BUFFALO BILL, THE SCOUT

HIS BOYHOOD DAYS, LIFE ON THE PRAIRIES, TRAPPER, SOLDIER, HUNTER AND SHOWMAN

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ILLUSTRATED

No. 8

M. A. DONOHUE & COMPANY
CHICAGO NEW YORK

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CHAPTER I.

HIS FIRST INDIAN.

William Frederick Cody, more generally known as Honorable W. F. Cody, and famous the world over as "Buffalo Bill," was born in Scott county, Iowa, February 26, 1845.

His father, Isaac Cody, was a farmer, in a small way, and with his wife Ann Cody, lived in a little log cabin on his farm in the Scott county backwoods, at that time regarded as a part of the Far West wilderness.

Mr. Cody did not find farming in Scott county a very profitable business, so, when Billy was about five years old, determined to "get out of the wilderness," and moved with his family to the little village of Le Clair, on the Mississippi river, some fifteen miles north of Davenport.

At Le Clair Billy was sent to school, but did not attend very regularly, as he found it much pleasanter, without the knowledge or consent of his parents, to go skiff-riding on the father of waters.

But he did not long have the opportunity to do either, for after residing at Le Clair for only two

years, Billy's father again determined to make a move, and packing his family and possessions into a carriage and three "mover wagons" he started for the then Territory of Kansas.

After a journey of much interest to all, especially to Billy, across the plains of Iowa and over the hills of Missouri, the family arrived in good shape at Weston, a small town on the border line between Missouri and Kansas, where Billy's uncle, Elijah Cody, a well-to-do merchant, resided. Here the family remained, moving upon one of Elijah's farms, while Billy's father crossed the line into Kansas and established a trading post of the Kickapoo Indian Agency at Salt Creek Valley.

When Billy was eight years old his father bought him a pony, which at once gave Billy an occupation and a pastime, for he combined business with pleasure, and with the aid of his pony, made himself useful to his father in a number of ways.

There were many ready and rough riders at Kickapoo then, and Billy soon learned to be a pretty good horseman. But his pony continued to be stubborn and unsubmissive. One day a company of eight men came into the vicinity of Mr. Cody's trading post, driving a herd of several hundred horses which they had taken wild in California and driven across the plains. One of the men watched Billy as he was trying to pet his fractious pony into submissiveness.

"Here, my lad," said the man. "I can break that pony for you," and making a slip noose, he passed it over the pony's nose and springing lightly upon his back, dashed away over the prairie and kept the pony

upon a run until he was completely exhausted. Riding up to where Billy and his father stood he sprang to the ground, passed the lariat to Billy, and said:

"He is all right now. Get on and ride him."

While Billy went away to care for his pony, his father drew the stranger out into conversation, and found he had been a great wanderer, that he had been in Australia, had served a time as a circus rider, had spent several years in California, hunting and capturing wild horses, and was then on his way to Weston, Missouri, to visit his uncle, Elijah Cody.

"What is your name?" asked Mr. Cody in surprise.

"Horace Billings."

"Then you are my nephew, the son of my sister Sophia. I am Isaac Cody, brother of Elijah Cody!"

The discovery was mutually pleasant, and Billy was called up and introduced to his cousin Horace. Henceforward they were fast and inseparable friends, the one being, however, only a lad about nine years old, while the other was a tall, handsome man, measuring in height six feet and two inches.

Billings was an accomplished horseman, and took especial pride and pleasure in teaching the boy the art of horsemanship, together with the use of the lasso.

The United States had lost about three hundred horses on the Kansas plains by stampede, and a reward of ten dollars a head was offered for their capture and return to Fort Leavenworth. Billings and Billy roamed the plains, chasing these semi-wild horses, and young Cody soon was proficient in the science and art of horsmanship.

In the meantime the Indian boys who visited his father's trading post, had taught him to use the bow and arrow, and from them he had learned to talk in the Kickapoo language.

In 1854 the bill known as the "Enabling Act of Kansas Territory" passed Congress. Immediately thousands of people poured into Kansas to pre-empt land claims. Among these were hundreds of Missourians who were very loud in their declarations that Kansas should be made a slave state, as was Missouri. Excitement ran high. The question was the one theme of conversation wherever a company of men were assembled. At one of these impromptu gatherings Mr. Cody was called upon for his views. He was quite a politician, and in Iowa was considered a good stump speaker.

He got upon a box and began to express his views in mild language, but insisting that Kansas ought to be kept "white," and slavery not to be allowed to fill the state with negroes. This ingenious argument in behalf of freedom did not "take" very well with his audience, and encouraged by the shouts of disapproval from the crowd, a ruffian jumped upon the box where Mr. Cody stood, and drawing a large bowie knife plunged it into the speaker's breast twice, and would have killed him had not some of the more humane spectators interfered in his behalf.

Mr. Cody recovered from his wounds, but was compelled to flee from the country to escape death by hanging at the hands of the pro-slavery border ruffians. He went to Grashopper Falls, thirty-five

miles west of Fort Leavenworth, but was pursued by his enemies even there, and would have been surprised and killed, had not Billy discovered their intentions, and, in a wild ride of many miles, mounted on his pony, most of the time pursued by the would-be lynchers, warned his father in time for him to escape to Lawrence, where he was made a member of the first legislature of Kansas, and assisted in organizing the territory into a State.

When Billy was but ten years old, he hired out to Mr. Russell, of Leavenworth, to herd cattle, and received for his services the munificent sum of twenty-five dollars per month, besides his board. At the end of two months he went back home, carrying with him one hundred silver half dollars, his salary as cattle herder. His mother received him joyfully, although he had run away to accept the position, not being able to get his mother's consent. He afterward spent seven years in the service of the same man in the several capacities of pony express, wagon master, cattle driver, etc.

About this time he got into a difficulty with a schoolmate on account of having the same girl for a sweetheart. Billy and his sweetheart would spend the hours of intermission from study at school in building bowers for a mimic home. The other boy took delight in tearing these houses down as fast as Billy could build them. The finale was a school boy fight in which Billy used a dirk, inflicting an ugly but not dangerous wound upon his rival's leg. To avoid the punishment he knew to be in store for him

when the teacher discovered his act, he fled, and did not stop until he intercepted a government train of freight wagons which he had noticed creeping slowly along over the prairie. Fortunately he was acquainted with one of the teamsters, and in him found a sympathizing friend, who, when camp was made for the night, mounted a horse and taking Billy up, rode back to Mrs. Cody's and obtained permission of her to take the young fugitive on his trip, to be gone about forty days. She finally agreed to the arrangement. When Billy returned, he found his mother had succeeded in pacifying the father of the boy he had wounded. Even Billy made friends with him, and the friendship remained between the two, a lasting monument of the gentle and benign influence of a mother's love and foresight.

In April, 1857, Billy's father died. Billy then determined to follow the life of a plainsman to obtain means to assist his mother in caring for the family.

The following month he found employment with Mr. Russell and his partners, and started for Salt Lake City with a herd of cattle for the United States troops sent out to fight the Mormons. It was on this journey that Billy received his initiation as an Indian fighter and killed his first Indian, though at the time but eleven years of age. His own account of the matter, as given in his autobiography, is as follows:

"Nothing occurred to interrupt our journey until we reached Plum Creek, on the South Platte River, thirty-five miles west of Old Fort Kearney. We had made a morning drive and had camped for din-

ner. The wagon master and the majority of the men had gone to sleep under the mess wagons. The cattle were being guarded by three men, and the cook was preparing dinner. No one had an idea that the Indians were anywhere near us. The first warning we had was the firing of shots and the whoops and yells from a party of them, who, watching us napping, gave us a most unwelcome surprise. All the men jumped to their feet and seized their guns. They saw in astonishment the cattle running in every direction, they having been stampeded by the Indians, who had killed the three men who were on day herd duty, and the red devils were now charging down on the rest of us.

"I then thought of mother's fear of my falling into the hands of the Indians, and I had about made up my mind that such was to be my fate; but when I saw how coolly and determinedly the McCarthy brothers were conducting themselves, and giving orders to the little band, I became convinced that we would stand the Indians off. Our men were all well armed with Colt's revolvers and Mississippi 'yagers,' which last carried a bullet and two buckshots.

"The McCarthy boys, at the proper moment, gave orders to fire upon the advancing enemy. The volley checked them, although they returned the compliment and shot one of our party through the leg. Frank McCarthy then sung out, 'Boys make a break for the slough yonder, and we can then have the bank for a breastwork.'

"We made a run for the slough, which was only a

short distance off, and succeeded in reaching it safely, bringing with us the wounded man. The bank proved to be very effective breastwork, affording us good protection. We had been there but a short time when Frank McCarthy, seeing that the longer we were coralled the worse it would be for us, said:

"'Well, boys we will try to make our way back to Fort Kearney by wading in the river and keeping the bank for a breastwork.'

"We all agreed that this was the best plan, and accordingly proceeded down the river several miles in this way, managing to keep the Indians at a safe distance with our guns, until the slough made a junction with the Platte River. From there down we found the river at times quite deep, and in order to carry the wounded man along with us, we constructed a raft of poles for his accommodation, and in this way he was transported.

"Occasionally the water would be too deep for us to wade, and we were obliged to put our weapons on the raft and swim. The Indians followed us pretty close, and were continually watching for an opportunity to get a good range and give us a raking fire. Covering ourselves by keeping well under the bank, we pushed ahead as rapidly as possible, and made pretty good progress, the night finding us still on our way, and the enemies still on our track.

"I being the youngest and the smallest of the party, became somewhat tired, and without noticing it, I had fallen behind the others for some little distance. It was about ten o'clock and we were keeping very quiet

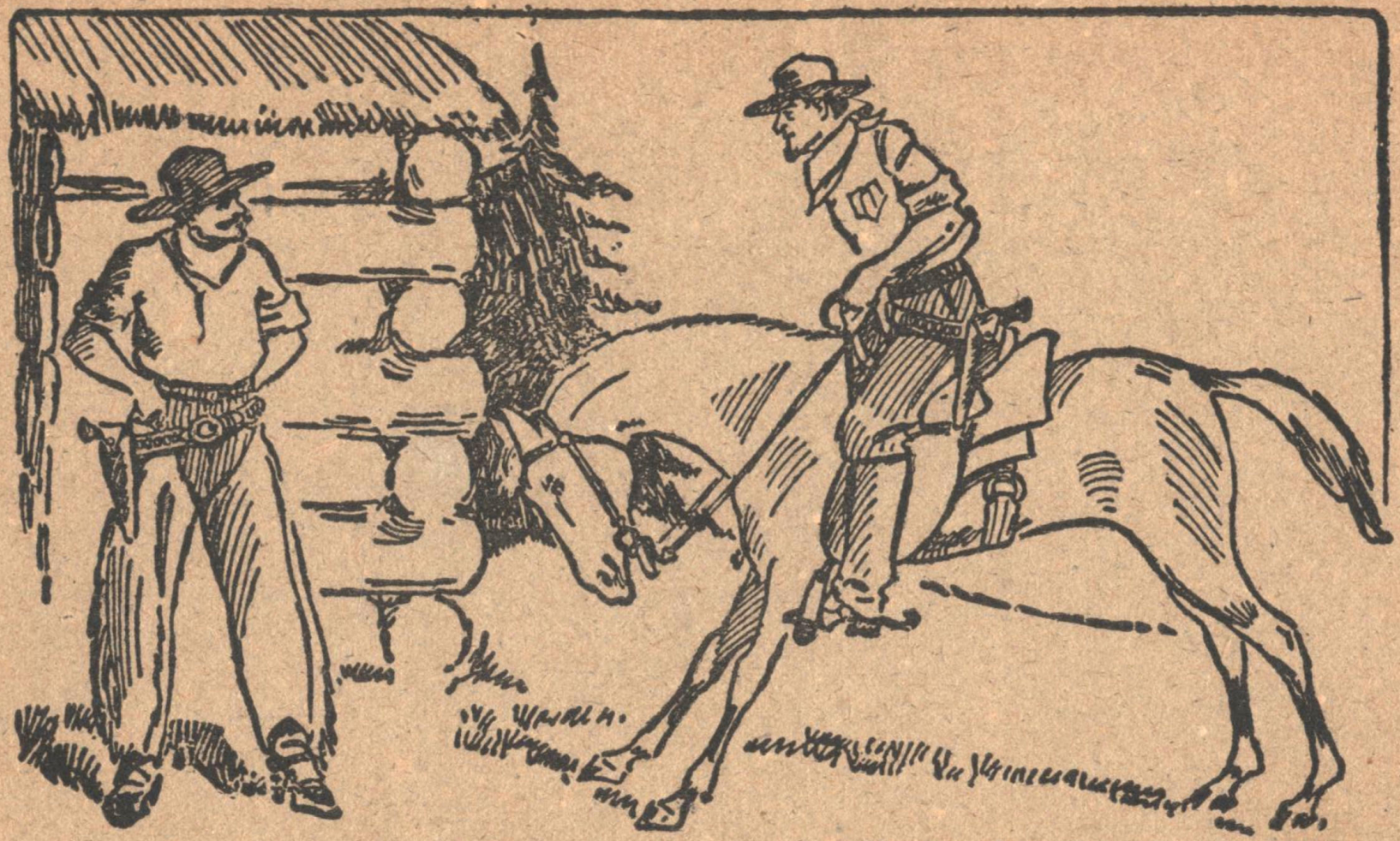
and hugging close to the bank, when I happened to look up to the moon-lit sky and saw the plumed head of an Indian peeping over the bank. Instead of hurrying on and alarming the men in a quiet way, I instantly aimed my gun at the head and fired. The report rang out sharp and loud on the night air, and was immediately followed by an Indian whoop, and the next moment about six feet of dead Indian came tumbling into the river. I was not only overcome with astonishment, but was badly scared, as I could hardly realize what I had done. I expected to see the whole force of Indians come down upon us. While I was standing thus bewildered the men who had heard the shot and the war whoop, and had seen the Indian take a tumble, came rushing back.

"'Who fired that shot?' cried Frank McCarthy.

"'I did,' replied I rather proudly, as my confidence returned, and I saw the men coming up.

"'Yes, and little Billy has killed an Indian stone dead,—too dead to skin,' said one of the men, who had approached nearer than the rest, and had nearly stumbled upon the corpse. From that time on I became a hero and an Indian killer. This was of course the first Indian I had ever shot, and my exploit created quite a sensation.

"The other Indians upon learning what had happened to their 'advance guard,' set up a terrible howling, and fired several volleys at us, but without doing any injury, as we were well protected by the bank. We resumed our journey down the river and traveled all night. We reached Fort Kearney just after the



reveille—bringing the wounded man with us. The commandant at once ordered a company out to endeavor to recapture the cattle from the Indians. The troops followed the train to the head of Plum Creek and there abandoned it, without having seen a single red skin."

CHAPTER II.

THE SECOND TRIP.

In 1853 Billy made arrangements to make another trip across the plains, in the capacity of "extra hand" to the wagonmaster of a train that was to transport supplies for the army of General Albert Sidney Johnson, that had been sent out to Salt Lake to look after the Mormons.

The wagonmaster's name was Lew Simpson, and he was one of the most trusty teamsters that ever commanded a bull-train. Simpson had known Billy for quite a while, and he knew that he was certain to obtain the latter's consent to make the trip with him across the plains, though at that time such a journey was exceedingly perilous.

When Simpson proposed the matter to Billy, he was wild to go, but his mother interposed an emphatic objection and urged him to abandon so reckless a desire. She reminded him that in addition to the fact that the trip would possibly occupy a year, the journey was one of extreme peril, beset as it was by Mormon assassins and treacherous Indians, and begged him to accept the lesson of his last experience and narrow escape as a providential warning. But to her pleading and remonstrances Billy returned the answer that he had determined to follow the plains as

an occupation, and while he appreciated her advice and desired greatly to honor her commands, yet he could not on any account give up his determination to accompany the train.

Finding it was impossible to move Billy from his determined purpose to accompany Simpson at all hazards, Mrs. Cody reluctantly gave her consent, but not until she had called upon Simpson and secured from him the promise that he would take the best of care of her precious boy.

So Billy, after arranging with his employers that when his pay fell due it should be turned over to his mother, set out with Simpson and his train of ten wagons direct for Salt Lake.

A description of the wagon trains that carried freight from Fort Leavenworth to Salt Lake City, will interest the reader.

The wagons were huge affairs and strongly built, being capable of carrying something over seven thousand pounds of merchandise. They were provided with a double canvas cover stretched over bows to protect the freight from rain. The wagons were drawn by oxen, several yokes of them being attached to one wagon. Each team had a driver. The train consisted of twenty-five drivers, one wagonmaster who had control of the entire cavalcade, one assistant wagonmaster, one "extra hand," one night herder, one cavallard driver, whose duty it was to drive the loose animals. This company was divided into messes of seven persons each, and each mess did its own cooking. One of the men would cook, another get water,

another wood, while another stood guard, and so on, each having a particular duty to perform. The entire company was heavily armed with revolvers and rifles, and always had their weapons handy in case of emergency. The wagonmaster, in the language of the plains, was known as the "bull-wagon boss," the teamsters were known as the "bull whackers," and the whole train as the "bull outfit." The company for which Billy was working had two hundred and fifty "outfits," which consisted of 6,000 wagons, 75,000 oxen, and 8,000 men. Thus it will be seen that the position Billy was called to fill was no mean one, and the wages paid, fifty dollars per month in gold, was a prize to be coveted.

The trip from the outset was full of interest to Billy. The country through which they passed fairly swarmed with buffaloes, and the train laid over one day for a grand bison hunt. They killed quite a number of buffaloes, captured a number of stray cattle—a portion of a herd that the Indians had stampeded—and enjoyed a day of rare sport.

The next morning the train resumed its onward journey towards great Salt Lake. The train was strung out to a considerable length along the road which ran near the foot of the sand-hills, two miles from the South Platte River. Then and there it was that Billy first witnessed a buffalo stampede. In his autobiography, Buffalo Bill thus describes the exciting scene: "Between the road and the river we saw a large herd of buffaloes grazing quietly, they having been down to the stream for a drink. Just at this

time we observed a party of returning Californians coming from the west. They, too, noticed the buffalo herd, and in another moment they were dashing down upon them, urging their steeds to the greatest speed. The buffalo herd stampeded at once and broke down the hills; so hotly were they pursued by the hunters that about five hundred of them rushed through our train pell-mell, frightening both men and oxen. Some of the wagons were turned clear round, and many of the terrified oxen attempted to run to the hills, with the heavy wagon attached to them. Others turned around so short that they broke the wagon tongues off. Nearly all the teams got entangled in their gearing, and became wild and unruly, so that the perplexed drivers were unable to manage them.

The buffaloes, the cattle and the drivers were soon running in every direction, and the excitement upset nearly everybody and everything. Many of the cattle broke their yokes and stampeded. One big buffalo bull became entangled in one of the heavy wagon-chains, and it is a fact that in his desperate efforts to free himself he not only actually snapped the strong chain in two, but broke the ox-yoke to which it was attached, and the last seen of him he was running towards the hill with it hanging from his horns. A dozen other equally remarkable incidents happened during the short time that the frantic buffaloes were playing havoc with our train, and when they got through and left us our outfit was badly crippled and scattered."

Nothing further of special interest occurred to the

train until it arrived within a few miles of Green River in the Rocky Mountains. Here the company was surprised by Joe Smith and a squad of Danites from the Mormons, who were permitted to ride into the camp while at noonday halt, as the wagonmaster and drivers supposed them to be a lot of Californians going East. The trainmen were given one wagon, some provisions, and their arms and six yoke of oxen, and told to put back to Ford Bridger. They could do nothing but obey. They tarried, however, and saw the entire train of twenty-four wagons, and the loads of hard tack, bacon, ammunition and other supplies for Gen. Johnson's army, burned to ashes.

They finally reached Fort Bridger, but there were gathered three or four hundred men in the employ of the Freight Company, besides the garrison of the United States troops.

Winter now set in, and provisions were scarce. The men were reduced to three quarter rations, and then to one half rations, and finally to one quarter. As a last resort they killed and ate the oxen, which by this time had been reduced to skin and bones, and as these failed to supply the demand, mules were also killed and portioned out to the half-famished men and soldiers. When the mules and oxen were gone, the wood for fuel was brought from the mountains by men, twenty or more of whom would drag a wagon loaded with fuel. Spring, though, came at last, and with it a move to Fort Laramie. Here another train was organized to return to Fort Leavonworth. On this trip, Billy, Simpson and his assistant, rode ahead of the

train to overtake one that had a day's start. These three were attacked by forty Indians. Simpson immediately dismounted and had the other two do the same. The mules were killed, and behind these the three lay all day and all night, keeping the Indians at bay with their rifles and revolvers as they were armed only with bows and arrows. However, the assistant wagonmaster was severely wounded in the shoulder by an arrow. Next day about 10 o'clock the train arrived, and the Indians suddenly departed, leaving on the field four dead companions.

Billy finally arrived home in safety, to the great joy of his mother and sister.

The next move Billy made, was to join a party of trappers who intended to trap for beaver and otter, and kill wolves for their pelts. This business proved unprofitable, and was abandoned after two months. He then returned home and remained about three months, attending the neighborhood school.

When spring came again, he joined a party bound for Pike's Peak, the then newly discovered gold field. Two months of prospecting was all he could stand, and he then concluded he was not cut out for a miner.

The next business in which he engaged, was pony express rider. This was at that time a new business on the plains. He was obliged to ride forty-five miles in three hours, and change horses three times. He continued in this work two months or more, during which time he never failed to make his trips according to schedule. It was very hard on him, and he gave it up at the urgent solicitation of his mother.

CHAPTER III.

THE TRAPPER.

