following morning pushed on with renewed vigor, and in the best of spirits.

Near evening on the fourth day following, we arrived at the foot of the Sierra; and directly in front of us, about midway up the valley, or pass, more properly speaking, lay the Apache village. An exclamation of joy escaped my lips. At last, then, the hopes and longings of nine weary years were about to be satisfied. My reflections were abruptly terminated by Harding remarking that it was highly important that we seek cover and approach the village cautiously, if we expected our efforts to be crowned with success. All felt the justness of this observation, and seeking the cover of the mountain, we proceeded on our journey. In a short time we had advanced as near as we deemed it prudent, until the night should close in. Our reins were tightened, and we sat on our weary horses, looking over the plain. A magnificent panorama under any circumstances lay before us; but its interest was heightened by the peculiar circumstances under which we viewed it. The lodges were dotted over the plain in picturesque profusion, the smoke curling gracefully up in their dreamy spirals. One lodge stood apart, and from its size and decorations, we at once guessed it to be the abode of the chief. Harding confirmed our conjectures. Several droves of horses were quietly browsing on the open prairie. The sun was setting. The mountains were tinged with an amber colored light; and the quartz crystals sparkled on the peaks of the southern Sierras. It was a scene of silent beauty.

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We remained for some time gazing up the valley, without any one uttering his thoughts. It was the silence that precedes resolve. An hour has fled; the sun sinks below the horizon, and the mountains take on a sombre hue. It is night. We urge our horses forward once more, keeping close to the mountain foot; conversing in whispers, we crawl around and among the loose boulders that have fallen from above, and after an hour's ride we find ourselves opposite the town.

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The night passes slowly and silently; one by one the fires are extinguished, and the plain is wrapped in the gloom of a moonless night. The swan utters its wild note, the gruya whoops over the stream, and the wolf howls on the skirts of the sleeping village.

Dismounting, we gather in a little knot, and consult as to what plan we shall pursue. It is finally determined that Harding and myself shall penetrate into the village, enter the chief's lodge, abduct my wife, and hastily rejoin our comrades, who will hold themselves in readiness to cover our retreat, and, if the worst comes to the worst, keep our pursuers at bay until we have made good our escape.

Hastily divesting ourselves of all unnecessary accoutrements, we started out on the plain, and cautiously approached the chief's lodge, which loomed up in the darkness like some hideous genii.

An Indian dog that was lurking about the door gave the alarm, but Harding's knife entered his vitals ere he could repeat it.

Now was the critical moment. Drawing the flap aside that served as a door, I peered cautiously in; all was silent; a small fire was burning in the center of the lodge, its fitful gleam dimly illuminating the interior. A number of low couches were ranged around the wall.

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But at this juncture a dilemma presented itself. Here were a number of women, one of when was certainly my wife; but how was I to ascertain in which of these couches she reposed. If I should trust to chance, advance to the first one and peer in, and by so doing startle its inmate, even though that inmate were my wife, the peculiar nature of the visit would so startle her that she would not be enabled to recognize the intruder.

However, I determined to approach the first bed and trust to the chapter of accidents for the rest. Advancing noiselessly to the side of the couch, I lifted the curtain of dressed buffalo hide.

The fire cast a dim light over the face of the sleeper, and, oh, joy, it was the loved features of my wife. I tried to speak, whisper her name; my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. I trembled like an aspen, and had to grasp the bed for support. This movement awakened the sleeper, and with an half-suppressed exclamation, she sprung to a sitting posture.

To breathe her name, clasp her in my arms, and rush for the door, was the work of an instant, and hastily snatching a robe that was suspended from the side of the lodge, I enveloped her in it, and rapidly gained the cover of the mountain. In a few moments our party was in full gallop down the valley.

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Leaving the Indian village, we started with all speed on our return. I did not anticipate pursuit, and we made no attempt to conceal our trail.

Indeed, my mind was so occupied with the grand fact that I had recovered my long-lost darling, that I thought of nothing else. As we rode along, each recounted to the other the story of their toils, trials, and sufferings; a thousand questions were asked and answered; and in the joy of the present and hope for the future, we were for a time happy.

About the middle of the forenoon we approached a thick chaparral, and were just entering it, when a party of about sixty Apaches suddenly rushed out from its leafy coverts, and with the rapidity of thought we were surrounded and captured. My wife was able, by her influence with the leader of the party, to save us from indignity, and a lengthy parley followed. I made known to the chief my desire to recover my wife, and endeavored to arrange some terms of purchase or barter. In this I was, after a time, successful, and, after an interminable siege of pipe smoking and discussion, relative to the price, we came to terms, and in a few minutes I had *purchased* my wife at the cost of all my *worldly* possessions. But I cared not for this; on the contrary, I was only too glad to recover my wife at any cost, and felt no regret at parting from the accumulations of two years of toil and hardship.