Billy's restless spirit could not be satisfied with the seemingly humdrum life of a farmer, and soon he went on a trapping expedition up the Republican River and its tributaries in company with Dave Harrington. They were very successful, and had many trophies of their skill, when Billy, unfortunately, slipped on the ice while creeping toward a herd of elk around the bend of a sharp bluff, and fell heavily, breaking his leg just above the ankle. This left the two trappers in anything but an enviable situation. Dave played the surgeon and rather skilfully set the broken bone. The prospect was dreary enough. They were one hundred and twenty-five miles from the nearest settlement. Rather than remain in that dreary region through the winter, Billy persuaded Dave to go to the settlement, get an ox-team, return and take him home. This he consented to do, and left on his long tramp, after providing fuel and food to last his friend Bill until he should return. This he expected to do in about twenty days. The house where Bill now lay was a "dug-out," a hole made in the ground, covered with poles, upon which were placed grass, leaves and other similar materials. To be thus situated was bad enough for a

well man, and far worse for a boy in Billy's condition. The days dragged slowly by until twelve of them had been passed. One day at this time, Billy was awakened from sleep by some one standing by his bed and touching his arm. He opened his eyes, and saw looking into his face, the hideous outline of a huge Indian warrior, all painted and bedecked for war. Through the door other Indians were crowding, and outside the dug-out, Billy heard the tramping of horses and the voices of those who could not get into the little room. He knew they were on the war-path and would not hesitate to put him to death after subjecting him to such torture as their devilish ingenuity could invent. They were not in a hurry, however, to execute their plans against him, but proceeded to investigate the hut and contents. They very deliberately set about cooking what food they wanted and could find at hand, taking special pains to use all his tea, coffee and sugar. He watched their movements with intense interest, but could find no way by which he could escape. Finally, an old Indian came in, and Billy was rejoiced to see that he was a chief whom he had met before. The recognition was mutual. The Indian chief,—Rain-in-the-face, could speak a little English, and Billy could speak a little Indian language, and he thus succeeded in securing the old chief's attention and sympathy. He begged that his life might be spared, and food left to keep him from starving. The chief consulted his warriors, and told Billy that they would spare his life, but the provisions were to be used. He then asked them to let him keep his gun and pistol

as a means of defense from wild animals. This they would not consent to do, as one of their number had no fire arms, and greatly admired Billy's outfit in that line. They stayed all day and all the next night, and left next morning, taking all Billy's cooking utensils, and nearly all his provisions. He was glad, however, to see them leave without taking his life. A heavy snowstorm now set in and completely covered the dug-out. At night, wolves came in immense numbers, howled around the hut, ran over the top of it, scratched for an entrance, and made Billy's blood run cold at the prospect of being eaten alive by half-starved wolves after escaping the scalping-knife of the savages.

The twentieth day came, the day appointed for Harrington's return. Billy counted the hours as they went by, and waited and listened for the welcome voice of his tried and true friend. Night came, but Harrington came not. A whole week passed beyond the appointed time, and Billy was still alone. Finally, on the twenty-ninth day, when hope was about dead, and Billy nearly dead, too, he heard a voice:

"Hello, Billy!"

"All right, Dave!"

"Well, old boy, are you alive?"

"Yes, but that is about all. I have had a tough siege of it since you went away."

This conversation was carried on while Dave was digging his way through the drifted snow to the door of the hut. He finally pushed the door open, went in, and was immediately clasped in Billy's arms. He

would not let him go, but hugged him time and again, meanwhile telling him how he loved him.

"Well, Billy, my boy," said Dave, "I hardly expected to see you alive, but as I had left you here, I was bound to come through, or die in the attempt."

Again Billy threw his arms around Dave's neck and fell upon his bosom while tears of joy ran down his face.

Dave then sat down and told Billy what great trials he had encountered in going and coming. How the snow had blocked his way; how the oxen had wandered off, and what a weary time he had hunting them.

The two friends soon packed up what little goods the Indians had left them, and put back in a wagon drawn by the team of oxen, for civilization. They accomplished the return trip, and Billy was once more at his mother's house. Dave Harrington accompanied him. Here Dave died, being tenderly nursed by Billy's mother and sisters, who felt that they could not do enough for one who had done so much for Billy. But his disease was not to be baffled, and after an illness of only a week, poor Harrington died of pneumonia.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PONY EXPRESS.

A short time after the death of his friend Harrington, Billy met his old wagonmaster and friend, Lew Simpson, who was fitting out a train at Atchison and loading it with supplies for the Overland Stage Company.

"Come along with me, Billy," said Simpson. "I'll give you a good lay-out. I want you with me."

"I don't know that I would like to go so far west as that again," replied Billy; "but I do want to ride the pony express once more; there is some life in that."

Simpson laughed at Billy's hankering for further experience in the pony express business, but told him if that was what he had got his mind set on, he had better come with him to Atchison and see Mr. Russell, who would be pretty certain to give him a situation.

Billy acceded to this proposition, and was given the coveted position by Mr. Russell, on his arrival at Atchison. He was assigned to a route seventy-six miles long, and rode with ease and regularity. One day after making his trip he found the rider who was to continue the route a distance of eighty-five miles, was drunk, and unable to go out. Billy immediately mounted a fresh pony, and started on the drunken

rider's route. He made the ride on time, having accomplished 322 miles on horseback without an hour's rest. It is the greatest feat in that line on record.

A short time after making this trip, Billy was riding along the same route, when a band of Sioux Indians, armed with pistols, dashed out from behind a sand ravine, and gave Billy one of the closest calls for his scalp he had ever experienced up to that date. But, very fortunately for Billy, and for the pony express company, Billy's horse was a swifter stepper than any of those ridden by the Indians, and Billy soon placed a very safe distance between himself and his pursuers. When he arrived at Sweetwater, the first station on the route of his flight, he found that the Indians had raided the station, killed the stock tender, and driven off all the horses so that he was compelled to continue his journey without a fresh mount. He arrived safely at Ploutz Station, twelve miles further on, having made a twenty-four mile straight run without change of horse.

One day when Billy was laying off, taking the world easy, and only riding when other riders were disabled, he started out for a bear hunt, all by himself. He rode up into the mountains without discovering any bears, and not wishing to return without any trophy of his skill, he continued to ride until night came on. He now found himself many miles from headquarters, and in a wild and desolate region. He had killed two sage hens, and was about to make a fire to cook one of them for supper, when he heard the neighing of a horse. He sprang to his horse, which stood near by,

to prevent him from answering, as is usual for horses to do under such circumstances.

He was now quite anxious to know whether the owner of the horse was friend or foe. He made a reconnoissance and saw a light shining at a little distance from him. Approaching the light he found it came from a dug-out in the mountain side. He drew near cautiously, and found that persons were conversing in his own language. He was glad to find that the occupants were white men. He rapped on the door, and was immediately answered:

"Who's there?"

"A friend, and a white man."

"Come in."

He stepped in and found himself in the midst of as rough a set of men as he had ever met in all his wanderings. One or two of them he recognized as formerly teamsters when he was connected with the freight trains of the plains. He was pleased to see that they did not recognize him. He was thoroughly surprised and frightened by his unexpected surroundings, but did not by appearance or tone of voice betray his emotions. He wanted to get away from them as soon as possible.

"Where are you going, young man?" said one of them.

"I am on a bear hunt."

"Who is with you?"

"I am entirely alone."

"Where are you from?"

"I left Horseshoe Station this morning."

"How came you here?"

"Just as I was going into camp, about one hundred yards down the creek, I heard one of your horses whinny, and then I came to your camp."

"Where is your horse?"

"I left him down the creek."

"Well, we will send for him."

"Captain, I will leave my gun here, go down and get my horse, and return and stay all night."

"Jim and I will go with you," said one of the men. "You may leave your gun here. You will not need it."

"All right, lead the way."

Billy now knew he was in the hands of a band of horse thieves. He knew that he would never get away from them alive, unless he escaped that hour. He thought fast, and soon had his plan matured. There seemed to be but little choice between being shot to death while fleeing from them, and being shot to death tied to a stake. He preferred the former. They reached the place where the horse was hitched.

"I will lead the horse," said one.

"Very well," said Billy. "I will carry these two sage hens which I have killed."

The man went ahead, leading the horse. Billy came next, carrying the sage hens. The other man brought up the rear. Every step onward seemed to Billy to be a step toward certain death. He determined to escape or die there. He dropped one of the hens as if by chance, and asked the man behind him to pick it up. He stooped to do so, but as it was dark, he had

to search for the hen. Billy pulled his revolver, seized the muzzle, and with the butt dealt the man a heavy blow on the back of his head, felling him to the ground. The man ahead turned to see what was the matter, but as he did so, drew his revolver. Billy was too quick for him, and sent a bullet crashing through his brain. He seized his horse, jumped into the saddle, and galloped away as fast as he could, over the rough road.

The thieves in the hut heard the noise and were soon in hard pursuit, and gaining rapidly on him. He abandoned his horse, gave him a sharp slap on the shoulders, and he went bounding away down the mountain side. He crept up into some brush, and had the satisfaction of seeing the robbers rush by him, and heard them firing at what they supposed was Billy on the horse.

When they had gone he slipped down and struck out for Horseshoe Station, distant about twenty-five miles. He traveled hard all night and reached the station at daylight. When he had related his experience, a band was organized to pursue the robbers. When the company formed for this purpose reached the rendezvous of the men, they found it deserted, and could find no trace of the route taken by the fleeing robbers.

Indian depredations in the neighborhood of the Express headquarters continued to grow worse from day to day, until they became so bad that it was decided to stop the pony express entirely for awhile, and to only run the stages occasionally. But this

did not prevent the Indians from attacking the stage when it did run, and only a few days after this decision was made, several hundred Sioux attacked the overland stage between Split Rock and Three Crossings, plundered the coach, killed the driver and two passengers, and badly wounded Lieutenant Flowers, the assistant division agent.

After this robbery and murder by the Indians a party of the stage company's men and pony express riders was organized to hunt down the murderous Sioux, and if possible drive them from the country.

The party was headed by Wild Bill, the famous Indian fighter, and soon got upon the trail of the Indians. Pushing rapidly forward they at last discovered the Indians camped on the opposite side of Clear Creek, a tributary of Powder River. There were several hundred of them, and they seemed to be perfectly free from any thoughts of danger, for they had no scouts posted and were evidently relying for safety upon the fact that they were under their own vine and fig tree, with no white men within many miles of their camp.

The Indians outnumbered their white avengers three to one, so after taking the lay of the camp, upon the advice of Wild Bill, it was decided to wait until it was nearly dark, and then, after creeping as close to them as possible, make a dash through the camp, open a general fire, and then stampede the horses.

This plan was successfully carried out. The Indians taken completely by surprise, were bewildered, astounded, and did not comprehend the situation until

the whites had ridden pell-mell through their camp and got away with not only the horses which the Indians had stolen from the whites, but with those also that belonged to the Indians.

CHAPTER V.

BUFFALO BILL AND WILD BILL.

In 1862 Billy, or Bill as he was now more commonly called, joined an expedition against the Indians in the capacity of guide and scout to Col. Clark, who was in command of the 9th Kansas Volunteers. They had several engagements with the Indians but none of any special importance.

After his return from this expedition he was summoned home by the serious illness of his mother. On his arrival home he found his mother dying, and when she was, soon after, borne to the grave and forever buried from his sight, Bill was distracted. His mother had been to him the one object that seemed to make his life worth living.

To drown the unbearable sorrow that was destroying all desire to live, he plunged into a career of dissipation, and would soon have gone to ruin had it not been for the fact that some of his old frontier friends got him enlisted in the volunteer service of the United States army.

The 7th Kansas regiment of volunteer infantry, known as "Jennison's Jayhawkers" had just re-organized and re-enlisted as veterans, and before Bill was aware what had been done, several of his old-time friends, who were now veterans of the Union, had him

enlisted for the war in the 7th Kansas infantry. In the spring of 1864 the regiment went to Tennessee, and reached Memphis just after the memorable defeat of General Sturgiss, at Guntown, Mississippi. The fighting he was now called upon to do was new to him. He was finally made a non-commissioned officer, and placed upon detached duty as scout.

While serving in this capacity in Missouri he had a singular meeting with his old fellow Indian fighter of pony express days, Wild Bill. He thus relates the incident in his autobiography: "I was still acting as scout, when one day I rode ahead of the command, some considerable distance, to pick up all possible information concerning Price's movements. I was dressed in gray clothes, or Missouri jeans, and on riding up to a farm house and entering I saw a man, also dressed in gray costume, sitting at a table eating bread and milk. He looked up as I entered, and startled me by saying:

"'You little rascal, what are you doing in those secesh clothes?'

"Judge of my surprise when I recognized in the stranger my old friend and partner, Wild Bill, disguised as a Confederate officer.

"'I ask you the same question, sir?' said I, without the least hesitation.

"'Hush! sit down and have some bread and milk, and we'll talk it all over afterwards,' said he.

"I accepted the invitation and partook of the refreshments. Wild Bill paid the woman of the house,

and we went out to the gate where my horse was standing.

"'Billy, my boy,' said he, 'I am mighty glad to see you. I haven't seen or heard of you since we got busted on that St. Louis horse race.'

"'What are you doing here?' I asked.

"'I am a scout under General McNiel. For the last few days I have been with General Marmaduke's division of Price's army, in disguise as a Southern officer from Texas, as you see me now,' said he.

"'That's exactly the kind of business that I am out on today,' said I, 'and I want to get some information concerning Price's movements.'

"'I'll give you all that I have;' and he then went on and told me all that he knew regarding Price's intentions, and the number and condition of his men. He then asked about my mother, and when he learned that she was dead he was greatly surprised and grieved; he thought a great deal of her, for she had treated him almost as one of her own children. He finally took out a package, which he had concealed about his person, and handing it to me, he said:

"'Here are some letters which I want you to give to General McNeil.'

"'All right,' said I as I took them, 'but where will I meet you again?'

"'Never mind that,' he replied, 'I am getting so much valuable information that I propose to stay a little while longer in this disguise.' Thereupon we shook hands and parted."

In this connection it may be of interest to the reader

to know some further particulars concerning this zealous Union Scout, Wild Bill. The following description and estimate of his character is from the pen of Gen. George A. Custer, under whom he served as guide and scout:

"Among the white scouts were numbered some of the most noted of their class. The most prominent among them was Wild Bill, whose highly varied career was made the subject of an illustrated sketch in one of the popular monthly publications several years ago. Wild Bill was a strange character, just the one whom a novelist would gloat over. He was a plainsman in every sense of the word, and yet unlike any other of his class. In person he was about six feet, one inch in height, straight as the straightest of the warriors whose implacable foe he was. He had broad shoulders, well-formed chest and limbs, and a face strikingly handsome; a sharp, clear, blue eye, which stared you straight in the face when in conversation; a finely shaped nose, inclined to be aquiline; a well-turned mouth, with lips only partially concealed by a handsome mustache. His hair and complexion were those of a perfect blonde. The former was worn in uncut ringlets, falling carelessly over his powerfully formed shoulders. Whether on foot or on horseback, he was one of the most perfect types of physical manhood I ever saw. Of his courage there could be no doubt; it had been brought to the test on too many occasions to admit of a doubt. His skill in the use of the pistol and rifle was unerring, while his deportment was exactly the opposite of what might be expected from a man of

his surroundings. It was entirely free from all bluster or bravado. He seldom spoke of himself unless requested to do so. His conversation, strange to say, never bordered either on the vulgar or blasphemous. His influence among the frontiersmen was unbounded, his word was law; and many are the personal quarrels and disturbances which he has checked among his comrades by his simple announcement that 'this has gone far enough,'— if need be, followed by the ominous warning that when persisted in or renewed, the quarreler 'must settle it with me.'

"Wild Bill was anything but a quarrelsome man; yet no one but himself could enumerate the many conflicts in which he had been engaged, and which had almost always resulted in the death of his adversary. I have a personal knowledge of at least half a dozen men whom he had at various times killed, one of these being at the time a member of my command. Yet he always escaped unhurt."

The friendship that had sprung up between these two men never grew cold, but rather increased as the years rolled by, remained unimpaired to the time of Wild Bill's untimely and tragic death.

Bill remained with the army as a soldier-scout until 1865 when he was detailed for special service at headquarters in St. Louis. It was there he met and courted Miss Louisa, who afterwards became Mrs. Cody.

CHAPTER VI.

LAYING OUT AND BOOMING A TOWN.

For some time after his marriage, Cody conducted a hotel called the Golden Rule House, at Salt Creek Valley, Kansas.

This same hotel had at one time been kept by Cody's mother, and so Bill was very well received by the people of Salt Creek Valley, and with their encouragement and patronage did a good business.

But his adventurous nature could not long endure the monotonous routine of hotel life, and he was soon again acting as a guide and scout for the Government at the military post at Elsworth.

It was while so employed he first met General Custer. Bill was scouting in the vicinity of Fort Hays, when General Custer came up to the post in search of a guide to pilot him and his escort of ten men to Fort Larned, a distance of sixty-five miles across the country. Cody was selected for this duty.

In his autobiography he relates the incident as follows:

"I was ordered by the commanding officer to guide General Custer to his desired destination, and I soon received word from the general that he would start out in the morning with the intention of making the trip in one day. Early in the morning, after a good

night's rest, I was on hand mounted on my large mouse colored mule—an animal of great endurance—and ready for the journey; when the general saw me he said:

"'Cody, I want to travel fast, and go through as quickly as possible, and I don't think that mule of yours is fast enough for me.'

"'General, never mind the mule, he'll get there as soon as your horses. The mule is a good one.'

"'Very well; go ahead then,' said he, but he looked as if he thought I would delay the party on the road.

"For the first fifteen miles, until we came to the Smoky Hill River, which we were to cross, I could hardly keep the mule in advance of the general, who rode a frisky, impatient and ambitious thoroughbred steed; indeed, the whole party was finely mounted. The general repeatedly told me that the mule was 'no good,' and that I ought to have a good horse. But after crossing the river and striking the sandhills, I began letting my mule out a little, and putting the persuaders to him. He was soon out-traveling the horses, and by the time we had made about half the distance to Ford Larned, I occasionally had to wait for the general or some of his party, as their horses were beginning to show signs of fatigue.

"'General, how about this mule?' I asked at last.

"'Cody, you have a better vehicle than I thought you had,' was his reply.

"From that time on to Fort Larned I had no trouble in keeping ahead of the party. We rode into the fort at 4 o'clock in the afternoon with about

half the escort only, the rest having lagged behind."

A short time after his return to Fort Hays, Bill was ordered to report to the Tenth Cavalry as scout to guide an expedition against a band of Indians that had recently made a raid on the Kansas Pacific railroad, killing a number of men and running off a hundred horses and mules.

The calvary, a colored regiment, quickly overtook the Indians, but soon wished they hadn't, for the Indians turned upon their pursuers, captured their cannon and stampeded the regiment.

Shortly after the above incident, Bill visited the town of Elsworth, where he met a man named William Rose, who persuaded Bill to go into business with him as a real estate promoter.

Rose was a contractor on the Kansas Pacific Railroad, and had a contract for grading near Fort Hays. He succeeded in convincing Cody that a million could easily be made in the enterprise.

The scheme was to purchase a site for a town at a point where they knew the Kansas Pacific would cross Big Creek, about a mile from Fort Hays, lay it out in town lots and boom the business for all there was in it.

When the site was surveyed and the lots laid out, they gave the new town the name of Rome. To make things boom, they gave a lot to anyone who would build upon it, reserving for themselves the corner lots and other desirable locations.

Their scheme was a success. In lass than one month they had a town consisting of about two hundred

frame and log houses, a hotel, several stores, and a saloon. Their fortune was now made, and they would frequently meet and figure up their gains, which as yet were in the future, but very near—almost within their grasp.

About this time, Dr. Webb, who was agent for the railroad, and whose business it was to locate towns, came to Rome and sought the proprietors.

"You have a flourishing town, I see," said he.

"Yes, indeed," said Bill. "Let us give you a lot. All you have to do is to build on it."

"No, thank you," said the Doctor. "But would you not like a partner?"

"A partner! No, sir; we have too good a thing to 'whack up' with any one," said Bill loftily.

"Gentlemen," said the Doctor, "I am agent for the railroad, and it is my business to locate towns."

"Ah, indeed," said Rose. "So we have saved the company great expense. Here we have a town already started."

"But the company expect to make money selling land and town lots, and unless you give the company or me a show in this matter, I will have to start a town near you and run competition."

"Go ahead," said Rose; "we have the 'bulge' on you."

The Doctor departed, and staked a place about one mile east of Rome and called it Hays City. He took pains to inform everyone that there the railroad company would build shops and establish headquarters. The result is easily and quickly told. All the houses

in Rome were pulled down and carted to Hays City. Cody & Rose found their site deserted, the only sign of a town having been there was the lone shanty where they kept their little stock of merchandise. They too, finally pulled up stakes, and accepted two lots apiece in Hays City as a gift from Dr. Webb. Bill did not try to build another town. He returned to his favorite pursuit of scouting and hunting. Rose accepted a contract for grading a part of the railroad and Bill undertook to furnish the camp with buffalo meat.

CHAPTER VII.

A HOT CHASE.

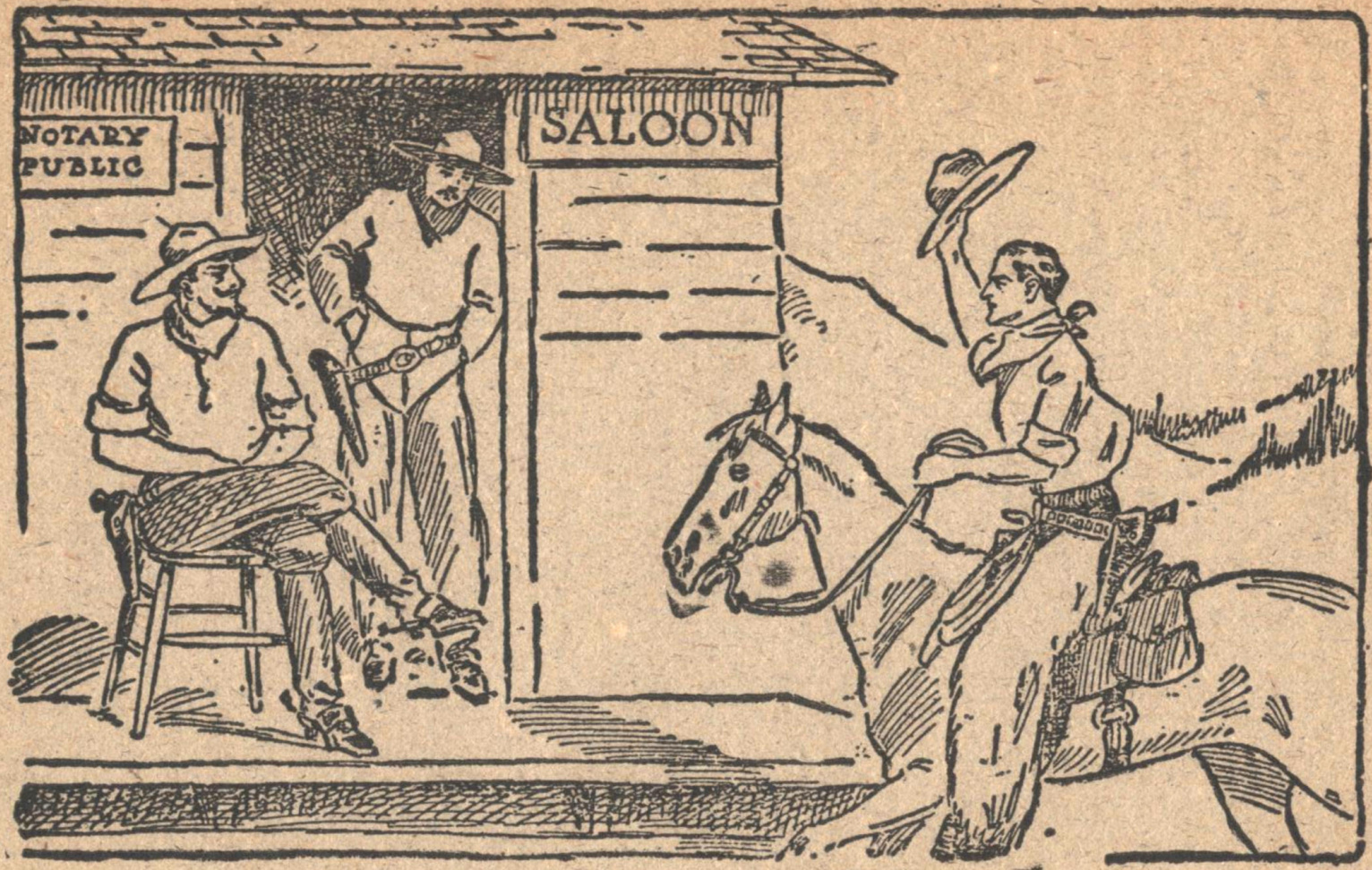
One day in the spring of 1868, while Buffalo Bill was engaged as hunter for the Kansas Pacific Railroad Company, he mounted Brigham and started for Smoky Hill River. After galloping for about twenty miles he stopped on a small hill overlooking the valley of that beautiful river, and was gazing on the landscape, when suddenly he saw a band of about thirty Indians some half a mile distant. From the way they jumped on their horses he knew they had seen him as soon as they came in sight.

Buffalo Bill knew that the only chance he had for life was to make a run for it, and he immediately wheeled and started back to the railroad. Brigham seemed to understand what was up, and struck out as if he comprehended full well that it was to be a run for life. He crossed a ravine n a few jumps, and on reaching a ridge beyond, Buffalo Bill drew rein, looked back and saw the Indians tearing after him at full speed and evidently well mounted. Had Brigham been fresh Buffalo Bill would have had no fear as to the result of the race, but as he was not, the outcome seemed decidedly dubious.

His pursuers were evidently gaining on him for a while, then Brigham suddenly made a spurt and shot

ahead again. But he could not keep up his speed for any great distance, and when he had run about three miles further, eight or nine of the Indians were not more than three hundred yards behind, and five or six of these seemed to be shortening the gap at every jump. Brigham now exerted himself to his utmost, and for the next three or four miles got "right down to business." But the Indians were about as well mounted as Bill was, and one of their horses in particular—a spotted animal—kept gaining on him all the time. The other horses were strung out behind for a distance of two miles or more, but still chasing as hard as they could.

The Indian on the spotted horse was armed with a rifle, and would occasionally send a bullet whistling along in unpleasant proximity to Buffalo Bill's head. He saw that this Indian must be checked, or a stray bullet from his gun might do Brigham or himself some harm; so, suddenly stopping his horse and quickly wheeling him around, he raised his rifle to his shoulder, took deliberate aim at the Indian and his horse, hoping to hit one or the other, and fired. The Indian was not eighty yards away at the time, and at the crack of the rifle down went his horse. Not waiting to see if he recovered, Buffalo Bill turned Brigham and fairly went flying from the place; he had urgent business elsewhere about that time, and was in something of a hurry to get there. The other Indians had gained on him while he was engaged in shooting at their leader, and they sent several shots whizzing past him. Buffalo Bill occasionally wheeled in his saddle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and returned their fire, one of his shots breaking a leg of one of their horses.

The chase was kept up until within three miles of the railroad track, where two companions of soldiers were stationed for the purpose of protecting the workmen from the Indians. One of the outposts saw the Indians chasing across the prairie and gave the alarm. There was mounting in hot haste, which the Indians observed, and they turned and ran in the direction from which they had come.

Upon learning what had happened, Captain Nolen of the Tenth Cavalry, with forty of his men determined to pursue the Indians. Buffalo Bill was given a fresh horse, and invited to join in the chase. As the horses of the cavalry men were all fresh, they soon began shortening the distance between themselves and the redskins. Before the Indians had gone five miles the cavalry overtook and killed eight of their number. The others succeeded in making their escape.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW HE EARNED THE NAME OF "BUFFALO BILL."

Bill found his contract to furnish the camp with meat was a pretty difficult one to carry out.

For several days no buffaloes were seen anywhere in the vicinity of the camp, and the meat supply was running decidedly low.

But one day when Bill had just placed his horse "Brigham" into a team that was used in drawing a scraper, one of Rose's horses having given out, one of the workmen discovered a bunch of buffaloes just coming over a distant hill. Bill jerked the harness off his horse,—the horse that afterwards became so famous—leaving the blind bridle on, and mounted without a saddle. Snatching up his gun, which he called "Lucretia Borgia," and which was an improved breech-loading needle gun, just received from the government, he dashed away toward the game.

Just then the gates of the fort opened and a captain and several lieutenants rode out, they too having discovered the buffalo, and were intent on a chase after them. As Bill rode up to them the Captain said:

"Well, my man, you are not going after the buffalo on that horse! It takes a spirited and blooded horse to take such game."

"Does it?" asked Bill, innocently, as if he were ig-

norant of the business.

"Yes, it does; but as we only want the tongues and a few tenderloin steaks, you may follow us and take the rest of the game."

Bill bowed low in acknowledgment of the favor granted him, while the officers galloped off to overtake the buffalo. Bill knew the habits of the animal, and instead of riding directly toward them, as the officers did, he took a straight course for the creek, where he knew they would cross. In this way he arrived there as soon as they did, while the officers were in the rear about three hundred yards. He immediately threw off the old blind bridle and let "Brigham" have his own way. The horse understood his business. He carried Bill close up to the side of one buffalo, and as soon as he heard the shot and saw the animal fall, he dashed up alongside another, and so on. There were only eleven buffaloes in the herd. These were all killed in quick succession, only one shot missing aim. When the last animal was down Brigham stopped, and Bill leaped from his back, just as the others rode up. Bill saluted them in royal style and said:

"Gentlemen, here are your tongues and tenderloins."

"Who are you, anyway?" asked the Captain in astonishment.

"My name is Cody," said Bill.

"What, not Bill, the scout?"

"The same, sir."

"Well, I must say that horse of yours has good running points."

"Yes, a few."

"And what a hunter you are. Indeed, I never saw finer sport."

"Brigham did the hunting, sir. I had only to do the shooting. When I fired and missed, he would give me another chance at the same animal. If I missed the second time, he would dash away as much as to say, 'You are no good.'"

The Captain gave Bill a pressing invitation to come to the fort, and assured him that he would be glad to give him employment, whenever he should have need of a scout.

At Fort Wallace was a scout named Comstock, who was thought by some to be more expert in hunting and killing buffaloes than was Cody. It was arranged by mutual friends to have a trial of skill. The stake was $500, and both men found ready backers.

The place was twenty miles east of Sheridan, Kansas. The contest was extensively advertised, and hundreds of people from as far east as St. Louis, went to see the match.

It was agreed that both men should ride into the herd, and Cody should take the right side, and Comstock the left. Cody was mounted on Brigham, and had his trusty rifle Lucretia, a 50 caliber. He felt confident of success, because he knew his horse could not be excelled, and his gun had no equal. At the appointed day the company assembled, and soon a herd

of buffaloes was discovered quietly grazing. A man to keep tally went with each hunter, while the spectators remained at a safe distance.

Cody rode to the head of his part of the herd, and by killing the leaders, and pressing the others from right to left, he soon had them running in a circle. He kept up the race until he had sixty-nine buffaloes lying dead in a very small circle. Comstock rode after his and killed the rearmost animal each time. The result was that he had only forty-six dead animals, and they were scattered along the plains for three or four miles. As may be guessed, Cody's plan made his skill appear to great advantage. The championship was cheerfully accorded to him. This circumstance, coupled with the fact that as hunter for the Kansas Pacific Railroad Company, he had in eighteen months killed 4,280 buffaloes, gave him the name of "Buffalo Bill."

The grand finale of his contest with Comstock may be mentioned here. On the last run he took both saddle and bridle from his horse, and, although the ladies of the company begged him not to undertake so rash a feat, he dashed away on his well-trained horse without either saddle or bridle. He separated a big bull from the herd, and headed him toward the company of spectators. On they came, nearer and nearer to the assembly, and it seemed that the ladies must be run down before the infuriated beast and the wild rider. The ladies were frightened, and screamed lustily. Just as the buffalo was a few feet distant, "Brigham" came up alongside at one bound, and Cody sent a

ball through the heart of the bull, which rolled in the dust at the very feet of the spectators, while Bill leaped to the ground and "Brigham" stopped short in his tracks. This brilliant feat won round after round of applause for "Buffalo Bill."

CHAPTER IX.

BUFFALO BILL AND THE COW-BOYS.

When Buffalo Bill lived in Hays City, Kansas was a pretty tough country, and there was sometimes something else for him to do besides fighting Indians and hunting buffaloes.

There were cowboys and rough characters galore, and they used to run things to suit themselves. Among the towns set down on the hot prairie but ambitious for future greatness, that had suffered greatly by the depredations and lawlessness of the rough element, was Abilene—some folks call it the City of the Plains. It was almost as much as a marshal's life was worth to arrest a cowboy in Abilene, and even if he did manage to get his prisoner in the lock-up the fellow's cronies would come swooping down on the town, terrorize the citizens, intimidate the jailer, and release the culprit. In time the boldness of the cowboys became so intolerable that the Council determined to take extraordinary measures for the protection of the citizens and the apprehension of the marauders.

At that time Cody was being talked about very much on account of his recent buffalo killing match with Comstock. All through the West he was known for his intrepidity as well as for his extraordinary success in handling rough characters. T. J. Henry,

then mayor of Abilene, and now the owner of an extensive irrigation ranch in Colorado, was instructed to write to Cody and learn how much he would demand to take the marshalship of the town and rid the locality of its undesirable element. Cody laconically replied:

"One hundred dollars a month."

The Abilene Council thought the figure was too high and the negotiations were temporarily permitted to drop. Shortly afterward a negro cowboy was arrested for being disorderly. After considerable difficulty, he was locked up. A couple of hours later a party of his cowboy friends came riding into town, whooping and firing their pistols into the air, and almost before the town had realized what had happened, they had released the prisoner and were scudding away over the prairie with him.

This was the climax to many similar outrages, and it aroused the town to a pitch of frenzy. Mayor Henry called for a posse of citizens to follow the miscreants, and nearly every able-bodied man in the corporation responded. They were all heavily armed. Several miles out of town they came upon the cowboys, who had carelessly encamped for the night. The mayor advanced at the head of his posse, and pointing out the fact that the citizens outnumbered the cowboys two to one, and were prepared to fight to the death, demanded the return of the culprit. After considerable parleying, the cowboys relinquished the negro and he was triumphantly returned to the lock-up.

That night a heavy guard of citizens surrounded the jail.

The next morning brought with it renewed excitement. Everyone was nervous and expectant. All looked for further trouble and probable bloodshed. Gangs of cowboys began to gather early in the day, and signs of brewing trouble were everywhere apparent.

After a consultation with the Council, Mayor Henry sent word to Cody to come at once to Abilene—at his own price. The following day he arrived.

About 9 o'clock in the morning the Mayor was sitting in his office when a well-built, wiry-looking man entered. He wore his hair long, beneath a slouched hat, and the Mayor thought he was a cowboy.

"Are you Mayor Henry?" asked the stranger.

"Yes," was the reply.

"Well, my name's Cody—Buffalo Bill they call me and—I've come over to look after the 'boys.'"

The Mayor extended his hand. "You've come just in time," he said. "The devil's to pay here and something's got to be done mighty quick. What do you propose to do?"

"The first thing," responded Cody, slowly weighing his words—"is to pass an ordinance making it a misdemeanor to carry firearms. I want you to get the Council together and pass it right away. Then I want some copies of the ordinance printed."

The mayor smiled incredulously. "Why," he exclaimed, "how on earth do you expect to enforce such an ordinance?"

"That's my part of the work," said Cody. "You pass the ordinance and leave the rest to me."

The council was hurriedly convened and the ordinance passed. Then a hundred or more copies were struck off. That night the new marshal tacked them up all over town. The next morning everybody read the ordinance and went around with broad smiles on their faces. The cowboys were especially amused. Nobody thought for a moment that the ordinance could be enforced.

About 3 o'clock in the afternoon Cody was walking down the middle of the main street, when an uproar in a saloon attracted his attention. Quietly crossing over, he entered. A crowd of cowboys were inside and one of them in particular seemed to be endeavoring to see how much of a disturbance he could make. Going up to the fellow, Cody looked him square in the eyes and said, quietly:

"Say, stranger, ain't you making just a little bit too much noise for the good of this town?"

The cowboy looked at the speaker in undisguised amazement.

"Who the —— be you? " he demanded, contemptuously.

"I'm the man who is paid for taking care of fellows like you," was the reply.

"So you're the new marshal, air ye?"

"I guess I am."

"Well, you be——"

Cody interrupted him. "Don't swear, stranger," he said, "it don't pay."

Just then the cowboy's coat flew back and the marshal noticed a revolver in the fellow's belt.

"Don't you know that's against the ordinance?" he said. "Better give me that."

"I'll see you jiggered first," cried the cowboy, and he made a movement to draw the "shooting iron." But the marshal was too quick for him. Before he could lay his hand on the revolver, Cody's fist caught him square between the eyes. He dropped like a log. The marshal stooped down, relieved the prostrate man of his revolver and then quietly walked out of the saloon. The other men in the place, many of them the toughest kind of border desperadoes, were completely awed by the audacity of the thing.

The following day, as the marshal was passing along the street, he saw another cowboy with a couple of long, murderous-looking revolvers ostentatiously displayed in his belt.

"You have to give them up, stranger," he said, approaching the fellow.

The cowboy started toward the marshal with blood in his eye.

"Say," he yelled, "you're the fellow that floored my brother yesterday, ain't yer?"

"May be I am."

"Well, I'm just going to wipe up the earth with you."

Cody stood still, put his thumbs under his arms and looked the cowboy in the face.

"Now, look here, stranger," he said, "there's no use getting hot. Let's argue this thing out a little."

The cowboy, however, was in no humor for argument. His hands instinctively went down to his belt. The revolvers never came out. One of the marshal's sledge-hammer blows sent him sprawling, and before he could recover his equilibrium his revolvers had gone to join the one confiscated from his brother.

Several similar incidents soon convinced the cowboys that they had an extraordinary man to deal with, and in a few weeks, under the guardianship of the new marshal, Abilene became as quiet and orderly as the most conservative citizen could wish for.

Cody remained three months, and for his services in ridding the town of its desperadoes, often at the peril of his own life, he received the munificent sum of $300. But he made no complaint. It was the price he had himself set upon his services.

CHAPTER X.

GUIDE, SCOUT AND INDIAN FIGHTER.

Soon after the incident recorded in the preceding chapter, Buffalo Bill reported to Captain Parker, in command at Ford Larned, for duty as scout and guide.

Gen. Hazen soon after arrived at the fort and took command. There were three hundred lodges of Indians about the fort. They were restless and anxious to take the war path, but were kept quiet by the efforts of the soldiers. Gen. Hazen wanted to go to Fort Harper, and ordered Bill and twenty infantrymen to accompany him, as he rode in a six mule wagon. They went as far as Fort Zarah, where they left the General to go alone, and had orders to return to Ford Larned next morning. But Buffalo Bill told the sergeant that he would return to Larned that afternoon, and saddling his mule, he set out alone. When about half way he was "jumped" by a band of Indians, who rade up saying, "How! How!" and one reached out his hand to Buffalo Bill for a hearty shake. He grasped the hand and was immediately jerked forward by the brave, while another redskin grabbed his mule by the bridle, and another snatched his revolver from the hostler, another grabbed his rifle from him, while still another struck him on the head

with a tomahawk. Then they started off towards the Arkansas River, one leading the mule, while the rest lashed him from behind. They were yelling, whooping, singing, as only Indians can when having everything their own way. These were some of the Indians who had been left at Fort Larned that morning. Bill soon discovered that the whole band were on the war path, and these were only a squad from the main army.

One of the chiefs came up to him and asked him where he had been. A happy thought came to him at that instant, and he answered, "I have been searching for the 'Whoa-haws.'" The Indians used this term to designate the cattle furnished them by the government. The old chief was anxious to know more about the "Whoa-haws." Bill told him they were back a little way, and he had been sent by Gen. Hazen to tell him that they were for his people. The chief asked if any soldiers were with the herd. Bill said there were. The chief seemed delighted; Bill then told him that the treatment he had received was mean and cowardly, especially as he was on such a friendly errand. The chief then made the young men give up Bill's arms. He was anxious to get the cattle, and believed also there were "heap of soldiers coming." Bill had been lying to him, but thought himself justified under the circumstances. The old chief told him to go back and bring the cattle up. This Bill consented to do, and started off, intending when in the valley, out of sight of the Indians, to put spurs to his mule and flee to Fort Larned. He had gone but a little way, when, on looking back, he saw fifteen Indians following him, he

urged his mule to a lope. He reached the valley and turned sharply off and headed toward the fort. The Indians came in sight, and seeing him fleeing, started in hot pursuit. They kept up the chase for about nine miles, Fort Larned being still six miles distant, when the old road was reached, and Buffalo Bill put spurs to his mule and urged him to his greatest speed. The Indians came on, but did not gain much. At sundown Fort Larned was four miles away, but in plain sight. Bill's mule began to give out, while the horses of the Indians seemed fresh, and were gaining rapidly. When two miles from the fort, several of the Indians were only a quarter of a mile behind the fleeing scout. Fortunately, he saw a squad of soldiers in a government wagon going to the fort. He hailed them, and hastily told his story. They turned aside in a clump of trees near at hand, and waited the Indians, who came dashing along. They fired upon them, killing two; the others turned and escaped in the dark. The two were scalped, and then Buffalo Bill and his comrades moved into the fort, where all the soldiers were under arms, and preparing for an attack, as they had heard the firing.

When Buffalo Bill reported to the Commander, he found him with all his scouts trying to find a man who would volunteer to carry a dispatch to General Sheridan, then at Fort Hays, sixty-five miles away. None were willing to go. Finally Cody volunteered, and although he had ridden sixty miles that day and was tired and hungry, he mounted a horse and left Fort Larned, to ride to Fort Hays in the night, not a

star appearing, and a storm gathering in the sky. His route lay through a country infested by hostile Indians, but he reached General Sheridan's headquarters a little after daybreak, and delivered the message.

After taking a nap of two hours, and visiting with some old acquaintances at Hays City, near the fort, he reported again to General Sheridan, as he had been requested to do. He found him trying to persuade some scout to carry a message to Fort Dodge, ninety-five miles away. But none would volunteer, though the pay was large. Several messengers had been killed on that route, and the scouts were chary about taking the chances. It seemed hard to ask Buffalo Bill to do it, since he had just ridden one hundred and twenty-five miles the day and night before. No one would volunteer, and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon Cody mounted a fine horse and started. He rode seventy miles that night, and reached Saw Log Crossing, where he found a company of colored troops under command of Major Cox. Here he slept an hour, got a fresh horse, and was soon on the way again. It was now just sunrise. About 10 o'clock he reached Fort Dodge. He found the Commander anxious to send messages to Fort Larned, but no scout would undertake the trip. Fort Dodge is sixty-five miles from Fort Larned. As the latter post was Cody's headquarters, he volunteered to make the trip for the Commander. The Commander said he would be glad to send the message, but it seemed too hard for Buffalo Bill to make the journey after all he had done, especially as they had no fresh horse to offer him, and only a mule as a substitute. But

Cody was anxious to return, and he mounted the mule and commenced his homeward trip, leaving Fort Dodge at dark. He did not take the main and generally traveled road, knowing the Indians would be watching that for scouts. Unfortunately his mule gor away as he stopped to get a drink at the creek. He tried to catch him, but the obstinate animal trotted on ahead, just out of his reach, the balance of the night. Just at sunrise he came in sight of Fort Larned. When the morning guns echoed over the plains, they were just half a mile from the fort, the mule trotting along ahead, and Bill trudging after him afoot. He was provoked. Raising his gun, he aimed and fired, and lodged a ball in the mule's hip. He shot him again, and continued to pepper him from the rear until he dropped dead. The troops at the fort hearing the firing, came rushing out to see the cause. They all agreed that the mule had been served just right. Buffalo Bill reported to Captain Parker, delivered the message, and then lay down and took a long, refreshing sleep. General Hazen had returned to Fort Larned, and wanted to send some message to General Sheridan, so that night found Buffalo Bill again on the road, mounted on a good horse, bound for Fort Hays, the headquarters of General Sheridan. The next morning found the intrepid scout again in the presence of General Sheridan, who was astonished when he knew of the rides he had made from post to post, since he saw him two or three days before. He had ridden 355 miles in fifty-eight riding hours, most of the time in the night, making an average of over six miles an hour, through a trackless plain infested by hostile Indians.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHIEF OF SCOUTS.

General Sheridan retained Buffalo Bill at the fort, and appointed him Chief of Scouts and assigned him to duty with the Fifth Cavalry, which was just about to set out on an expedition against the Dog Soldier Indians, who were then making considerable trouble along the Republican River.

The expedition set out for the Beaver Creek Country almost immediately after Buffalo Bill's appointment was made, and met with exciting incidents from the very first day of its march.

Buffalo Bill kept the officer's mess well supplied with fresh buffalo meat, and one day surprised the Colonel by running seven big buffaloes straight into camp, and killing them all in rapid succession in the presence, and almost at the very feet of the officer.

The Colonel was somewhat dumbfounded, and not altogether pleased with the incident. He went up to Buffalo Bill and asked for an explanation. "I can't allow any such business as this," he said, "what do you mean by it?"

"I didn't care about asking for any wagons this time, Colonel," replied Buffalo Bill, "so I thought I would make the buffaloes furnish their own transportation."