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Resuming our journey, we reached Santa Fé in safety, in a few days, and commenced making preparations for our return to the East. The kind-hearted Mexican women overwhelmed my wife with attentions, and she was soon provided with apparel more suitable than the barbaric, although beautiful, Indian costume. My principal difficulty was the want of money, and I was much perplexed to know how to secure a sufficient sum to enable us to return to our friends. It is probable that had I freely stated our circumstances and narrated our sad story, generous hearts might have been found among the many American miners and trappers sojourning in the town; for many a noble heart beats beneath a rough and unpromising exterior; but my pride shrank from appearing in the character of a mendicant, and I finally came to the conclusion that we must remain at Santa Fé for a time, until I could find some employment by which to earn sufficient means to enable us to return to our former home. I had forgotten the fact that I possessed a warm friend in Ned Harding, or, if I had thought of him in this connection, it was not with any idea that he could aid me.

In this I was mistaken, as the sequel will show. On the third morning after my return, Ned called me out under pretence of taking a walk, and after strolling about for a time in silence, he opened his mind as follows: "Well lad, what are ye goin' to do next? I suppose you don't intend to stay here in this 'ere God forsaken hole, that these yaller-bellies calls a city; the Lord forgive their ignorance; if they could only see Lunnon, once—well, as I was a sayin', you can't stay here, and you can't take your little girl back into the mining kentry, very well; so what do you mean to do? let old Ned know, and don't go round, keepin' as close as an ister, and never sayin' nothin' to nobody." Thus admonished, I forgot my reserve, and fully explained to him my dilemma. He listened in silence until I had finished, and then broke forth with—"Why, Lord bless ye, lad, yer gettin' foolish, certain, ho! ho! yer little woman has turned yer head, sure; why, you forgot all about the mine, and I reckon there's vally enough to that to send ye home like a nabob, if you like to travel that way."

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"The mine!" I exclaimed in surprise, "why Ned, I thought we had abandoned it altogether, you don't mean to tell me that I can realize anything from the claim?"

"You bet, I mean just that," said Harding, his features expanding into a broad grin as he marked my look of utter astonishment. "Why lad, if we were all agreed on the thing, I've got a party here that'll give us five thousand apiece for our claim—I ain't such a fool as I look, and it wa'n't for nothin' that I left Pete there a holdin' possession, and there he'll stay till he hears from me—so now if you're willin' to take five thousand for your sher, just say the word, and we'll have it settled in no time."

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Further inquiry elicited the information that during the two days previous, while I had spent my time in unprofitable cogitation, Ned had been "kinder prospectin' round among the speckilaters," as he termed it, and had found parties willing and anxious to buy the claim held jointly by Ned, Pete Jackson, and myself, for fifteen thousand dollars in cash. Ned had brought with him some specimens of the quartz which he had shown to the intending purchasers, and some of which they had subjected to assay, and the result of this had determined them to buy the claim if everything could be satisfactorily arranged.

It did not take me long to decide, in fact, I fairly jumped at the offer. The sum mentioned seemed a princely fortune at the time, and, in fact, to one in my situation it really was so, for wealth is but comparative, after all. The following morning the trade was arranged, the necessary papers drawn up, and Ned left the same afternoon for the mine in company with the buyers, to deliver the property and complete the transaction. In a few days he returned, and I soon found myself in possession of five thousand dollars in gold coin, the largest amount of money I ever

owned.

I now hurried the preparations for our departure, and a few days later we joined an eastward bound train, and journeyed with it towards the rising sun! With the details of our journey I will not weary the reader, suffice it to say that we made the trip without trouble or molestation of any sort, and reached St. Louis in safety. How strange it all seemed, to walk about the streets of the great city of the West, and as the residents fondly term it "the future great city of the world;" everything seemed so unreal, after the long years of my captivity and wild life among the mountains, that I used sometimes to fancy that it was all but a dream and I would presently awake to find myself again in the temple with Wakometkla, in that strange and far off land hidden among the mighty mountains of the Sierra Madre.

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We remained but a few days in the metropolis of the West, and then journeyed to a point further eastward, where my wife had relatives living, or at least supposed that some might yet be surviving. On our arrival we found such to be the case, and a joyful reunion was the result; we being received as two risen from the dead.