The point of Bill's reply rested in the fact that only a day or two before when he asked the Colonel to send out some wagons to fetch back the buffaloes he intended to shoot the Colonel replied: "First kill your buffaloes and then ask for the wagons." The Colonel took the remark good-naturedly, and Bill was permitted thereafter to have as many wagons sent out after the buffaloes he intended to kill as he deemed to be necessary to bring in the carcasses.

On the second day's march the cavalry arrived at the South fork of Beaver Creek, where they discovered a large fresh Indian trail. They rapidly followed it up for about eight miles, when suddenly they discovered a large number of Indians on the bluffs just ahead of them.

A company of cavalry and scouts were in advance of the main command nearly a mile. Suddenly about four hundred Indians charged down upon them, and a lively fight immediately commenced. The company was soon supported by the full force of cavalry. The Indians also kept increasing in numbers all the while until the fight became quite general. Quite a number were killed and wounded on each side. The Indians were evidently fighting to give their families and village a chance to get away. They had been surprised with a larger force than they had expected to see in that part of the country. The fight was continued until dark, when the Indians took to the hills and annoyed the troops by firing down upon them from the bluffs. Several times during the night the command was ordered out to dislodge them. Next morning not a red-

skin was to be found in the neighborhood.

The cavalry struck out on the trail, and soon came to the spot where the Indians had camped the day before. It could easily be seen that the village was a very large one, consisting of about five hundred lodges; and the command pushed forward from this point on the trail which ran back toward Prairie Dog Creek.

They soon came in sight of the retreating village, and the warriors turned back to give them battle. They set the grass on fire between them and the troops, in order to secure as much delay as possible. The cavalry kept up a running fight for the remainder of the day, the Indians repeatedly attempting to lead them off the track of their flying village, but their trail was easily followed, as they were continually dropping tepee poles, camp kettles, furs and all heavy articles, belonging to them. They were evidently scattering and it was hard for the cavalry to keep on the main trail. When dark set in the command went into camp, it being useless to try to follow the Indians after nightfall.

Late in the afternoon of the next day the Indians were discovered going over a hill some distance ahead of the cavalry, and when they saw that they would be overtaken, the main body of warriors once more turned back and fought the cavalry; but they were continually driven back, until darkness set in, and the cavalry camped for the night.

Next morning it was found that the Indians had scattered in every direction. The main trail was fol-

lowed up to the Republican River, where the cavalry then made a cut off and went north towards the Platte River. They found, however, that the Indians by traveling night and day had got a long start, and the General concluded that it was useless to follow them any further, as they had been pushed so hard and given such a scare that they would leave the Republican country and go north across the Union Pacific railroad.

Buffalo Bill continued to act as Chief of Scouts until 1872, and had many exciting fights with Indians. He was successful in all his expeditions, and was a favorite with the various officers of the army under whom he did service, including such distinguished generals as William T Sherman, Phil. H. Sheridan, Nelson A. Miles, Eugene A. Carr, James B. Fry, Wesley Merritt, W. H. Emory, Col. James W. Forsyth, and many other officers under whom he served directly as guide, scout and Indian fighter.

General Sheridan's estimate of the value of his services as guide and scout, as expressed in that officer's "Autobiography," will serve to show why Buffalo Bill was held in such high favor by the fighting officers of the army.

After describing the difficulties encountered in conducting a campaign against the Indians on the blizzard-swept plains of the northwest in the winter of '68, he says:

"The difficulties and hardships to be encountered had led several experienced officers of the army and some frontiersmen, like old Jim Bridger, the famous scout

and guide of earlier days, to discourage the project. I decided to go in person, bent on showing the Indians that they were not secure from punishment because of inclement weather—an ally on which they had hitherto relied with much assurance. We started, and the very first night a blizzard struck us and carried away our tents. The gale was so violent that they could not be put up again; the rain and snow drenched us to the skin. Shivering from wet and cold, I took refuge under a wagon, and there spent such a miserable night that when morning came the gloomy predictions of old man Bridger and others rose up before me with greatly increased force. The difficulties were now fully realized; the blinding snow, mixed with sleet; the piercing wind, thermometer below zero—with green bushes only for fuel—occasioning intense suffering. Our numbers and companionship alone prevented us from being lost or perishing, a fate that stared in the face the frontiersmen, guides, and scouts on their solitary missions.

"An important matter had been to secure competent guides for the different columns of troops, for, as I have said, the section of country to be operated in was comparatively unknown.

"In those days the railroad town of Hays City was filled with so-called 'Indian scouts,' whose common boast was of having slain scores of redskins; but the real scout—that is, a guide and trailer knowing the habits of the Indians—was very scarce, and it was hard to find anybody familiar with the country south of the Arkansas, where the campaign was to be made. Still,

about the various military posts there was some good material to select from, and we managed to employ several men, who, from their experience on the plains in various capacities, or from natural instincts and aptitude, soon became excellent guides and courageous and valuable scouts, some of them, indeed, gaining much distinction. Mr. William F. Cody ('Buffalo Bil'), whose renown has since become world-wide, was one of the men thus selected. He received his sobriquet from his marked success in killing buffaloes to supply fresh meat to the construction parties on the Kansas Pacific Railroad. He had lived from boyhood on the plains and passed every experience—herder, hunter, pony-express rider, stage-driver, wagonmaster in the quartermaster's department, and scout of the army, and was first brought to my notice by distinguishing himself in bringing me an important dispatch from Fort Larned to Fort Hays, a distance of sixty-five miles, through a section infested with Indians. The dispatch informed me that the Indians near Larned were preparing to decamp, and this intelligence required that certain orders should be carried to Fort Dodge, ninety-five miles south of Hays. This too being a particularly dangerous route—several couriers having been killed on it—it was impossible to get one of the various Petes, Jacks, or Jims hanging aroung Hays City to take my communication. Cody, learning of the strait I was in, manfully came to the rescue, and proposed to make the trip to Dodge, though he had just finished his long and perilous ride from Larned. I gratefully accepted his offer, and after a short rest he

mounted a fresh horse and hastened on his journey, halting but once to rest on the way, and then only for an hour, the stop being made at Coon Creek, where he got another mount from a troop of cavalry. At Dodge he took some sleep, and then continued on to his own post—Fort Larned—with more dispatches. After resting at Larned he was again in the saddle with tidings for me at Fort Hays, General Hazen sending him this time with word that the villages had fled to the south of the Arkansas. Thus, in all, Cody rode about three hundred and fifty miles in less than sixty hours, and such an exhibition of endurance and courage at that time of the year, and in such weather, was more than enough to convince me that his services would be extremely valuable in the campaign, so I retained him at Fort Hays till the battalion of the Fifth Cavalry arrived, and then made him chief of scouts."

CHAPTER XII.

SUBDUING HORSE THIEVES.

The following incident which took place while Buffalo Bill was engaged by the government as a guide and scout, as related by him in his autobiography, establishes his reputation in that respect beyond any dispute:

"In a few minutes more I was on my way to Sheridan, and after settling my business there, I proceeded to Fort Lyon, arriving two days afterward.

"'I'm glad you've come, Bill,' said General Carr, 'as I have been wanting you for the last two weeks. While we have been at this post several valuable animals, as well as a large number of government horses and mules have been stolen, and we think the thieves are still in the vicinity of the fort, but as yet we have been unable to discover their rendezvous. I have had a party out for the last few days in the neighborhood of old Fort Lyon, and they have found fresh tracks down there and seem to think that the stock is concealed somewhere in the timber, along the Arkansas river. Bill Green, one of the scouts who is just up from there, can perhaps tell you something more about the matter."

"Green, who had been summoned, said that he had discovered fresh trails before striking the heavy tim-

ber opposite old Fort Lyon, but that in the tall grass he could not follow them. He had marked the place where he had last seen fresh mule tracks, so that he could find it again.

"'Now, Cody, you're just the person we want,' said the General.

"'Very well, I'll get a fresh mount, and to-morrow I'll go down and see what I can discover,' said I.

"'You had better take two men besides Green, and a pack mule with eight or ten days' rations,' suggested the General, 'so that if you find the trail you can follow it up, as I am very anxious to get back this stolen property. The scoundrels have taken one of my private horses and also Lieutenant Forbush's favorite little black race mule.'

"Next morning I started out after the horse-thieves, being accompanied by Green, Jack Farley and another scout. The mule track, marked by Green, was easily found, and with very little difficulty I followed it for about two miles into the timber and came upon a place where, as I could plainly see from numerous signs, quite a number of head of stock had been tied among the trees and kept for several days. This was evidently the spot where the thieves had been hiding their stolen stock until they had accumulated quite a herd. From this point it was difficult to trail them, as they had taken the stolen animals out of the timber one by one and in different directions, thus showing that they were experts at the business and experienced frontiersmen, for no Indian could have

exhibited more cunning in covering up a trail than did they.

"I abandoned the idea of following their trail in this immediate locality, so calling my men together, I told them that we would ride out for about five miles and make a complete circuit about the place, and in this way we would certainly find the trail on which they had moved out. While making the circuit we discovered the tracks of twelve animals—four mules and eight horses—in the edge of some sand-hills, and from this point we had no trouble in trailing them down the Arkansas river, which they had crossed at Sand creek, and then had gone up the latter stream, in the direction of Denver, to which place they were undoubtedly bound. When nearing Denver their trail became so obscure that we at last lost it; but by inquiring of the settlers along the road which they had taken, we occasionally heard of them.

"When within four miles of Denver—this was on a Thursday—we learned that the horse-thieves had passed there two days before. I came to the conclusion they would attempt to dispose of the animals at Denver, and being aware that Saturday was the great auction day there, I thought it best to remain where we were, at a hotel, and not go into the city until that day. It certainly would not have been advisable for me to have gone into Denver meantime, because I was well known there, and if the thieves had learned of my presence in the city they would at once have suspected my business.

"Early Saturday morning we rode into town and

stabled our horses at the Elephant corral. I secured a room from Ed. Chase, overlooking the corral, and then took up my post of observation. I did not have long to wait, for a man whom I readily recognized as one of our old packers, rode into the corral mounted upon Lieutenant Forbush's racing mule, and leading another government mule, which I also identified. It had been recently branded, and over the 'U. S.' was a plain 'D. B.' I waited for the man's companion to put in an appearance, but he did not come, and my conclusion was that he was secreted outside of the city with the rest of the animals.

"Presently the black mule belonging to Forbush was put up at auction. Now, thought I, is the time to do my work. So, walking through the crowd, who were bidding for the mule, approached the man who had offered him for sale. He recognized me and endeavored to escape, but I seized him by the shoulder, saying: 'I guess, my friend, that you'll have to go with me. If you make any resistance, I'll shoot you on the spot.' He was armed with a pair of pistols, which I took away from him. Then informing the auctioneer that I was a United States detective, and showing him—as well as an inquisitive officer—my commission as such, I told him to stop the sale, as the mule was stolen property, and that I had arrested the thief, whose name was Williams.

"Farley and Green, who were near at hand, now came forward, and together we took the prisoner and the mules three miles down the Platte River; there, in a thick bunch of timber, we all dismounted and

made preparations to hang Williams from a limb, if he did not tell us where his partner was. At first he denied knowing anything about any partner, or any other stock; but when he saw that we were in earnest, and would hang him at the end of the given time—five minutes—unless he 'squealed,' he told us that his 'pal' was at an unoccupied house three miles further down the river.

"We immediately proceeded to thee spot indicated, and as we came within sight of the house we saw our stock grazing near by. Just as we rode up to the door, another one of our old packers, whom I recognized as Bill Bevins, stepped to the front and I covered him instantly with my rifle before he could draw his revolver. I ordered him to throw up his hands, and he obeyed the command. Green then disarmed him and brought him out. We looked through the house and found their saddles, pack-saddles, blankets, overcoats, lariats and two Henry rifles, which we took possession of. The horses and mules we tied in a bunch, and with the whole outfit we returned to Denver, where we lodged Williams and Bevins in jail, in charge of my friend, Sheriff Edward Cook. The next day we took them out, and tying each one on a mule we struck out on our return trip to Fort Lyon.

"At the hotel outside the city, where we had stopped on Thursday and Friday, we were joined by our man with the pack mule. That night we camped on Cherry creek, seventeen miles from Denver. The weather—it being in April—was cold and stormy, but we found a warm and cosy camping place in a bend of the

creek. We made our beds in a row, with our feet towards the fire. The prisoners so far had appeared very docile, and had made no attempt to escape, and therefore I did not think it necessary to hobble them. We made them sleep on the inside, and it was so arranged that some one of us should be on guard all the time.

At about one o'clock in the night it began snowing, while I was watching. Shortly before three o'clock, Jack Farley, who was then on guard, and sitting on the foot of the bed, with his back to the prisoners, was kicked clear into the fire by Williams, and the next moment Bevins, who had got hold of his shoes—which I had thought were out of his reach—sprang up and jumped over the fire, and started on a run. I sent a shot after him as soon as I awoke sufficiently to comprehend what was taking place. Williams attempted to follow him, and as he did so I whirled around and knocked him down with my revolver. Farley by this time had gathered himself out of the fire, and Green had started after Bevins, firing at him on the run; but the prisoner made his escape into the bush. In his flight, unfortunately for him, and luckily for us, he dropped one of his shoes.

"Leaving Williams in the charge of Farley and 'Long Doc,' as we called the man with the pack mule, Green and myself struck out after Bevins as fast as possible. We heard him breaking through the brush, but knowing that it would be useless to follow him on foot, we went back to the camp and saddled up two of the fastest horses, and at daylight we struck out

on his trail, which was plainly visible in the snow. He had got an hour and a half the start of us. His tracks led us in the direction of the mountains and the South Platte River, and, as the country through which he was passing was covered with prickly pears, we knew that he could not escape stepping on them with his bare foot, and hence we were likely to overtake him in a short time. We could see, however, from the long jumps that he was taking he was making excellent time, but we frequently noticed, after we had gone some distance, that the prickly pears and stones along his route were cutting his bare feet, as nearly every track was spotted with blood.

"We had run our horses some twelve miles when we saw Bevins crossing a ridge about two miles ahead. Urging our horses up to their utmost speed, we reached the ridge just as he was descending the divide towards the South Platte, which stream was very deep and swift at this point. It became evident that if he should cross it ahead of us, he would have a good chance of making his escape. So pushing our steeds as fast as possible, we rapidly gained on him, and when within a hundred yards of him I cried to him to halt or I would shoot. Knowing I was a good shot, he stopped, and coolly sitting down waited till we came up.

"'Bevins, you've given us a good run,' said I.

"'Yes,' said he, 'and if I had had fifteen minutes more of a start, and got across the Platte, I would have laughed at the idea of your ever catching me.'

"Bevins' run was the most remarkable feat of the

kind ever known, either of a white man, or an Indian. A man who could run bare-footed in the snow eighteen miles through a prickly pear patch, was certainly a 'tough one,' and that's the kind of a person Bill Bevins was. Upon looking at his bleeding foot I really felt sorry for him. He asked me for my knife, and I gave him my sharp-pointed bowie, with which he dug the prickly pears briars out of his foot. I considered him as 'game' a man as I had ever met.

" 'Bevins, I have got to take you back,' said I, 'but as you can't walk with that foot, you can ride my horse and I'll foot it.'

"We accordingly started back for our camp, with Bevins on my horse, which was led either by Green or myself, as we alternately rode the other horse. We kept a close watch on Bevins, for we had ample proof that he needed watching. His wounded foot must have pained him terribly but not a word of complaint escaped him. On arriving at the camp we found Williams bound as we had left him and he seemed sorry that we had captured Bevins.

"After breakfasting we resumed our journey, and nothing worthy of note again occurred until we reached the Arkansas river, where we found a vacant cabin and at once took possession of it for the night. There was no likelihood of Bevins again trying to escape, for his foot had swollen to an enormous size and was useless. Believing that Williams could not escape from the cabin, we unbound him. We then went to sleep, leaving Long Doc on guard, the cabin being comfortably warmed and well lighted by the fire. It was

a dark, stormy night—so dark that you could hardly see your hand before you. At about ten o'clock Williams asked Long Doc to allow him to step to the door for a moment.

"Long Doc, who had his revolver in his hand, did not think it necessary to wake us up, and believing that he could take care of the prisoner, he granted his request. Williams thereupon walked to the outer edge of the door, while Long Doc, revolver in hand, was watching from the inside. Suddenly Williams made a spring to the right, and before Doc could even raise his revolver, he had dodged around the house. Doc jumped after him, and fired just as he turned a corner, the report bringing us all to our feet, and in an instant we knew what had happened. I at once covered Bevins with my revolver, but as I saw he could hardly stir, and was making no demonstration I lowered the weapon. Just then Doc came in swearing 'a blue streak,' and announced that Williams had escaped. There was nothing for us to do except to gather our horses close to the cabin and stand guard over them for the rest of the night, to prevent the possibility of Williams sneaking up and stealing one of them. That was the last I ever saw or heard of Williams.

"We finally got back to Fort Lyon with Bevins, and General Carr, to whom I immediately reported, complimented us highly on the success of our trip, notwithstanding we had lost one prisoner. The next day we took Bevins to Boggs' ranch on Picket Wire creek, and there turned him over to the civil author-

ities, who put him in a log jail to await his trial. He was never tried, however, for he soon made his escape, as I expected he would. I heard no more of him until 1872, when I learned that he was skirmishing around on Laramie plains at his old tricks. He sent word by the gentleman from whom I gained this information, that if he ever met me again he would kill me on sight. He was finally arrested and convicted for robbery, and was confined in the prison at Laramie City. Again he made his escape, and soon afterwards he organized a desperate gang of outlaws who infested the country north of the Union Pacific railroad, and when the stages began to run between Cheyenne and Deadwood, in the Black Hills, they robbed the coaches and passengers, frequently making large hauls of plunder. They kept this up for some time, till finally most of the gang were caught, tried, convicted and sent to the penitentiary for a number of years. Bill Bevins and nearly all of his gang are now confined in the Nebraska State prison, to which they were transferred from Wyoming."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE COWBOYS.

"The following interesting and truthful account of the American cowboy appeared a short time ago in the columns of Wilkes' Spirit, and was written by the celebrated plainsman, J. B. Omohundro, famous the world over under the name of Texas Jack.

"The cowboy! How often spoken of, how falsely imagined, how greatly despised (where not known), how little understood! I've been there considerable. How sneeringly referred to, and how little appreciated, although his title has been gained by the possession of many of the noblest qualities, that form the romantic hero of the poet, novelist, and historian; the plainsman and the scout. What a school it has been for the latter! As 'tall oaks from little acorns grow,' the cowboy serves a purpose, and often develops into the most celebrated ranchman, guide, cattle-king, Indian fighter, and dashing ranger. How old Sam Houston loved them, how the Mexicans hated them, how Davy Crocket admired them, how the Comanches feared them, and how much you beef-eaters of the rest of the country owe to them, is a large sized conundrum. Composed of many, to the manner born, but recruited largely from Eastern young men they were taught at school to admire the de-

ceased little George, in exploring adventures, and, though not equalling him in the 'Cherry-tree goodness,' were more disposed to kick against the bulldozing of teachers, parents, and guardians.

"As the rebellious kid of old times filled a handkerchief (always a handkerchief, I believe) with his all, and followed the trail of his idol, Columbus, and became a sailor bold, the more ambitious and adventurous youngster of later days freezes onto a double-barreled pistol and steers for the bald prairie to seek fortune and experience. If he don't get his system full it's only because the young man weakens, takes a back seat, or fails to become a Texas cowboy. If his Sunday-school ma'am has not impressed him thoroughly with the chapter about our friend Job, he may at first be astonished, but he'll soon learn the patience of the old hero, and think he pegged out a little too soon to take it all in. As there are generally openings, likely young fellows can enter, and not fail to be put through. If he is a stayer, youth and size will be no disadvantage for his start in, as certain lines of the business are peculiarly adapted to the light young horseman, and such are highly esteemed when they become thoroughbreds, and fully possessed of 'cow sense.'

"Now 'cow sense' in Texas implies a thorough knowledge of the business, and a natural instinct to divine every thought, trick, intention, want, habit, or desire of his drove, under any and all circumstances. A man might be brought up in the states swinging to a cow's tail, yet, taken to Texas, would be as useless

as a last year's bird's nest with the bottom punched out.

"The boys grow old soon, and the old cattle-men seem to grow young; thus it is that the name is applied to all who follow the trade. The boys are divided into range-workers and branders, road driver and herder, trail-guides and bosses.

"As the railroads have now put an end to the old-time trips, I will have to go back a few years to give a proper estimate of the duties and dangers, delights and joys, trials and troubles, when off the ranch. The ranch itself and the cattle trade in the States still flourish in their old-time glory, but are being slowly encroached upon by the modern improvements that will, in course of time, wipe out the necessity of his day, the typical subject of my sketch. Before being counted in and fully endorsed, the candidate has had to become an expert horseman, and test the many eccentricities of the stubborn mustang; enjoy the beauties, learn to catch, throw, fondle—oh! yes, gently fondle (but not from behind)—and ride the 'docile' little Spanish-American plug, an amusing experience in itself, in which you are taught all the mysteries of rear and tear, stop and drop, lay and roll, kick and bite, on and off, under and over, heads and tails, hand springs, triple somersaults, standing on your head, diving, flip flaps, getting left (horse leaving you fifteen miles from camp—Indians in the neighborhood, etc), and all the funny business included in the familiar term of 'bucking;' then learn to handle a rope, catch a calf, stop a crazy cow, throw a beef steer, play with

a wild bull, lasso an untamed mustang, and daily endure the dangers of a Spanish matador, with a little Indian scrape thrown in, and if there is anything left of you they'll christen it a first-class cowboy. Now his troubles begin (I have been worn to a frizzled end many times before I began); but after this he will learn to enjoy them—after they are over.

"As the general trade on the range has often been described, I'll simply refer to a few incidents of a trip over the plains to the cattle markets of the North, through the wild and unsettled portions of the Territories, varying in distance from fifteen hundred to two thousand miles—time, three to six months—extending through the Indian Territory and Kansas to Nebraska, Colorado, Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Nevada and sometimes as far as California. Immense herds, as high as thirty housand or more in number, are moved by single owners, but are driven in bands of from one to three thousand, which, when under way, are designated 'herds.' Each of these has from ten to fifteen men, with a wagon-driver and cook, and the 'kingpin of the outfit,' the boss, with a supply of two or three ponies to a man, an ox team, and blankets; also jerked beef and corn meal—the staple food. They are also furnished with mavaricks or 'doubtless-owned' yearlings for the fresh meat supply. After getting fully under way, and the cattle broke in, from ten to fifteen miles a day is the average, and everything is plain sailing in fair weather. As night comes on, the cattle are rounded up in a small compass, and held until they lie down, when

two men are left on watch, riding round and round them in opposite directions, singing or whistling all the time, for two hours, that being the length of each watch. The singing is absolutely necessary, as it seems to soothe the fears of the cattle, scares away the wolves or other varmints that may be prowling around, and prevents them from hearing any other accidental sound, or dreaming of their old homes, and if stopped would, in all probability, be the signal for a general stampede. 'Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,' if a cowboy's compulsory bawling out lines of his own composition can be considered such.

"But on nights when 'Old Prob' goes on a spree, leaves the bung out of his water-barrel above, prowls around with his flash-box, raising a breeze, whispering in tones of thunder, and the cowboy's voice, like the rest of the outfit, if drowned out, steer clear, and prepare for action. If them quadrupeds don't go insane, turn tail to the storm, and strike out for civil and religious liberty, then I don't know what 'strike out' means. Ordinarily so clumsy and stupid-looking a thousand beef steers can rise like a flock of quail on the roof of an exploding powder mill, and will scud away like a tumble weed before a high wind, with a noise like a receding earthquake. Then comes fun and frolic for the boys!

"Talk of 'Sheridan's ride, twenty miles away!' That was in the daytime, but this is the cowboy's ride with Texas five hundred miles away, and them steers steering straight for home; night time, darker than the word means, hog wallows, prairie dog, wolf and badger

holes, ravines and precipices ahead, and if you do your duty, three thousand stampeding steers behind. If your horse don't swap ends, and you hang to them until daylight, you can bless your lucky stars. Many have passed in their checks at this game. The remembrance of the few that were footloose on the Bowery a few years ago will give an approximate idea of the three thousand raving bovines on the war path. As they tear through the storm at one flash of lightning, they look all tails, and at the next flash all horns. If Napoleon had had a herd at Sedan, headed in the right direction, he would have driven old Billy across the Rhine.

"The next great trouble is in crossing streams, which are invariably high in the driving season. When cattle strike swimming water they generally try to turn back, which eventuates in their 'milling,' that is, swimming in a circle, and if allowed to continue, would result in the drowning of many. There the daring herder must leave his pony, doff his togs, scramble over their backs and horns to scatter them, and with whoops and yells, splashing, dashing, and didoes in the water, scare them to the opposite bank. This is not always done in a moment, for a steer is no fool of a swimmer; I have seen one hold his own for six hours in the Gulf after having jumped overboard. As some of the streams are very rapid and a quarter to a half-a-mile wide, considerable drifting is done. Then the naked herder has plenty of amusement in the hot sun, fighting greenhead flies and mosquitoes, and peeping around for Indians, until the rest of the lay-out is put over—not

an easy job. A temporary boat has to be made of the wagon box, by tacking the canvas cover over the bottom, with which the ammunition and grub is ferried across, and the running gear and ponies are swum over afterward. Indian fights and horse thief troubles are part of the regular rations. Mixing with other herds and cutting them out, again avoiding too much water at times, and hunting for a drop at others, belongs to the regular routine.

"Buffalo chips for wood a great portion of the way (poor substitute in wet weather) and the avoiding of prairie fires later on, vary the monotony. In fact, it would fill a book to give a detailed account of a single trip, and it is no wonder the boys are hilarious when it ends, and, like the old toper, swears 'no more for me,' only to return and go through the mill again.

"How many, though, never finish, but mark the trail with their silent graves! No one can tell. But when Gabriel toots his horn, the 'Chisholm trail' will swarm with cowboys. 'Howsomever, we'll all be thar,' let's hope for a happy trip, when we say to this planet, adois."

CHAPTER XIV.

IN NEW YORK CITY.

In September, 1871, General Sheridan took a party of his New York friends, among them James Gordon Bennett, of the New York Herald, out to Post McPherson for a grand buffalo hunt.

Buffalo Bill, at the instance of General Sheridan, was on hand to act as scout and guide to the party. He was introduced by the general to each of his friends individually, and, to use Buffalo Bill's own words, given "a good send-off."

Under the experienced buffalo-hunter's guidance, the party had an exceedingly successful hunt, killing quite a number of buffaloes, antelopes, jack-rabbits and turkeys.

That they enjoyed their little Wild West experience goes without saying, and that they were grateful to Buffalo Bill for the part he contributed towards making it a success, was afterwards proven, when, at their invitation, he was an honored guest of Gotham.

Some time after this high-toned hunting-party returned to New York, Buffalo Bill, at General Sheridan's suggestion, secured a thirty days' leave of absence, and started for the city of New York, in response to a pressing invitation so to do from certain members of the high-toned hunting party for whom

he had so satisfactorily acted as guide.

On his arrival at Chicago, on his way East, Buffalo Bill was met at the depot by Colonel M. V. Sheridan, who said that his brother, the General, had not yet returned, but had sent work that Buffalo Bill was to be his and the Colonel's guest, at his house, while he remained in Chicago.

He spent several days in Chicago, where he was kindly received and right royally entertained by many of her prominent citizens, some of whom had met him while on pleasure excursions in the West.

From Chicago he proceeded to New York where he was treated as a prince. His own account of his reception and treatment by his New York friends, as given in his autobiography, is as follows: "On arriving at New York I was met at the depot by Mr. J. G. Hecksher, who had been appointed as 'a committee of one' to escort me to the Union Club, where James Gorden Bennet, Leonard W. Gerome and others were to give me an informal reception and where I was to make my headquarters during my visit to the great Metropolis. I had an elegant dinner at the club rooms, with the gentlemen who had been out on the September hunt, and other members of the club.

"After dinner, in company with Mr. Hecksher—who acted as my guide—I started out on the trail of my friend, Ned Buntline, whom we found at the Brevoort Place Hotel. He was delighted to see me, and insisted on my becoming his guest. He would listen to no excuses, and on introducing me to Messrs. Overton and Blair, proprietors of the Brevoort, they also gave

me a pressing invitation to make my home at their house. I finally compromised the matter by agreeing to divide my time between the Union Club, the Brevoort House, and Ned Buntline's headquarters.

"The next few days I spent in viewing the sights of New York, everything being new and startling, convincing me that as yet I had seen but a small portion of the world. I received numerous dinner invitations, as well as invitations to visit different places of amusement and interest; but as they came in so thick and fast, I soon became badly demoralized and confused. I found I had accepted invitations to dine at half a dozen or more houses on the same day and at the same hour. James Gordon Bennett had prepared a dinner for me, at which quite a large number of his friends were to be present, but owing to my confusion, arising from the many other invitations I had received, I forgot all about it and dined elsewhere. This was 'a bad break,' but I did not learn of my mistake until next day, when at the Union Club House several gentlemen, among them Lawrence Jerome, inquired where in the world I had been, and why I had not put in an appearance at Bennett's dinner. They said that Bennett had taken great pains to give me a splendid reception, that the party had waited till nine o'clock for me and that my non-arrival caused considerable disappointment. I apologized as well as I could by saying that I had been out on a scout and had got lost and had forgotten all about the dinner, and expressed my regret for the disappointment I had created by my forgetfulness. August Belmont, the banker, being near

me, said: 'Never mind, gentlemen, I'll give Cody a dinner at my house."

" 'Thank you, sir,' said I; 'I see you are determined that I shall not run short of rations while I am in the city. I'll be there sure! Both Mr. Jerome and Mr. Hecksher told me that I must not disappoint Mr. Belmont, for his dinners were splendid affairs. I made a note of the date, and at the appointed time I was promptly at Mr. Belmont's mansion, where I spent a very enjoyable evening.

"Mr. Bennett, who was among the guests, having forgiven my carelessness, invited me to accompany him to the Leiderkranz masked ball, which was to take place in a few evenings and would be a grand spectacle. Together we attended the ball and during the evening I was well entertained. The dancers kept on their masks until midnight, and the merry and motley throng presented a brilliant scene, moving gracefully beneath the bright gas-light to inspiriting music. To me it was a novel and entertaining sight, and in many respects reminded me greatly of an Indian war-dance.

"Acting upon the suggestion of Mr. Bennett, I had dressed myself in my buckskin suit, and I naturally attracted considerable attention; especially when I took part in the dancing and exhibited some of my backwoods steps, which, although not as graceful as some, were a great deal more emphatic. But when I undertook to do artistic dancing, I found I was decidedly out of place in that crowd, and I accordingly withdrew from the floor.

"I had been in New York about twenty days when General Sheridan arrived in the city. I met him soon after he got into town. In answer to a question how I was enjoying myself, I replied that I had struck the best camp I had ever seen, and if he didn't have any objections I would like to have my leave of absence extended about ten days. This he willingly did, and then informed me that my services would soon be required at Fort McPherson, as there was to be an expedition sent out from that point.

"The time soon arrived for my departure for the West; so packing up my traps I started for home."

CHAPTER XV.

A NIGHT VISIT TO SPOTTED TAIL'S CAMP.

In 1872 the Grand Duke Alexis, of Russia, visited this country, and having met General Sheridan, he expressed to him a desire to participate in a buffalo hunt somewhere on our Western plains.

General Sheridan was very much pleased to be able to afford the Grand Duke a splendid opportunity for engaging in the sport, and immediately set about making preparations for a grand hunt in the vicinity of Fort McPherson.

General Forsyth and Dr. Asch, of his staff, were sent out to the fort to have all the necessary arrangements perfected by the time the Grand Duke should arrive. Of course the first thing they did was to interview Buffalo Bill in the matter, and learned from him that there were at the time plenty of buffaloes in the vicinity, and especially on the Red Willow, sixty miles distant.

General Sheridan's commissioners then inquired of Buffalo Bill the location of the camp of Spotted Tail, chief of the Sioux Indians. He informed them that it was his opinion that the camp was located somewhere on the Frenchman's Fork, about one hundred and fifty miles from Fort McPherson, as Spotted Tail had permission from the Government to hunt the buf-

falo with his people during the winter, in that portion of the Republican River country.

The commissioners then informed him that General Sheridan wished him to visit Spotted Tail's camp, and induce about one hundred of the leading warriors and chiefs to come to the point where it should be decided to locate the Alexis hunting camp, and to be there by the time the Grand Duke should arrive, so that he could see a body of American Indians and observe the manner in which they killed buffaloes. The Indians would also be called upon to give a grand war-dance in honor of the distinguished visitor.

Next day a pleasant camping place was selected for the Alexis party, on a little knoll in the valley of the Red Willow, and Buffalo Bill started for Spotted Tail's camp. In his autobiography he thus describes his visit: "The weather was very cold and I found my journey by no means pleasant and I was obliged to camp out with only my saddle blankets; and besides, there was more or less danger from the Indians themselves; for, although Spotted Tail himself was friendly, I was afraid I might have difficulty in getting into his camp. I was liable at any moment to run into a party of his young men who might be out hunting, and as I had many enemies among the Sioux, I would be running considerable risk in meeting them.

"At the end of the first day I camped on Stinking Water, a tributary of the Frenchman's Fork, where I built a little fire in the timber; but it was so very cold I was not able to sleep much. Getting an early start in the morning I followed up the Frenchman's

Fork and late in the afternoon I could see, from the fresh horse tracks and from the dead buffaloes lying here and there, recently killed, that I was nearing Spotted Tail's camp. I rode on for a few miles further, and then hiding my horse in a low ravine, I crawled up a high hill, where I obtained a good view of the country. I could see for four or five miles up the creek, and got sight of a village and of two or three hundred ponies in its vicinity. I waited until night came and then I succeeded in riding into the Indian camp unobserved.

"I had seen Spotted Tail's camp when he came from the north and I knew the kind of lodge he was living in. As I entered the village I wrapped a blanket around my head so that the Indians could not tell whether I was a white or a red man. In this way I rode around until I found Spotted Tail's lodge. Dismounting from my horse I opened his tent door and, looking in, saw the old chief lying on some robes. I spoke to him and he recognized me at once and invited me to enter. Inside the lodge I found a white man, an old frontiersman, Todd Randall, who was Spotted Tail's agent and who had lived a great many years with the Indians. He understood their language perfectly and did all the interpreting for Spotted Tail. Through him I readily communicated with the chief and informed him of my errand. I told him that the warriors and chiefs would greatly please General Sheridan if they would meet him about ten sleeps at the old Government crossing of the Red Willow. I further informed him that there was a great chief from

across the water who was coming there to visit him.

"Spotted Tail replied that he would be very glad to go; that the next morning he would call his people together and select those who would accompany him. I told Spotted Tail how I had entered his camp. He replied that I had acted wisely; that although his people were friendly, yet some of his young men had a grudge against me, and I might have had difficulty with them had I met them away from the villiage. He directed his squaw to get me something to eat, and ordered that my horse be taken care of, and upon his invitation I spent the remainder of the night in his lodge.

"Next morning the chiefs and warriors assembled according to orders, and to them was stated the object of my visit. They were asked: 'Do you know who this man is?'

"'Yes, we know him well,' replied one, 'that is Pa-he-has-ka,' (that being my name among the Sioux, which translated means 'Long-Hair') 'that is our old enemy.' A great many of the Indians who were with Spotted Tail at this time had been driven out of the Republican country.

"'That is he,' said Spotted Tail. 'I want all my people to be kind to him and treat him as my friend.'

"I noticed that several of them were looking daggers at me. They appeared as if they wished to raise my hair then and there. Spotted Tail motioned and I followed him into his lodge, and thereupon the Indians dispersed. Having the assurance of Spotted Tail that none of the young men would follow me I started

back for the Red Willow, arriving the second night."

At the site chosen for the Alexis camp, Buffalo Bill found active preparations going on for putting up large wall tents for the Grand Duke and his suite.

CHAPTER XVI.

A BUFFALO HUNT WITH THE DUKE ALEXIS.

On his return to the Alexis camp, Buffalo Bill found active preparations going on for putting up large wall tents for the Grand Duke and his suite and for General Sheridan, his staff officers, and invited guests of the party. Proceeding to Fort McPherson he reported what had been done. Thereupon seventy-five of the very best horses were selected from the five or six hundred at the fort, and sent to the Red Willow, to be used by Alexis and his party at the coming hunt. Two days later a large supply of bedding, furniture, provisions, etc., arrived from Chicago for the use of the Grand Duke and his party.

A day or so later the Grand Duke Alexis and party arrived, and Buffalo Bill was at once introduced to the royal foreigner by General Sheridan, who remarked to the Grand Duke that Buffalo Bill would take charge of him and show him how to kill buffalo.

It would be difficult to say which of the two distinguished individuals thus introduced by General Sheridan was the more impressed by the appearance of the person to whom he had received an introduction.

The Grand Duke was a large, fine looking young man, and looked the very impersonation of Royalty. Buffalo Bill was attired in his best hunting suit, was

feeling first rate, and appeared every inch the successful scout, guide and Indian fighter he was reputed to be.

That the Grand Duke had been thoroughly posted by General Sheridan as to Buffalo Bill's qualifications for acting as a guide on this particular occasion was evident from the confidence with which he entrusted himself to his care and direction, and the pride which he evidently felt when Buffalo Bill loaned him his splendid buffalo horse Buckskin Joe for the occasion.

That evening the Indians, who had arrived at the camp as per arrangement, gave their grand war-dance, much to the entertainment of the Grand Duke.

During the course of the evening Duke Alexis asked Buffalo Bill a great many questions as to how to shoot buffaloes, and wanted to know what kind of a gun or pistol was used. Bill told him that it was a very easy thing to kill buffaloes, and all he would have to do would be to sit on old Buckskin Joe's back and fire away.

Early next morning the party were all in their saddles and in a few minutes were galloping over the prairies in search of a buffalo herd. They had not gone far before they observed a herd some distance ahead of them crossing their way; after which they proceeded cautiously, so as to keep out of sight until they were ready to make a charge.

The Grand Duke became very much excited immediately, and wanted to charge toward the buffaloes forthwith, but Buffalo Bill kept him back, and by keep-

ing behind the sand hills unobserved gradually approached near to the herd.

"Now is your time!" cried Buffalo Bill. "You must ride as fast as your horse will go, and don't shoot until you get a good opportunity."

Away they went, tearing down the hill like mad, throwing up a sand-storm in their rear, and leaving the Duke's retinue far behind. When within a hundred yards of the fleeing buffaloes the Duke fired, but unfortunately missed, being unused to shooting from a running horse.

Buffalo Bill rode up close to his side and advised him not to fire until he could ride directly upon the flank of a buffalo, as the sport was most in the chase. Without further words from either both hunters dashed off together and ran their horses on either flank of a large bull, against the side of which the Grand Duke thrust his gun and fired a fatal shot. He was very much elated at his success, taking off his cap and waving it vehemently, at the same time shouting to those who were fully a mile in the rear. When his retinue came up there were congratulations and everyone drank to his good health with overflowing glasses of champagne. The hide of the dead buffalo was carefully removed and dressed, and the royal traveler in his journeyings over the world has no doubt often rested himself upon this trophy of his skill on the plains of America.

There are those who pretend to assert that there is something suspicious in connection with the shooting of that buffalo by the Grand Duke Alexis, and

even go so far as to say that Buffalo Bill held the bull by the horns while Grand Duke butchered it. But then there are always envious and suspicious people everywhere who are unwilling to accord to any one the just meed of praise earned through superior skill or bravery. The Grand Duke, undoubtedly, is entitled to all the credit he ever received on account of the animal's slaughter.

As the party were quite fatigued after the exciting affair with the buffalo, an encampment was made, and the evening pleasantly passed with song and story.

On the following morning, by request of Spotted Tail, the Grand Duke hunted for a while by the side of "Two-Lance," a celebrated chief, who claimed he could send an arrow entirely through the body of the largest buffalo. This feat seemed so incredulous that there was a general denial of his ability to perform it; nevertheless, the Grand Duke and also several others who accompanied the chief, witnessed, with profound astonishment, an accomplishment of the feat, and the arrow that passed through the buffalo was given to the Duke as a memento of Two-Lance's skill and power. All of which is vouched for by Buffalo Bill, in his autobiography, in substantially the same words as it is above given.

When the Grand Duke was satisfied that he had had enough of the sport, orders were given for the return to the railroad. And so ended the royal buffalo hunt.

CHAPTER XVII.

WINNING FAME IN A NEW FIELD.

In the fall of 1872 Buffalo Bill, very unexpectedly to himself, was elected a member of the Nebraska Legislature, and hence derived the title of Honorable. While serving as such member he received an urgent letter from Ned Buntline to come East and appear on the stage in a play which Buntline was certain would prove a howling success if Buffalo Bill would only consent to take part in it as the hero of the drama.

Bill's friends all advised him against taking the step, and reminded him of his stage fright on the occasion of his appearance on the stage of the Bowery Theater.

But Buntline had written him a series of letters, all having a tendency to brace him up for the final urgent request to come East and take the leading role in his play, and they had the desired effect, for Buffalo Bill, against the advice of General Reynolds and protest of his friends in Nebraska, resigned both his seat in the Legislature and his position under General Reynolds, and started for Chicago, to meet Mr. Buntline.

When he arrived at Chicago he found that Buntline had not yet written the play, but that he had it all in his head. Some tall hustling was done to get the

play written and rehearsed. Buntline named his play "Scouts of the Plains," and within a week after Buffalo Bill had arrived in Chicago it had been written, rehearsed and placed on the boards of the Amphitheater.

Whether from stage fright or for want of sufficient study of his part, when Buffalo Bill came on the stage, he could not remember one word of the speech he was expected to make.

Ned Buntline, who also had a part in the play, repeatedly gave him the "cue," but to no effect, the words wouldn't come. Buntline, however, was sufficient for the emergency. Slapping Bill on the back, he shouted, as if it were a part of the play:

"Where have you been, Bill? What has kept you so long?"

Glancing up into one of the boxes where his friend Mr. Milligan, a very popular man and widely known in Chicago, was seated with some friends, Buffalo Bill cried out:

"I have been out on a hunt with Milligan."

The "hit" was immense, and the theater echoed again and again with applause.

The fact was, and it was known to many in the audience, that Milligan had but recently been out West and met with an amusing adventure in way of an alleged buffalo hunt and fight with the Indians.

Buntline took the "cue," and followed his first impromptu question with others equally as pat, and

though Buffalo Bill remained on the stage for at least fifteen minutes, not a word of the part that had been assigned to him was spoken, for the entire conversation was impromptu.

Financially the "Scouts of the Plains" was a success, and Buffalo Bill felt perfectly satisfied with his debut as an actor. From Chicago the troupe went to St. Louis, thence to Cincinnati, and then all over the East and West, meeting with wonderful success in all parts of the country. The novel innovation of introducing Indians, scouts and cowboys on the stage in mimic pioneer life caught the enthusiasm of the people everywhere, and the troupe was flooded with offers of engagements from the managers of the leading theatres all over the country. At the end of the season Buffalo Bill found his share of the profits netted him $6,000.

The wonderful popularity of these performances proved beyond question that the people of this country wanted to see American pioneer life truthfully presented on the stage, and the "Scouts of the Plains" and similar plays presented to American audiences by Buffalo Bill and his troupe paved the way for the production of the magnificent Wild West exhibitions of after years.

In 1874 Buffalo Bill again went to the plains. After scouting until fall he returned to New York and organized another troupe. The summer of 1875 he spent with his family in Rochester, New York.

In the fall of that year he re-organized his troupe, and did a very successful business. While playing at Springfield, Mass., in April, 1876, he received a telegram announcing the serious illness of his little boy, an only son, and arrived home in time to have the little one die in his arms.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ONCE MORE A SCOUT.

In the spring of 1876 our war with the Sioux broke out, and Buffalo Bill was sent for by General Crook, to accompany his command as guide and chief of scouts.

At Cheyenne he came upon the 5th cavalry regiment, with whom he had done good service as guide and scout. The regiment was under command of General Carr, and was on its way back from Arizona to join General Crook. General Carr at once appointed Buffalo Bill his guide and chief of scouts, and the next morning the regiment proceeded to Fort Laramie.

On their arrival at Fort Laramie they found General Sheridan there, accompanied by General Frye and General Forsyth, en route to Red Cloud agency. Many depredations had been recently committed on the Union Pacific Railroad and on the Black Hills road in the vicinity, the Fifth Cavalry was sent out to scout the country between the Indian agencies and the hills. By continued scouting, with occasional small engagements, it was supposed the Indians were soon driven from the vicinity, and, under the command of General Wesley Merritt, who had been ordered to relieve General Carr, the regiment had started to return to

Fort Laramie, when a scout arrived and reported the massacre of General Custer and his band of heroes on the Little Big Horn, on June 25, 1876. The scout also brought orders for General Merritt to proceed at once to Fort Fetterman and join General Crook in the Big Horn country.