And now our cup of happiness was indeed full; reunited after so long a separation and such bitter suffering we had returned at last to friends and home!

In conclusion, I can only express my thanks to those kind readers who have followed me patiently through all my wanderings, and listened to my simple, yet I hope not uninteresting narrative of the hardships and perils through which I have passed.

If the story of our captivity has proved a source of entertainment to the reader—if it haply excites a feeling of sympathy and interest for the many wretched captives who yet remain in a servitude worse than death among the rude tribes of the West—if it renders the general public more familiar with a region of which so little is known—if should chance to afford to those officials of our government, to whom the subject is relegated, any new views in reference to the proper method of dealing with the Indians—if it accomplishes any of these ends, I shall be more than repaid for my labor in its preparation.

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My thanks are also due to my kind friend, Dr. Clark Johnson, without whom opportune aid this book would never have been written.

And now kind reader, for the present at least, *farewell*.

THE END.

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TO THE PUBLIC.

As there has been considerable inquiry concerning the remedy to which allusion is herein made, I will, by way of explanation, make the following statement, which will relieve me from a large amount of correspondence with anxious inquirers.

The remedy is the most remarkable purifier of the blood that I have ever known; it is a tonic, a diuretic, a nervine, and a gentle laxative. It is alterative, sudorific, soporific, and deobstruent.

These qualities, harmoniously blended into one single remedy, make one of the very best combinations which can possibly be taken into the human system.

It is a very remarkable remedy in disease of the stomach. Dyspepsia cannot exist any length of time if the remedy be taken as directed, *instantly* after eating.

All Diseases of the Liver and Bowels readily succumb to its magic influence, while all nervous diseases and all diseases of the blood are speedily eradicated by the peculiar elements in its composition, which act directly upon such difficulties.

We have thousands upon thousands of certificates from persons who have been afflicted with various maladies, and who have been cured by the use of this remedy; and I am, myself, frequently made surprised to learn what wonderful results follow the use of this medicine.

The remedy, Dr. CLARK JOHNSON'S INDIAN BLOOD SYRUP, is sold by agents in nearly every post-village in the United States; but wherever it happens that I do *not* have an agent, I shall be glad to make one, and would invite honorable persons to communicate with me upon the subject of an agency.

I require no money from agents except as the medicines are sold.

Trusting that the afflicted will make a trial of this remarkable remedy, which has providentially fallen upon my notice,

I am, with respect,
Yours, truly,
C. JOHNSON,
Jersey City, N.J.

July 1st, 1873.

Transcriber's Note

Some inconsistent spelling in the original document has been preserved.

Typographical errors corrected in the text:

Page 10 temporarily changed to temporarily
Page 29 by changed to my
Page 34 guttural changed to guttural
Page 64 gutterals changed to gutturals
Page 68 rythmic changed to rhythmic
Page 70 discernable changed to discernible
Page 73 Hugh changed to Huge
Page 86 Shoshoness changed to Shoshones
Page 94 Stanhawon changed to Stonhawon
Page 95 removed repeated word "the"
Page 109 orgie changed to orgy
Page 114 tassajo changed to tasajo
Page 116 use changed to uses
Page 118 apalling changed to appalling
Page 120 unforseen changed to unforeseen
Page 122 cascass changed to carcass
Page 136 otb-to-toa changed to oth-to-toa
Page 153 vanqueros changed to vaqueros
Page 168 circuituous changed to circuitous
Page 176 buffoloes changed to buffaloes
Page 234 conlcude changed to conclude
Page 235 occaions changed to occasions
Page 235 foreseen changed to foreseen
Page 236 goverment changed to government
Page 236 deseerts changed to desserts
Page 239 wierd changed to weird
Page 242 Is changed to It
Page 244 Stonawon changed to Stonhawon
Page 247 imperitive changed to imperative
Page 249 "tying the cattle" should read "tying the horses"
Page 259 by changed to my
Page 260 meritricious changed to meretricious
Page 260 enciriling changed to encircling
Page 264 soubriquet changed to sobriquet
Page 266 deleted extra word "under" before "undertaken"
Page 267 mental changed to metal
Page 269 rifs changed to rifts
Page 270 goverment changed to government
Page 291 praticability changed to practicability
Page 296 buzzarts changed to buzzards
Page 297 buzzart changed to buzzard
Page 297 buzzarts changed to buzzards

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SEVEN AND NINE YEARS AMONG THE
CAMANCHES AND APACHES: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY ***

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