The massacre of General Custer and his little band of brave men by Sitting Bull and his Sioux, is a matter of too recent history to require repeating here. The blame and praise of that terrible slaughter has been given and charged to one officer and then another. Just where the blame belongs, probably none will ever know. The only certainty about it is, "Some one had blundered."

On the evening of the receipt of the news of General Custer's massacre, General Merritt received information through a scout that eight hundred Cheyenne warriors had that day left Red Cloud agency to join Sitting Bull's hostile forces in the Big Horn country. He immediately selected five hundred men and horses and began a forced march for War-Bonnett creek, with the intention of reaching the main Indian trail running to the north across the creek before the Cheyennes could get there. Buffalo Bill, in his autobiography, thus describes what followed: "We arrived there the next night, and at daybreak the following morning, July 17, 1786, I went out on a scout, and found that the Indians had not yet crossed the creek. On my way back to the command I discovered a large party of Indians, which proved to be the Cheyennes, coming up from the south, and I hurried to the

camp with this important information.

"The cavalry men quietly mounted their horses, and were ordered to remain out of sight, while General Merritt, accompanied by two or three aids and myself, went out on a little tour of observation to a neighboring hill, from the summit of which we saw that the Indians were approaching almost directly towards us. Presently fifteen or twenty of them dashed off to the west in the direction from which we had come the night before; and upon closer observation with our field glasses, we discovered two mounted soldiers, evidently carrying dispatches for us, pushing forward on our trail.

"The Indians were evidently endeavoring to intercept these two men, and General Merritt feared that they would accomplish their object. He did not think it advisable to send out any soldiers to the assistance of the couriers, for fear they would show to the Indians that there were troops in the vicinity who were waiting for them. I finally suggested that the best plan was to wait until the couriers came closer to the command and then just as the Indians were about to charge, to let me take the scouts and cut them off from the main body of the Cheyennes, who were coming over the divide.

"'All right, Cody,' said the General, 'if you can do that, go ahead.'

"I rushed back to the command, jumped on my horse, picked out fifteen men, and returned with them to the point of observation. I told General Merritt to

give us the word to start out at the proper time, and presently he sang out:

" 'Go in now, Cody, and be quick about it. They are going to charge on the couriers.'

"The two messengers were not over four hundred yards from us, and the Indians were only about two hundred yards behind them. We instantly dashed over the bluffs, and advanced on a gallop towards the Indians. A running fight lasted several minutes during which we drove the enemy some little distance and killed three of their number. The rest of them rode off towards the main body, which had come into plain sight, and halted, upon seeing the skirmish that was going on. We were about half a mile from General Merritt, and the Indians whom we were chasing suddenly turned upon us, and another lively skirmish took place. One of the Indians, who was handsomely decorated with all the ornaments usually worn by a war chief when engaged in a fight, sang out to me in his own tongue: 'I know you, Pa-he-haska; if you want to fight, come ahead and fight me.'

"The chief was riding his horse back and forth in front of his men, as if to banter me, and I concluded to accept his challenge. I galloped towards him for fifty yards and he advanced towards me about the same distance, both of us riding at full speed, and then, when we were about thirty yards apart, I raised my rifle and fired; his horse fell to the ground, having been killed by my bullet. Almost at the same instant my own horse went down, he having stepped into a gopher hole. The fall did not hurt me much, and I

instantly sprang to my feet. The Indian had also recovered himself, and we were both on foot, and not more than twenty paces apart. We fired at each other simultaneously. My usual luck did not desert me on this occasion, for his bullet missed me, while mine struck him in the breast. He reeled and fell, but before he had fairly touched the ground I was upon him, knife in hand, and had driven the keen edged weapon to its hilt in his heart. Jerking his war-bonnet off, I scientifically scalped him in about five seconds.

"The whole affair from beginning to end occupied but little time, and the Indians, seeing that I was some little distance from my company, now came charging down upon me from a hill, in hopes of cutting me off. General Merritt had witinessed the duel, and realizing the danger I was in, ordered Colonel Mason with Company K to hurry to my rescue. The order came none too soon, for had it been given one minute later I would have had not less than two hundred Indians upon me. As the soldiers came up I swung the Indian chieftain's top-knot and bonnet in the air, and shouted:

" 'The first scalp for Custer.'

"General Merritt seeing that he could not now ambush the Indians, ordered the whole regiment to charge upon them. They made a stubborn resistance for a little while, but it was of no use for any eight hundred, or even sixteen hundred Indians to try and check a charge of the gallant old Fifth Cavalry, and they soon came to that conclusion and began a run-

ning retreat towards Red Cloud agency."

After the campaign against the Indians was ended Buffalo Bill returned East and played in a new drama written to illustrate scenes in the late Sioux war. After visiting the principal Eastern cities, the troupe went to California, and played to crowded houses.

Returning to Nebraska, he and Major North bought a cattle ranch. Leaving the Major to look after the cattle, Buffalo Bill went East, and in 1877 played in a new drama entitled "May Cody; or, Lost and Won." This was the most successful play he had ever appeared in.

CHAPTER XIX.

AS THE WORLD KNOWS HIM.

The best description of Buffalo Bill, and his marvelous exhibition of pioneer life on the plains, that has yet appeared, was given by a writer in the London Era, in recounting a Wild West performance he witnessed at Erastina, Staten Island. It reads as follows:

"In the grove of Erastina, is the Wild West encampment, adjoining the exhibition grounds. It is not unlike a military camp, with its headquarters under canvas, and its grouped tepees savagely ornamented with scalps and feathers. The picturesque Indian children playing under the trees, the uncouth, extemporized comfort and the prevailing air of organization gives it a novel interest. There are no restrictions upon visitors, who are allowed to enter the tents, chuck the Indian babies under the chin, watch the squaws at work, and interview the patriarchial chief who sits grim and stocial on his blanket. Of the exhibition on the grounds (and the proprietors will not allow you to call it a performance), especially at night when lit by the electric lights, the wild beauty of it is an entirely new element in our arena sports. When I saw it there were, by gate record, 12,000 people on the stands, which you will understand is the population of a goodly town. A stentorian voice in front of the

grand stand makes the announcements, and as he does so, the bands make their entry from the extreme end of the grounds, dashing up to the stand, a third of a mile, at a whirlwind pace. As an exhibition of equestrianism nothing in the world can equal this. Pawnees, Sioux, Cut Off Band, Ogalallas, cowboys, make this dash in groups, successively, and pull up in a growing array before the stand 200 strong. Such daredevil riding was never seen among Cossacks, Tartars, Arabs. All the picturesque horsemanship of the famous Bedouins sinks to child's play before these reckless mamelukes of the plains. When the American cowboys sweep like a tornado up the track, forty or fifty strong, every man swinging his hat and every pony at its utmost speed, a roar of wonder and delight breaks from the thousands and the men reach the grand stand in a cloud, welcomed by a thunderburst. Col. Cody, the far-famed Buffalo Bill, comes last. I don't know that anybody ever described Buffalo Bill on a horse. I am inclined to think nobody can. Ainsworth's description of Dick Turpin's ride stood for many years as the finest thing of its kind, and then young Winthrop in his clever story of 'John Brent' excelled it in his ride to the Suggernell Springs. Either one of these men, given a month and a safe publisher, might have wrought Buffalo Bill upon paper. He is the complete restoration of the Centaur. No one that I ever saw so adequately fulfills to the eye all the conditions of picturesque beauty, absolute grace, and perfect identity with his animal. If an artist or a riding master had wanted to mould a living ideal of romantic equestrian-

ship, containing in outline and action the men of Harry of Navarre, the Americanism of Custer, the automatic majesty of the Indian, and the untutored cussedness of the cowboy, he would have measured Buffalo Bill in the saddle. Motion swings into music with him. He is the only man I ever saw who rides as if he couldn't help it and the sculptor and the soldier had jointly come together in his act. It is well worth a visit to Erastina to see that vast parterre of people break into white handkerchiefs like a calm sea suddenly whipped to foam, as this man dashes up to the grand stand. How encumbered, and uncouth and wooden are the best of the red braves beside the martial leadership of this long-limbed pale-face! There they are, drawn up in platoon front. No circus can approximate its actuality. Look down the line. Every man has a record of daring, and there, shaking her long hair, is Georgie Duffie, the Colorado girl. A word of command, the line breaks. Away they go with shouts and yells. In an instant the grounds are covered with the vanishing hoofs. Feathers and war-paint glimmer in the mad swirl and they are gone in the distance. It is impossible to escape the thrill of this intense action. The enthusiasm of the multitude goes with them. All the abeyant savagery in the blood and bones comes to the surface, and men and women shout together. An impression prevailed among some of the spectators that these wild bucking horses are trained after the manner of circus horses. Nothing can be further from the truth, as I had occasion to learn after staying at the camp for two or three days and making their ac-

quaintance. There is one black mare they call Dynamite that is, without exception, the wickedest animal I ever saw. You are to understand that when a man attempts to mount her she jumps into the air, and turning a back somersault, falls upon her back with her heels upward. To escape being crushed to death is to employ the marvelous celerity and dexterity that a cowboy alone exhibits. The other day a cowboy undertook to ride this animal. It was necessary for four men to hold her and she had to be blindfolded before he could get on her, and then, letting out a scream like a woman in pain, she made a headlong dash and plunged with all her force into a fence, turning completely over head first and apparently falling upon the rider. A cry of horror rose from the spectators. But the rest of the exhibition went on. Poor Jim was dragged out, bleeding and maimed, and led away. What was the astonishment of the multitude, when the other refractory animals had had their sport, to see Dynamite again led out and the cowboy, limping and pale, came forward to make another attempt to ride her. 'No, no,' cried the spectators, 'take her away.' But the indomitable cowboy only smiled grimly and gave them to understand that in the cowboys' code a man who failed to ride his animal might as well retire from business. It was do or die. For fifteen minutes the fight went on between man and beast. Animal strength against pluck and intelligence. I never saw a multitude brought to such intense interest. It was the gladiatorial contest revived. The infuriated beast shook off the men who held her like insects. She lept into the air with a

scream and fell on her back. She laid down and grovelled. But the cowboy got upon her back by some superhuman skill, and then he was master. As he punished the animal mercilessly and swung his hat triumphantly, the concourse of people stood up and cheered long and loud."

This graphic description of Buffalo Bill and his Wild West exhibition, and other similar accounts given by well-known English actors who had witnessed the performance in America, awakened a deep desire in the minds of the people of London to "take in" the entertainment.

The eminent English actor, Mr. Henry Irving thus spoke to a representative of the Era, the leading dramatic organ of London, regarding a Wild West performance he witnessed at Staten Island, predicting that when it should come to London it would take the town by storm.

"I saw an entertainment in New York the like of which I had never seen before, which impressed me immensely. It is coming to London, and will be exhibited somewhere near Earl's Court, on the grounds of the forthcoming Exhibition. It is an entertainment in which the whole of the most interesting episodes of life on the extreme frontier of civilization in America are represented with the most graphic vividness and scrupulosity of detail. You may form some idea of the scale upon which the scene is played when I say that when I saw it the stage extended over five acres. You have real cowboys, with bucking horses, real buffaloes, and great hordes of cows, which are lassoed

and stampeded in the most realistic fashion imaginable. Then there are real Indians, who execute attacks upon coaches driven at full speed. No one can exaggerate the extreme excitement and 'go' of the whole performace. However well it may be rehearsed—and the greatest care is taken that it shall go properly—it is impossible to avoid a considerable share of the impromptu and the unforseen. For you may rehearse with buffaloes as much as you like, but no one cay say in what way they will stampede when they are suddenly turned loose in the open. No one can say how the ox has to be lassoed, or in what way the guns have to be fired when the border fight comes on. The excitement is immense, and I venture to predict that when it comes to London it will take the town by storm."

Mr. Irving's prediction was fulfilled to the letter. Buffalo Bill and his Wild West riders were welcomed to London with a more than royal welcome, for royalty itself—the Queen, the Prince of Wales and other royal personages of high rank, as well as vast crowds of the London populace flocked to Earl's Court station to witness the much talked of performance. The public press could not say enough in its favor, all were flatteringly eulogistic. The London Illustrated News devoted to a graphic description of the exhibition a two full page illustration and four columns of descriptive matter. Following is an extract from the latter:

"This remarkable exhibition, the 'Wild West,' has creater a furore in America, and the reason is easy to understand. It is not a circus, nor indeed is it acting

at all, in a theatrical sense; but an exact reproduction of daily scenes in frontier life, as experienced and enacted by the very people who now form the Wild West company. It comprises Indian life, cowboy life, Indian fighting and burning Indian villages, lassoing and breaking in wild horses, shooting, feats of strength, and border athletic games and sports. It could only be possible for such a remarkable undertaking to be carried out by a remarkable man; and the Hon. W. F. Cody, known as 'Buffalo Bill,' guide, scout, hunter, trapper, Indian fighter, and legislator, is a remarkable man. He is a perfect horseman, an unerring shot, a man of magnificent presence and physique, ignorant of the meaning of fear or fatigue; his life is a history of hairbreadth escapes, and deeds of daring, generosity and self-sacrifice, which compare very favorably with the chivalric actions of romance, and he has been not unappropriately designated the 'Bayard of the Plains.'"

Buffalo Bill was personally honored by calls from the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone and other distinguished statesmen of the realm and then commenced a long series of nvitations to breakfast, dinners, luncheons, and midnight layouts, garden parties and all the other attentions by which London society delights to honor what it is pleased to call the distinguished foreigner.

A writer in the London Sporting Life, thus concludes a laudatory notice of the Wild West opening performancec:

"The opening of the Wild West Show was one of the

most signal successes of recent years. Such a vast concourse of the cream—or it may be as well to say the creme de la creme—of society is seldom seen at any performance. The number of chariots waiting at the gates outnumbered those of Pharaoh, and the phalanx of footmen constituted quite a small army. There is much in the Wild West show to please. There is novelty of incident, wonderful tone, color, dextrous horsemanship, and a breezy independence of manner, which latter quality, by the way, is not entirely confined to the dramatis personæ. It is new, it is brilliant, it is startling, it will 'go!'"

The concluding performance was thus noticed by the London Times.

"The Wild West Exhibition, which has attracted all the town to West Brompton for the last few months, was brought yesterday to an appropriate and dignified close. A meeting of representative Englishmen and Americans was held, under the presidency of Lord Lorne, in support of the movement for establishing a Court of Arbitration for the settlement of disputes between this country and the United States. At first sight it might seem to be a far cry from the Wild West to an International Court. Yet the connection is not really very remote. Exhibitions of American products and of a few scenes from the wilder phases of American life certainly tend in some degree at least to bring America nearer to England. They are partly cause and partly effect. They are the effect of increased and increasing intercourse between the two countries, and they tend to promote a still more intimate under-

standing. The two things, the Exhibition and the Wild West Show, have supplemented each other. Those who went to be amused often stayed to be instructed. It must be acknowledged that the show was the attraction which made the fortune of the Exhibition. Without Colonel Cody, his cowboys, and his Indians, it is conceivable that the Exhibition might have reproduced the Wild West in one feature at any rate—namely, its solitude—with rare fidelity. But the Wild West was irresistible. Colonel Cody, much to the astonishment of some of his more superfine compatriots, suddenly found himself the hero of the London season. Notwithstanding his daily engagements and his punctual fulfillment of them, he found time to go everywhere, to see everything, and to be seen by all the world. All London contributed to his triumph, and now the close of his show is selected as the occasion for promoting a great international movement with Mr. Bright, Lord Granville, Lord Wolseley, and Lord Lorne for its sponsors. Colonel Cody can achieve no greater triumph than this, even if he some day realizes the design attributed to him of running the Wild West Show within the classic precincts of the Colosseum at Rome."

From all of which it appears that Buffalo Bill and his wonderful Wild West exhibition proved a howling success in the British metropolis.

From London the Wild West aggregation of two hundred people, with the numerous horses, buffaloes and wild steers, moved on in triumphal march to Birmingham, and thence to Manchester, where it was attended by people from all parts of England, and

Buffalo Bill and his wonderful Wild West riders soon became a familiar theme and marvel throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain.

Today, the world over, Buffalo Bill, in the minds of men, women and children, is the typical American pioneer, guide, scout, Indian fighter and plainsman.

It is but natural, therefore, that the world should be eager to learn all that can be told regarding the career of this remarkable American.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FAMOUS PONY EXPRESS.

The regular work of the daring and romantic overland pony express riders has never been exceeded, even by the recent specially trained for long-distance riding of the German and Austrian army officers. When it is considered that those pony express riders traveled over a wild country, without bridges or even roads deserving the name, crossed two great mountain chains, vast alkali deserts and had to fight Indians and wolves along much of their journeys and that the average time made was 250 miles a day, it will be seen that even the governments which pay attention to such matters have no such courier system to call upon. But this system was organized for the accommodation of the gold miners of California who were able and willing to pay, and in fact did pay $5 for each half ounce of mail brought to them from the old folks at home by the daring little pony express riders. Each rider was limited to fifteen pounds of mail, which was divided into four packages of equal weight and carried in saddle pockets, two in front and two behind the rider. So it will be seen that each rider carried mail for which the company received $2,400 in addition, of course, to the United States postage.

In 1859 Senator Gwinn, then United States Senator

from California, and a devoted Union man, appealed to the stage company to expedite travel and communications on the military road, so as to have a central line available to the North and South alike, and to demonstrate the possibilities of operating it in midwinter. Strange to say, this grand Union man and able statesman went into the Rebellion and lost his wonderful prestige and influence in California, as well as a fortune, in his fealty to his native State of Mississippi, and in 1866 was made the Duke of Sonora by Maximilian, in the furtherance of some visionary scheme of Western empire, but soon died. His propositions were duly considered and responded to by that famous firm, representatives of thrift, enterprise, energy, and courage, who well deserve the commendation of history and the gratitude of their countrymen.

Russell was a Green Mountain boy, who before his majority had gone West to grow up with the country; and after teaching a three-months' school on the frontier of Missouri had hired to old John Aull of Lexington, Mo., at $30 per month, to keep books, and was impressed in lessons of economy by the anecdotes of Aull that a London company engaged in the India trade had saved £80 per annum in ink by omitting to dot the "i's" and cross the "t's," when he was emptying his pen by splashing the office wall with ink. Alexander Majors is still living, venerable with years and honors, a mountain son of Kentucky frontier ancestry, the colleague and friend of Daniel Boone; and William Waddell, an ancestral Virginian of the blue-grass region of Kentucky, bold enough for any enterprise,

and able to fill any missing niche in Western wants.

The Pony Express was born from this conference, and the first move was to compass the necessary auxiliaries to assure success. Eighty young, agile, athletic riders were engaged and 420 strong and wiry ponies procured, and on the 9th of April, 1860, the venture was simultaneously commenced from St. Joseph and Sacramento City. The result was a success in cutting down the time more than one half, and it rarely missed making the schedule time in ten days, and in December, 1860, making it in seven days and seventeen hours. The stations were from twelve to fifteen miles apart, and one pony was ridden from one station to another, and one rider made three stations, and a few daredevil fellows made double duty and rode eighty or eighty-five miles. One of them was Charles Cliff, now a citizen of St. Joseph, who rode from St. Joseph to Seneca and back on alternate days. He was attacked by Indians at Scott Bluff, and received three balls in his body and twenty-seven in his clothes. Cliff made Seneca and back in eight hours each way.

The route of the pony express began at St. Joseph, Mo., and extended due West to Fort Kearney, Neb., thence up the Platte river to Julesburg, Col., across the Platte and to Forts Laramie and Bridges, Wyo., and on to Salt Lake, Utah. The descent into the plains of Nevada was made by the route through Ruby valley and thence along the Humboldt river. The Sierra Nevadas were crossed by way of Canon City, Placerville, then known as Hangtown, and the Sacramento valley, reached by the road the miners had made down

by Folsom to Sacramento and thence along the valley and over the foothills into San Francisco, where the long journey ended.

There were always eighty riders in the saddle, forty going East and forty West. Change stations were close together, especially over the mountainous sections, as the ponies were kept at top speed from station to station, no matter what kind of country they had to travel. Many of the brave lightweights who rode in the pony express service lost their lives in Indian fights, for the gentle red man seemed to esteem it a peculiarly high honor to dangle an express rider's scalp at his belt.

The keepers of the stations had the ponies already saddled, and the riders merely jumped from the back of one to another; and where the riders were changed the pouches were unbuckled and handed to the already mounted postman, who started at a lope as soon as his hand clutched them. As these express stations were the same as the stage stations, the employes of the stage company were required to take care of the ponies and have them in readiness at the proper moment.

At one of the change stations located at the crossing of the Platte at Fort Kearney, was employed the notorious Jack Slade, a Vermont Yankee. He shot a Frenchman named Jules Bevi, whose patronymic is preserved in the present station of Julesburg on the Union Pacific Railroad. Slade nailed one of his ears to the station door and wore the other several weeks as a watch-charm. He drifted to Montana, and in 1865 was hanged by the vigilantes on suspicion of head-

ing the road agents who killed Parker of Atchison and robbed a train of $65,000. His tragic end, as related by Doctor McCurdy, formerly of St. Joseph, contains an element of the pathetic. "He lived on a ranch near Virginia City, Mont., and every few days came into town and filled up on 'benzine,' and took the place by shooting along the streets and riding into saloons and proclaiming himself to be the veritable 'bad man from Bitter Creek.' The belief that he was connected with matters worse than bad whisky had overstrained the long-suffering citizens. The suggestive and mysterious triangular pieces of paper dropped upon the streets, surmounted with the skull and arrows, called the vigilantes to a meeting at which the death of Slade and two companions was determined. On the fated morning following the meeting he came to town duly sober and went to a drug store for a prescription, and while awaiting its preparation he was suddenly covered with twelve shot guns and ordered to throw up his hands. He complied smilingly, but proposed to reason with them as to the absurdity of taking him for a bad man. The only concession was permission to send a note to his wife at the ranch, and an hour was allotted him to make peace with the Unknown; ropes were placed around the necks of the three, and at the end of the time they were given short shrift, and were soon hanging between heaven and earth. While the bodies were swaying the wife appeared on the scene, mounted, with a pistol in each hand, determined to make a rescue; but seeing that it was too late she quailed before the determined visages of the vigilantes,

and soon left the vicinity, carrying away, as it was believed, a large amount of the proceeds of Slade's robberies."

The wonder was that the service was kept up at all; that so many of the riders escaped the Indians and the dangers of flood, storm, snow, heat and cold. Their chief advantage in encounters with the Indians was that the pony express riders were always better mounted, on better fed horses than the Indians, and could take care of themselves in a chase. They were a wary and experienced lot and difficult to ambuscade, so that while an occasional scalp was lost there were not many of the letters longed for which never came over that dangerous route.

The pony express went out of existence when the overland railroad and telegraph service was completed in 1869. Few of the old riders are still living and the promoter of the scheme, William H. Russell, and his chief assistant B. F. Ficklin, are long since both dead.

CHAPTER XXI.

SOME ACCOUNTS OF WILD BILL.

A biography of Buffalo Bill would not be complete without some accounts of Wild Bill, his whilom boon companion.

Among what influences, whether religious or otherwise, the days of his infancy were spent, we have no means of knowing. Scanty means incident to farm life in a new country necessarily deprived the youth of educational privileges to any great extent, and we conclude that his taste in other directions—his love for nature, and finding out her secrets—largely overpowered the desire for mere book-knowledge.

We find him getting the training and making ready for the pioneer life for which he early showed a love, by obtaining through his own exertions a pony, knife, and revolver. This was not a strange fancy when we take into consideration the unsettled condition of the country, the necessity for defense against hostile Indians, the wild animals to be subdued, besides the countless other needs that these would help to meet. With these, all his own, to use as often as he willed, he soon became an expert in hunting. He also acquired skill in trapping. His later experiences only perfected these accomplishments.

As an example of his wonderful skill as a marksman

we cite the following, as related in "Adventures of Wild Bill" by Ingraham:

"Failing in an effort to secure employment at once in Kansas whither he had gone in search of adventure, he sought to enlist with the 'Red Legs,' an anti-slavery band under the leadership of the noted Jim Lane. This band numbered some three hundred men, all thoroughly armed and mounted; but not having the wherewithal to purchase a horse and complete equipment, he was refused as a 'Red Leg Ranger,' greatly to his distress.

"A few days after this the Red Legs went out on the commons to shoot with rifles and pistols for prizes, and our youth determined to get into the ring if possible.

"To attract attention, when any one shot and did not drive the bull's eye, he laughed in a satirical way, till at last one of the Red Legs turned fiercely upon him and said: 'Look a hyar, boy, you has too much laugh, as if you c'u'd do better; an' durn my skins, ef yer haint a Red Leg, I'll give yer a chance to shoot. Ef yer takes ther prize, I'll pay yer put-up dust, an' ef yer don't, I'll take the hickory ramrod o' my rifle an' welt yer nigh ter death. Does yer shoot on my terms?'

"'I will, and beat you too,' was the quiet response.

"All eyes had turned on the tall, handsome youth before them, and several had determined to try his metal, after the shooting, for having laughed at them, and now they gazed on him with increased interest.

"There were three prizes, viz: a fine horse, saddle and bridle for the first; a rifle and belt, with two revolvers and a bowie-knife for the second, and a purse

of one hundred dollars for the third.

"He had some little money, and said quietly:

"'I'll pay the fees, for I want no man to give me money.'

"'Then shell out; it's fifteen fer the first, ten fer the second, and five dollars fer ther third prize, an' ther boys hes all chipped in, an' ef yer don't win, boy, they'll all see me larrup yer.'

"The speaker, Shanghai Bill, all knew, and greatly feared, for he was a desperado of the worst type, a giant in size and strength, and ever ready to get into a brawl.

"The boy smiled at his words, paid his thirty dollars, which left him with three in his pocket, and after the Red Legs had shot, took his stand, and raising his rifle, quickly fired. The first to start the cheer, was Jim Lane himself, who cried out:

"'By heaven! the best shot in the three hundred.'

"'It's a accident; besides, Gineral, ther's two more to be shooted,' growled Shanghai Bill.

"The two more were then shot in the same quick way as before, and the bullets found dead center.

"'I've got the horse, saddle and bridle toward becoming a Red Leg, General,' said the boy quietly, addressing Lane.

"'You have, indeed; now see if you can win the arms, and egad, I believe you can,' was Lane's reply.

"These were to be shot for with pistols, and at twenty paces, the best two in three shots, and once more three dead center bull's-eyes were scored by the lad.

"The men now became deeply interested in the youth, and watched eagerly for him to come to his third trial, which was to be with a rifle at a moving object, a hundred yards off. This object was a round piece of wood, painted red, which was to be rolled, like a wheel, along the ground, and at it three shots were given. Just as the man who rolled it started it in motion, a crow flew over the field above the heads of the crowd, and instantly raising his rifle, he fired and brought him down, while he immediately seized the weapon held by Shanghai Bill, and throwing it to a level, sent a bullet through the red wheel ere it had stopped rolling.

"This double feat, and one shot with a strange rifle, set the crowd wild with enthusiasm."

This is only one instance among numberless exhibitions of his unerring aim, which not only protected the weak and innocent, but as often dealt death to foes.

An account is given of the wonderful rescue of a small child. A bear having crept undiscovered near the cabin of an early settler, seized the child by its clothing, and was making fast tracks for the forest, when young Bill, discovering the fearful situation, pursued the animal, and shot him until he dropped the terrified infant, and turned upon him. Then it was that he put an end to the life of the beast, and catching up the child, soon returned him to his parents. This brave act settled an old difficulty between the father and himself, and made them firm friends ever after.

For a time he rendered efficient aid to the Overland Stage Company as driver. While serving in this ca-

pacity he was once intercepted by a band of Indians. As the road in front was an ascending grade for the remainder of the distance to the station, he was confident that it would be useless to attempt a passage with any hope of escape, unless their numbers could be reduced, or some successful device conceived of removing them from the way. To effect this, he made a short turn, and urged his team forward to their utmost exertions, thus deceiving the savages, who fancied that he was about to make the distance by another route.

Believing their energies were partially spent in gaining a new point from which to operate, he suddenly turned again, having won considerable time by this strategic movement, and used every art known to horsemen to excite his team to the greatest speed. The Indians, perceiving the trick, retraced the ground with fearful swiftness—those who were not already exhausted—and reached the edge of a narrow river that must be crossed, and there made their attack.

Wild Bill's desperate courage stood by him as, with the lines firmly secured, he made good use of his trusty revolvers, while his team broke through the yelling savages, and entered the stream, showered by the arrows of their assailants, which carried death to all but two of the occupants of the coach. These, as well as the brave driver, were wounded, though not seriously, and pushed forward, though closely pursued, until assistance reached them, when they were able to overthrow the remnant of the band.

Wild Bill scored many a success as an Indian-fight-

er, as the Generals whom he served can attest, in obtaining which his knowledge of wood-craft was of great assistance. We learn of him as a pony express rider winning new laurels for fidelity and daring, and gallant conduct.

In whatever capacity he served, he thoroughly mastered the situation, though death stared him in the face. Many times was he wounded so that it required weeks and months of nursing to restore him to usefulness, but neither this, nor the pain he endured, could unnerve him. He was always a terror to the lawless, stage-robbers, horse-thieves, and mean men of every description, they giving him a wide berth after once learning, by actual contact, his true metal, if they were so fortunate as once to escape with their lives.

Let us now look at his career as scout and spy during our Civil war, when he "encountered many perils and suffered many privations in defense of our nationality." In Harper's Magazine a lieutenant is made to tell one of the most daring feats ever attempted, which we quote:

"I can't tell the thing as it was," said the young officer. "It was beyond description. One could only hold his breath and feel. It happened when our regiment was attached to Curtis' command, in the expedition down into Arkansas. One day we were in the advance, and began to feel the enemy, who appeared in greater strength than at any time before. We were all rather uneasy, for there were rumors that Kirby Smith had come up from Texas with all his force, and as we were only a strong reconnoitering party, a fight

just then might have been bad for us. We made a big noise with a light battery, and stretched our cavalry out in the open, and opposite the rebel cavalry, who were drawn up in line of battle on the slope of the prairie, about a thousand yards away. There we sat for half an hour, now and then banging at each other, but both parties keeping pretty well with their line of battle. They waited for us to pitch in. We were waiting till more of our infantry should come.

"It was getting to be stupid work, however, and we were all hoping something would turn up, when we noticed two men ride out from the center of their line, and move toward us. At the first instant we paid little heed to them, supposing it some act of rebel bravado, when we saw quite a commotion all along the enemy's front, and then they commenced firing at the two riders, and their line was all enveloped with smoke, out of which horsemen dashed in pursuit. The two riders kept well together, coming straight for us. Then we knew they were trying to escape, and the Colonel deployed one company as skirmishers to assist them. There wasn't time to do much, although, as I watched the pursued and their pursuers, and found the two men had halted at what I could see was a deep ditch, the moments seemed to be hours; and when they turned, I thought they were going to give themselves up. But no; in the face of that awful fire, they deliberately turned back, to get space for a good run at the ditch. This gave time for two of their pursuers to get within a few yards of them, when they stopped, evidently in doubt as to the meaning of this retro-

grade movement. They did not remain long in doubt, for the two men turned again, and with a shout, rushed for the ditch, and then we were near enough to see that they were Wild Bill and his mate. Bill's companion never reached the ditch. He and his horse must have been shot at the same time for they went down together, and did not rise again.

"Bill did not get a scratch. He spoke to Black Nell, the mare he rode, who knew as well as her master that there was life and death in that twenty feet of ditch, and that she must jump it; and at it she went with a big rush. I never saw a more magnificent sight. Bill gave the mare her head, and turning in his saddle, fired twice, killing both of his pursuers, who were within a few lengths of him. They went out of their saddles like stones, just as Black Nell flew into the air and landed safely on our side of the ditch. In a moment both the daring scout and the brave mare were in our midst, while our men cheered and yelled like mad."

"Wild Bill had secured all the information that could be obtained from the Confederates and, as an engagement was about to take place, he decided to make a bold dash for the Union side. He undoubtedly enjoyed the prospect of danger connected with the adventure, or he certainly would have attempted to escape by a less conspicuous method. He had entered their lines in disguise as 'a boy in gray,' to avoid detection.

"Several times in different disguises he entered the enemy's lines, and once was discovered and sentenced

to execution; but escaped without injury, to again baffle the sharpest of their detectives and reveal plans of action to our forces that were of great value during the campaign.

Later he took command of a government wagon train bound for Springfield, Mo., with supplies for the United States Army.

At one time he was wagon-master of a train ordered by Gen. Fremont from Leavenworth, Kan., to Sedalia, Mo., and for meritorious conduct in defending the team and stores from an attack by marauding parties, he was made wagon-master of high rank in Gen. Curtis' command, the Army of the Missouri.

As marshal of Hays City he was equal to every emergency, as he was in every important position he was called to take. To hold this office in such places and under such circumstances as did Wild Bill, required far more courage than is expected of the ordinary official. The border element to which we have referred, was uppermost. Not only to shoot, but to kill, seemed to be demanded in order to suppress riots or to preserve anything like peace and order. The vices at which we hold up our hands in horror were the every day amusements, and the taking of human life was of such common occurrence and for such petty causes, that one would be in continual terror to listen to the bloody deeds so often enacted.

Wild Bill led a more quiet life when he joined Buffalo Bill in his journey through the United States as an actor, though he failed to distinguish himself, and on several occasions satisfied his love for "fair play,"

by settling disputes in a summary manner. He soon wearied of the life, and settled on a plan of his own to make money by taking buffaloes and Comanche Indians to the East, so that the people there might realize the spectacle of a buffalo hunt. This failed him financially on account of not having a private inclosure for the exhibition, though it afforded amusement to a large crowd; but as money was the object, he concluded to fall back for a time on a surer basis, by renewing his old life as scout for the government. Later we find him in the gold regions of the West, the Black Hills, hoping to amass a competency. Ere he has time to accomplish his purpose his life is cut short in its prime, by one of the many desperadoes that frequent places so remote from legal jurisdiction, lured on by the thirst for gain, and hoping to escape the reach of justice.

Wild Bill is shot while engaged with friends in a game of cards, to avenge a fancied injury on being beaten at a similar game a short time previous; and though the assassin escape speedy retribution, it comes and the cold-blooded murderer is at last numbered with his kind. The friends of Wild Bill laid him to rest in the everlasting mountains, with kindly hands and affectionate remembrances.

CHAPTER XXII.

CUSTER'S LAST CHARGE.

One of the most interesting features of "Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World" was the reproduction in miniature of the battle of the Little Big Horn, showing with historical accuracy the scene of Custer's last charge.

As that realistic scene is based on Buffalo Bill's understanding of the actual occurrence his account of the battle of the Little Big Horn, as given in his "Autobiography," is reproduced here:

"War against the Sioux having been declared, brought about by the combined causes of Black Hill outrages and Sitting Bull's threatening attitude, it was decided to send out three separate expeditions, one of which should move from the north, under Gen. Terry, from Fort Lincoln; another from the east, under Gen. Gibbon, from Fort Ellis, and another from the south, under Gen. Crook, from Fort Fetterman; these movements were to be simultaneous, and a junction was expected to be formed near the headwaters of the Yellowstone river.

"For some cause, which I will refrain from discussing, the commands did not start at the same time. Gen. Crook did not leave Fetterman until March 1st, with seven hundred men and forty days' supply. The

command was intrusted to Col. Reynolds, of the Third Cavalry, accompanied by Gen. Crook, the department commander. Nothing was heard of this expedition until the 22nd following, when Gen. Crook forwarded from Ft. Reno a brief account of his battle on Powder river. The result of this fight, which lasted five hours, was the destruction of Crazy Horse's village of one hundred and five lodges; or that is the way the dispatch read, though many assert that the battle resulted in little else than a series of remarkable blunders which suffered the Indians to make good their escape, losing only a small quantity of their property.

"One serious trouble arose out of the Powder river fight, which was found in an assertion made by Gen. Crook, or at least attributed to him, that his expedition had proved that instead of there being 15,000 or 20,000 hostile Indians in the Black Hills and Big Horn country, that the total number would not exceed 2,000. It was upon this estimation that the expeditions were prepared.

"The Terry column, which was commanded by Gen. Custer, consisted of twelve companies of the Seventh Cavalry, and three companies of the Sixth and Seventeenth Infantry, with four Gatling guns, and a detachment of Indian scouts. This force comprised twenty-eight officers and seven hundred and forty-seven men, of the Seventh Cavalry, eight officers and one hundred and thirty-five men of the Sixth and Seventeenth Infantry, two officers and thirty-two men in charge of the Gatling battery, and forty-five enlisted Indian scouts, a grand total of thirty-eight of-

ficers and nine hundred and fifty-nine men, including scouts.

"The combined forces of Crook, Gibbon, Terry and Custer, did not exceed twenty-seven hundred men, while opposed to them were fully 17,000 Indians, all of whom were provided with the latest and most improved patterns of repeating rifles.

"On the 16th of June Gen. Crook started for the Rosebud, on which stream it was reported that Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse were stationed; about the same time a party of Crow Indians, who were operating with Gen. Crook, returned from a scout and reported that Gen. Gibbon, who was on Tongue river, had been attacked by Sitting Bull, who had captured several horses. Crook pushed on rapidly toward the Rosebud, leaving his train behind and mounting his infantry on mules. What were deemed accurate reports, stated that Sitting Bull was still on the Rosebud, only sixty miles from the point where Gen. Crook camped on the night of the 15th of June. The command traveled forty miles on the sixteenth, and when within twenty miles of the Sioux' principal position, instead of pushing on, Gen. Crook went into camp.

"The next morning he was much surprised at finding himself attacked by Sitting Bull, who swooped down on him with the first streaks of coming dawn, and a heavy battle followed. Gen. Crook, who had camped in a basin surrounded on all sides by high hills, soon found his position so dangerous that it must be changed at all hazards. The advance was therefore sounded with Noye's battalion occupying a position on the right,

Mills on the right center, Chambers in the center, and the Indian allies on the left. Mills and Noyes charged the enemy in magnificent style, breaking the line and striking the rear. The fight continued hot and furious until 2 p. m., when a gallant charge of Col. Royall, who was in reserve, supported by the Indian allies, caused the Sioux to draw off to their village, six miles distant, while Gen. Crook went into camp, where he remained inactive for two days.

"In the meantime, as the official report recites: 'Generals Terry and Gibbon communicated with each other June 1st, near the junction of the Tongue and Yellowstone rivers, and learned that a heavy force of Indians had concentrated on the opposite bank of the Yellowstone, but eighteen miles distant. For fourteen days the Indian pickets had confronted Gibbon's videttes.'

"Gen. Gibbon reported to Gen. Terry that the cavalry had thoroughly scouted the Yellowstone as far as the mouth of the Big Horn, and no Indians had crossed it. It was now certain that they were not prepared for them, and on the Powder, Tongue, Rosebud, Little Horn, and Big Horn rivers, Gen. Terry at once commenced feeling for them. Major Reno, of the Seventh Cavalry, with six companies of that regiment, was sent up Powder River one hundred and fifty miles, to the mouth of Little Powder to look for the Indians, and, if possible, to communicate with Gen. Crook. He reached the mouth of the Little Powder in five days, but saw no Indians, and could hear nothing of Crook. As he returned, he found on the Rosebud a very large Indian trail, about nine days

old, and followed it a short distance, when he turned about up Tongue river, and reported to Gen. Terry what he had seen. It was now known that no Indians were on either Tongue or Little Powder rivers, and the net had narrowed down to Rosebud, Little Horn and Big Horn rivers.

"Gen. Terry, who had been waiting with Custer and the steamer 'Far West,' at the mouth of Tongue river, for Reno's report, as soon as he heard it, ordered Custer to march up the south bank to a point opposite Gen. Gibbon, who was encamped on the north bank of the Yellowstone, keeping abreast of Gen. Custer's column.

"Gen. Gibbon was found in camp awaiting developments. A consultation was had with Gens. Gibbon and Custer, and then Gen. Terry definitely fixed upon the plan of action. It was believed the Indians were at the head of the Rosebud, or over on the Little Horn, a dividing ridge only fifteen miles wide separating the two streams. It was announced by Gen. Terry that Gen. Custer's column 'would strike the blow.'

"At the time that a junction was formed between Gibbon and Terry, Gen. Crook was about one hundred miles from them, while Sitting Bull's forces were between the commands. Crook, after his battle, fell back to the head of Tongue river. The Powder, Tongue, Rosebud and Big Horn rivers all flow northwest, and empty into the Yellowstone; as Sitting Bull was between the headwaters of the Rosebud and Big Horn, the main tributary of the latter being known as the Little Big Horn, a sufficient knowledge of the topo-

graphy of the country is thus afforded by which to definitely locate Sitting Bull and his forces.

"Having now ascertained the position of the enemy, or reasoned out the probable position, Gen. Terry sent a dispatch to Gen. Sheridan, as follows: 'No Indians have been met with as yet, but traces of a large and recent camp have been discovered twenty or thirty miles up the Rosebud. Gibbon's column will move this morning on the north side of the Yellowstone, for the mouth of the Big Horn, where it will be ferried across by the supply steamer, and whence it will proceed to the mouth of the Little Horn, and so on. Custer will go up the Rosebud tomorrow with his whole regiment, and thence to the headwaters of the Little Horn, thence down that stream.'

"Following this report came an order, signed by E. W. Smith, Captain of the Eighteenth Infantry, Acting Assistant Adjutant General, directing General Custer to follow the Indian trail discovered, pushing the Indians from one side while General Gibbon pursued them from an opposite direction. As no instructions were given as to the rate each division should travel, Custer, noted for his quick, energetic movements made ninety miles the first three days, and, discovering the Indians in large numbers, divided his command into three divisions, one of which he placed under Major Reno, another under Major Benteen, and led the other himself.

"As Custer made a detour to enter the village, Reno struck a large body of Indians, who, after retreating nearly three miles, turned on the troops and ran them

pell mell across Grassy creek into the woods. Reno over-estimated the strength of his enemies and thought he was being surrounded. Benteen came up to the support of Reno, but he, too, took fright and got out of his position without striking the enemy.

"While Reno and Benteen were trying to keep open a way for their retreat, Custer charged on the village, first sending a courier, Trumpeter Martin, to Reno and Benteen with the following dispatch: 'Big village; be quick; send on the packs.' This order was too plain to be misconstrued. It clearly meant that he had discovered the village, which he intended attacking at once; to hurry forward to his support and bring up the packs, ambulances, etc. But instead of obeying orders Reno and Benteen stood aloof, fearful lest they should endanger their position, while the brave Custer and his squad of noble heroes rushed down like a terrible avalanche upon the Indian village. In a moment, fateful incident, the Indians came swarming about that heroic band until the very earth seemed to open and let loose the elements of volcanic fury, or like a riot of the fiends of Erebus, blazing with the hot sulphur of their impious dominion. Down from the hillside, up through the valleys, that dreadful torrent of Indian cruelty and massacre poured around the little squad to swallow it up with one grand swoop of fire. But Custer was there at the head, like Spartacus fighting the legions about him, tall, graceful, brave as a lion at bay, and with thunderbolts in his hands. His brave followers formed a hollow square, and met the rush, and roar, and fury of the demons. Bravely they

breasted that battle shock, bravely stood up and faced the leaden hail, nor quailed when looking into the blazing muzzles of five thousand deadly rifles.

"Brushing away the powder grimes that had settled in his face, Custer looked over the boiling sea of fury around him, peering through the smoke for some signs of Reno and Benteen, but seeing none yet thinking of the aid which must soon come, with cheering words to his comrades, he renewed the battle, fighting still like a Hercules and piling heaps of victims around his very feet.

"Hour after hour passed and yet no friendly sign of Reno's coming; nothing to be seen saving the battle smoke, streaks of fire splitting through the misty clouds, blood flowing in rivulets under tramping feet, dying comrades, and Indians swarming about him, rending the air with their demoniacal 'hi-yi-yip-yah,—yah-hi-yah.'

"The fight continued with unabated fury until late in the afternoon; men had sunk down beside their gallant leader until there was but a handful left, only a dozen, bleeding from many wounds and hot carbines in their stiffening hands. The day is almost done, when look! heaven now defend him! the charm of his life is broken, for Custer has fallen; a bullet cleaves a pathway through his side, and as he falters another strikes his noble breast. Like a strong oak stricken by the lightning's bolt, shivering the mighty trunk and bending its withering branches down close to the earth, so fell Custer; but like the re-acting branches, he rises partly up again, and striking out like

a fatally wounded giant lays three more Indians dead and breaks his mighty sword on the musket of a fourth; then, with useless blade and empty pistol falls back the victim of a dozen wounds. He is the last to succumb to death, and dies, too, with the glory of accomplished duty on his conscience and the benediction of a grateful country on his head. The place where fell these noblest of God's heroes is sacred ground, and though it be the Golgotha of a nation's mistakes it is bathed with precious blood, rich with the gems of heroic inheritance."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SIOUX GHOST DANCERS

The wild orgy of the Indians of the Northwest United States in 1890-91, known as the Ghost-Dance, was presumably a religious exercise; certainly that character was claimed for it by the participants.

"This is our church," argued one of them; "just the same as the white man's church, only we don't pass round the hat."

Whether this distinction was actually made by the intelligent red man, or was put into his mouth by the wicked reporter, is not the question at issue. Assuming that the Ghost-Dance was, to a considerable extent, a religious ceremony, we have to trace its rise and spread, and the influence which it has had upon the frontier history of the day.

The dance was said by the Indians to have been commanded by the Messiah who had lately arisen for them. Various statements have been made as to the identity of this individual; according to most accounts, he was a petty chief of the Utes, named Johnson Sides. But even if the personality of the alleged Saviour were agreed upon, there are variations, great and apparently irreconcilable, in the statements made as to his character. One authority represents him as one of the most diabolical of his race, and a principal actor in one

of the bloodiest massacres ever perpetrated west of the Missouri river. On the other hand, an army officer, writing to Gen. Miles, says that he is known as the "Peacemaker" among the Indians and whites of Nevada, where he has lived for many years. This officer continues:

"To substantiate his statement, he showed me a medal which he carried strung around his neck, on which was a legend to the effect that he was presented with the medal by some Christian society for his efforts toward doing good to his fellow men, whether white or red. * * * He told me that he read or knew the Bible; that he was desirous of making peace with every one, and that was why he was named Peacemaker. * * * I firmly believe that this is the good-natured Indian who has caused all this trouble; that he has taught the members of his tribe the story of Christ, or the Messiah, and the time when He will once more visit this earth, as it has been taught him by the Christian people interested in his welfare. He has told these visiting Indians of the paradise in store for all people when the Son shall once more visit this earth, and the Indian's paradise is whatever his imagination may lead him to believe, the same as the white man's. He has no doubt delivered the story in its true light, and the Indians in re-telling the story have warped and woven it according to their understanding."

If these statements and inferences be true, it will not be difficult to trace the whole thing. Johnson Sides, the sanguinary murderer in 1878, had twelve years in

which to become the Peacemaker of 1890. When we consider the part that Sitting Bull took in more than one massacre of the whites, and the absolute control which the law might afterward have gained over him, we cannot object that Sides would have been punished, had he really been one of the perpetrators of this bloody crime. He might, in all earnestness, as the officer quoted has suggested, tell the story of Redemption to his associates, with such embellishments as his imagination would suggest—embellishments which would make it more intelligible to them, but which would speedily become in their minds, the main part of the story. The promises of a paradise would take such form as they could understand; and every one who heard of the "good time coming" would be eager to spread the news. Then would come the question:

"Will not these things be for the white man, and the Indian be an outcast, as he is now?"

"No," the answer would be, "they will be for the Indian just as much as for the white man."

After a little, the share which the Indians were to have in the paradise would be dwelt upon with more and more emphasis, until the white man's was disregarded; the next step would be, that these blessings were to be for the Indians, and not for the white man; thence it is a short and easy step to the belief that the whites were to be destroyed to advance the prospects of the Indians. Indeed, it is not easy to see how the Indians could be brought to believe that, if the whites were left, the reds could expect to receive their due share of the millennial blessings.

Having corrupted the teaching thus far, the Indians were ready to be still further misled. The astute and revengeful chief of the great Sioux tribe, Sitting Bull, saw here his opportunity; and it was doubtless due to his efforts that the tidings of the Messiah's coming were so wide-spread, and a belief in the promises to the Indians so generally felt. The dance, which seems to be the natural expression for the Indian's most solemn emotions, became less and less that of the devotee, more and more that of the brave before he goes upon the warpath. Finally, the dancers appeared in full war-paint, and the situation became decidedly alarming to the whites.

It must always be borne in mind that there is a strong religious element in the Ghost-Dance itself. However it may have been spread by the efforts of Sitting Bull and others of his kind to advance their own ends, most of those who took part in it firmly believed that the wonderful prophecies were to be fulfilled. What were these prophecies, and how did they originate?

According to the answers to inquiries which were instituted by the Superintendent of the Indian Training School, at Carlisle, Pa., the belief in the Messiah originated in Wyoming. The writer does not pretend to reconcile this with the theory that Johnson, a resident of Nevada, is the original of the Messiah. Two Indians of the Northern Cheyennes followed a mysterious light in the heavens for eighteen days. Their route led through a country wholly without water, but wherever they found it necessary to halt, a little pool

made its appearance within their camp, and furnished all the water that they needed—not a drop more. Finally, they came to a secluded place near the mountains, and there, on the gentle slope, was a "wicky-up" of grass. Entering this, they saw Jesus, who told them that he had come to the white men once, and had been crucified by them; but now he had come to the Indians, and these two favored witnesses were to return and tell their brethren what they had seen.

The two Indians were then caught up in a cloud, and borne swiftly, until they reached their home. Here they related what they had seen; the wounds made by the nails and the spear were described, much stress was laid upon the fact that the Christ whom they had seen had long hair, and it was regarded as a conclusive proof of his identity that he was said to resemble the pictures in the white men's Bible. What finally became of Good Thunder and Yellow Breast, the two Indians to whom, according to the Sioux, this vision had been vouchsafed, does not appear. The Sioux Chief, Short Bull, became the chief prophet of this new dispensation, and claimed miraculous powers.

According to the belief which obtained among the Indians, the entire continent was to be covered with a layer of new soil, thirty feet deep. This would completely overwhelm the white man, his railways and steamboats, but the Indians would be enabled to wriggle up through the mass of earth, and through this purgatory reach the paradise prepared for them, where no white man would ever be allowed to come. Grass waist-deep was to cover this new earth, and immense

herds of buffalo and other game were to roam over it. These preliminaries being accomplished, the spirits of the dead Indians were all to return from the happy hunting grounds, to enjoy, with their descendants and kinsmen, the no less blessed fields of earth. How the supply of game was to be maintained in the face of this vast horde of hunters, their prophets did not say; perhaps the deer and buffalo were to come to life again each time that they were killed and eaten.

Some of the modern improvements were to be added to those which their forefathers had enjoyed; each warrior, no matter what his standing in the tribe, was to be provided with a horse and wagon. That so great a number should be required was no stumbling-block to their faith; the needed outfits would be produced by a wave of the Messiah's hand. Meanwhile, they were protected from their white enemies by a power equally miraculous with that which was to produce the wagons. The white men were speedily to lose the art of making gunpowder, and the stock now on hand would become useless. In the hands of the Indians, however, it appears that powder was to retain its old efficacy; for those who had no firearms made every effort to get them; a buck on one occasion trading a horse, said to be worth $75, for an old gun which could scarcely be valued at more than $2. Meanwhile, until the white man's powder should become useless in their hands, the Indians were to have bullet-proof shirts. Some of them tried to demonstrate their faith by firing into these garments—with no one inside them of course—at short range. When the bullets

penetrated the fabric, they consoled themselves with the idea that their own powder and bullets retained their old-time power.

A party of Indians started to visit Sitting Bull, and also to find, if possible, the new Messiah. On the road, one of their number, Yellow Hawk, informed his companions that he had received instructions in a vision to kill himself, as a test of his faith, being assured that he would be raised from the dead. He accordingly committed suicide; yet, when they reached Standing Rock Agency, they found there Yellow Hawk, alive and well; having been raised from the dead and miraculously transported to the Agency in advance of them, although they had traveled with great speed.

Short Bull pretended to receive celestial messages. On one occasion, he declared that on the previous night he had seen four stars fall from heaven. Three of them resumed their places in the skies; the fourth remained for a time on earth; and hastening toward the spot, he found there a letter written in English. Neither he nor his companions could read the letter; but it was nevertheless believed to be a message from the Messiah. The fact that he could not read the messages when he received them does not seem to have deterred this medicine man from venturing upon prophecy.

About sixteen miles to the southeast of the Walker River Agency buildings is an elevation known to the whites as Mount Grant. On the summit of this mountain, say the Indians, may still be discerned the footprints of their first father, for here was he placed when

first created. This mountain was to be the scene of the Messiah's reappearance, said the new prophets; but the place was sometimes fixed elsewhere. Finally, both time and place were definitely appointed: the long awaited Messiah was to appear at Wounded Knee, in the form of a buffalo, on that day which white men call November 20, 1890. Though the day passed away without anything that could be twisted into a fulfillment of the prophecy occurring, Sitting Bull and his lieutenant do not seem to have lost the confidence of their followers in the least degree.

Having thus given some slight account of the belief, it remains to describe, as far as possible, the form of worship known as the Ghost-Dance. Elsewhere we have described the ceremony called the Sun-Dance, which is a long-established custom of the Sioux. Writing in December, 1890, Gen. Howard says of a somewhat similar but less barbarous ceremony called the Omaha Dance:

"There seems to be little difference between it [the Messiah or Ghost-Dance] and the one we saw. The Indians were painted from head to foot with a variety of designs upon their chests, legs and backs. Their heads were decked out with feathers, strips of different colored cloth, bits of fur or other small articles, combined to attract attention. They had the usual strip of 'manta' about the waist, and some had on sashes, but otherwise they were naked. Their music was the usual drumming and singing, done mostly by outside bands who were looking on with delight and cheering their companions. The dancers kept time with the music.

They had some reliefs when any became too tired to continue the operation, so that the plot of ground to which they limited themselves was always full. The grunting and shouting and barking like coyotes or wolves were particularly exciting to the dancers, and somewhat so to the strangers. It seems that in the 'Messiah-Dance' they have sometimes added the women, who were never included in the 'Omaha.'"

During the first half of November, some portion of the strange and barbarous ceremony was witnessed by a lady missionary, Miss M. C. Collins. She writes:

"I have been up to Sitting Bull's, and the dance is in full blast. It is a most terrible thing—the old Sun-Dance with a new name. They dance facing the sun as long as possible, and fall down, moan and groan, and whoop, and foam at the mouth like mad dogs. They do not yet cut their bodies, but that will come soon. The men all dress in war dress and paint and feathers, and the women also take part and paint and wear feathers. Sitting Bull stayed in a sacred tent, and every one entering the dance for the first time went into the tent to be made 'wakan," and painted with crescents on the forehead, cheeks and chin, and a cross on the nose. I went into the tent and talked with the old man. He assented to everything, but promises nothing; he means war."

About the same time, a white man caught a glimpse of the Ghost-Dance while in progress; although the fears of his guide hurried him away before the height of the ceremony had been reached. The experience is thus described:

"The Ghost-Dance seems to be intended as a solemn notification to the Indian dead that they are needed on earth to help the remnant of their people exterminate the whites and seize their own again. It is also a ceremonial welcome in anticipation of the returning braves, and is at the same time a dirge. Whether the white men, who are all to die when the Messiah makes his appearance, are mourned in advance in the dirge movement of the chant which is part of the Ghost-Dance, seems hard to surmise. But the wild strains which my half-breed instructor said foretold the red man's final triumph, were certainly ferocious enough to satisfy the wildest sensation lover.

"The camp this friendly half-breed led me to spy upon is in a hollow surrounded by low, bare hills. From summit to summit across the valley would perhaps be a mile. The wagons of the braves—many of them, as farmers and freighters, now have their horses and wagons—are corralled in the centre of the valley. A fringe of tents skirts the borders of the camp, and a score or so of painted tepees are the lodging-places of the irreconcilable old squaws and bucks, who have never given in to progressive notions, gone to wearing shirts or working like white people. The oxen, bulls and cows, pigs and chickens, issued to these Indians by the Government for breeding purposes—for in the eye of the law most of them are farmers—have been driven into the valley also, and are lariated or cooped on the outskirts of the camp, where they are being killed and eaten at a rapid rate.

"The atmosphere was damp and moist when, two

nights ago, my half-breed friend and I set out for the camp. After an hour's laborious walk, and after crossing a marshy plain, the top of the hill to the west of the camp was reached about 9 o'clock. The lights of the camp-fire on which the evening meal had been cooked, were gradually allowed to die out, and several old squaws could be plainly seen moving in and out among the darkening embers. About three hundred yards east of the hill on which we were seated in a clump of stunted evergreens was an open space of an acre in extent, toward which the squaws seemed now urging, now driving the rest of the band. Around the outer rim of this open space fires were kindled of wood that seemed to have been smudged, as there was little or no flame, only a dull red glow and a profuse pale gray smoke, which, rising from all sides at once, formed a sort of canopy over the scene. Through this cloud, by fits and starts, the old squaws could be seen forming the warriors in rows around the eastern edge of the expanse, with the younger bucks and squaws in rows behind them. The warriors in the front rows were kneeling, the squaws behind them sitting, and the younger bucks standing behind them.

"Then the old squaws retired to the western edge of the open ground, where they were screened from observation by the brush, and remained out of sight for about ten minutes. During this time the picture was wild and impressive in an unusual degree. Seen by the smouldering light of the fires built in a long oval about forty feet in front of the line, the warriors, with their women and children behind them, knelt or sat or

stood in absolute silence. They were all waiting—just what for, the half-breed on the hill did not know. When a fire would burn up too bright and illuminate too clearly the solemn group near it, a squaw would go and pull the fagots away from the coals and subdue the flames.

"When the old squaws returned they joined hands and knelt down in the center of the open space. They began chanting, what sounded at first like a death-song, but now and again swelled into savagely triumphant yells. The smoke only parted at intervals, and while the chant was going on; but while the strange scene was shut from view the warriors advanced from the ranks, and, joining hands in a larger circle around the old squaws, began the Ghost-Dance. Their chant was less shrill than that started by the squaws, and was not so plainly heard. A portion of it seemed lamentation for their dead; then came the invocation to the dead to arise and help their brethren exterminate the white men.

"The squaws had not been observed to leave the circle they had formed, but as the warriors' chant swelled into what the half-breed said was the invocation to the departed Sioux to come back to earth, the old hags, one by one, stole like shadows under the linked arms of the braves, each with a burning stick in her shriveled hand, the light from which fell with gray ghastliness upon her painted face. This light for the first time made visible to the watchers the faces of the braves themselves, and it was now seen that they were in full war-paint.

"The old women passed through the circle like a procession of specters, each carrying a taper of grave-wax to light her unaccustomed feet over the rough surface of the valley. At all events that was what their wild performance looked like from the hill-top; and before the procession had half passed through the circle, the smoke grew so thick and the clouds above the valley so dense that the half-breed spy declared the immediate necessity of a return to the agency. Enough had been seen of the Ghost-Dance, which had then fairly begun, for report says it lasts well into the morning, and indeed until everybody connected with it is exhausted, to bring out clearly at least one significant fact: and that was that the bucks had war-paint on their faces. * * * Visions of the Happy Hunting-Grounds are seen in the Ghost-Dance by the warriors, who spin around in a religious delirium until they fall in a trance. In this trance the ghosts of dead braves and departed chiefs are said to come and tell them of the new glories to crown the red man. This by some is said to give its name to the dance."

But why should a religious ceremony, such as the Ghost-Dance undoubtedly was at its inception, excite alarm among the whites? Why, unless because "Conscience does make cowards of us all?" The white men knew what reason the Sioux had to be dissatisfied; saw them gathering in bands united by a common belief in the coming destruction of the white men, and trembled lest that belief should, by reason of its own force, work out its own fulfillment.

This is not the place to discuss the Indian policy

which has been pursued by the Government, with little variation, for a long term of years; perhaps it is founded on wisdom and worked out with patience and earnest desire for the Indian's welfare; but it is certain that it has frequently brought about disastrous wars and bloody massacres.

In June, 1889, the Sioux signed a treaty ceding to the Government a part of their reservation; Gen. Crook was a member of the Commission that secured their signatures; he had been their conqueror, but he was also their benefactor and friend; and they knew him and believed in him as such. He promised them that the Government would promptly pay them in full for their lands; but Gen. Crook was unable to secure the immediate fulfillment of the promises which he had been authorized to make; and during the time consumed by the "law's delay," he died. With his death, the Sioux felt that they had lost a trusty friend; nor were they far wrong. Delay in passing the appropriation bills intensified their distrust of the Government, for the usual rations in 1890 were delayed far beyond the proper time. Their crops had been a partial failure in 1888 and 1889; in the succeeding year they raised nothing. At the same time the annual appropriation was cut down year after year; and it was further claimed that in the census of 1890 the enumeration of Indians was far below the actual population; so that the tribes were, by law, entitled to a less amount of food than before. Whether these assertions are wholly true or not, it is certain that there was considerable distress among the Indians of various agencies during the

year 1890; enough, at least, to cause many of them to listen with eager ears to the seductions of Sitting Bull and his accomplices. From the columns of the daily press we might select many proofs of this state of affairs; one must be sufficient.

"CHICAGO, ILL., DEC. 11.—Capt. C. H. Conrad, in a report received from Gen. Miles today, says the seventeen hundred Indians at the Yankton Sioux Agency are receiving rations enough now for barely two days out of seven, and are starving. Crops have failed them owing to the drought, and, though they are willing to work, there is no employment obtainable for such a number during the winter. On ration day the poor devils, many of them old and decrepit of both sexes, are so famished that they cannot resist eating at once practically all that they may receive, notwithstanding that another issue of food is not due for a week. Captain Conrad adds: 'It is a standing complaint that these same Indians have $1,750 owing them for railroad right of way, locked up in the United States Treasury, and that individuals among them are still unpaid for services rendered the Government as far back as 1862.'"

Nearly a month before the date of this dispatch, Gen. Miles had estimated the number of Indians from whom trouble might be expected, at six thousand braves; these, he added, scattered over several hundred miles of territory. Gradually, however, the force of discontented savages became concentrated in the southern part of South Dakota, the Pine Ridge Agency being recognized as the central point of the territory which

their camps occupied.

The Ghost-Dance had been going on for months before any general alarm was felt. Even after the settlers and agents began to feel uneasy, there was no definite offense against the peace of which the Government could take cognizance. Even when it was known that the Indians had on their war-paint, it was decided that there was no good reason for interference with their dancing. At last, however, after many messages bidding the Indians to stop dancing, all of which were disregarded, it was decided that the soldiers should surround and disarm the Indians.

November 22, William McGaa, formerly an Indian scout, and at that time a wealthy ranchman living near Buffalo Gap, started to ride to Pine Ridge Agency, two days' journey distant. He enjoyed a wide friendship among the Indians, and notwithstanding the rumors with which the country was filled, had no hesitation about asking shelter for the night at a village situated about midway of his journey. He lay down to sleep in a tepee full of Indians, without thought of personal danger. He noticed, however, that all the warriors were fully armed; and although he afterwards professed that he had no fear for himself, he feigned sleep and kept his ears open during the early part of the night. Two weary hours passed, and he was wrapped in his cloak, to all appearance fast asleep. One of the bucks bent over him, fearful lest he might be pretending; but so cleverly did McGaa imitate the breathing of a man in deepest slumber, that the Indian was reassured, and turning to his companions, told

them that all was well. It may readily be believed that this did not make McGaa the more inclined to sleep; but every sense was on the alert to catch the purport of the whispered conversation which they carried on.

A considerable force of troops had been stationed at Pine Ridge, under Gen. Brooke, to watch the Ghost-Dancers in the surrounding country. About sixteen and a half miles north of that station, the White Horse Creek empties into the Wounded Knee. Here there is a rude amphitheater formed, the only practicable path to which is a road along the banks of the White Horse Creek. This road is bordered by dense clumps of trees, which also line the other side of the creek. The Indians' plan was to have a Ghost-Dance in the amphitheater, conducted in such a way as to tempt the troops from the agency to stop it. The woods were to be filled with Indians, who were to lie in ambush until the troops had advanced along the forest road, and well into the amphitheater; when a simultaneous attack from the dancing braves and from their hidden companions would result in the utter destruction of the soldiers.

Confident that McGaa was wholly ignorant of their plot, they allowed him to depart in safety in the morning, and he rode on to Pine Ridge, where the plot was unfolded to Gen. Brooke. The force available was not sufficient to justify that officer in ordering an attack upon the woods where the Indians were to lie concealed, for the odds in such a fight would be very great in favor of the red men; therefore it was decided to ignore the dancing which might go on at the

mouth of White Horse Creek.

But this incident showed the real spirit of the Indians, and every day confirmed the belief which had been growing up through months and which Miss Collins, the missionary above quoted, had expressed, when she said of Sitting Bull, "he means war."

Buffalo Bill undertook to settle the affair by negotiations with the Indians, and arrived at Standing Rock Agency for that purpose about the close of November. From this point he set out to visit Sitting Bull, attended by only two faithful companions, and attired in evening costume. What especial appropriateness there was in a swallow-tail coat and patent-leather shoes does not appear; and Cody was seriously ill for some days after his ride in consequence of riding so far, in cold weather, in such thin garments. He set out with the intention of arresting Sitting Bull; but had gone but six hours when this was discovered by the agent, who promptly sent men in pursuit of him to prevent any such attempt. It would, indeed, as after events proved, have been simple madness; for, according to the Indians themselves, they were stronger, numerically, and better equipped than they had been at any time since the Custer massacre. Notwithstanding the fact that his plans were thus changed, Buffalo Bill pressed on toward Sitting Bull's camp, and had a talk with the old chief and with many of his followers.

"Sitting Bull gave us this fine weather," one of them informed him, confidently. (The autumn of 1890 was an exceptionally fine one.)

"I will send you snow inside of twenty-four hours,"

declared Buffalo Bill, sternly, with a firm reliance upon his own ability as a weather-prophet. The forecast was a true one, and the confidence of at least one Indian in the powers of Sitting Bull received a severe shock.

The Government had decided upon a short, decisive, aggressive campaign. Agents were ordered to peremptorily stop the dancing and arrest the ringleaders, especially Sitting Bull. One trouble in dealing with the Indians has always been that they are allowed to keep their tribal relations; each tribe is organized under a number of petty or sub-chiefs, and one head-chief; each tribe is practically a standing army, ready to take the field whenever its commander-in-chief shall give the word; far readier than the standing armies of most civilized nations, which require time to collect their baggage and transport their artillery to the scene of action. The Indians' whole force consists of light cavalry; he expects to live off the stores of the enemy; if they cannot be obtained, he knows how to go hungry; but experience shows that he very frequently is fed at the expense of Uncle Sam even when engaged in war against him.

The Indians, of course, speedily learned what determination had been reached at Washington; and as the troops began to gather at Pine Ridge, Little Wound, chief of the Ogallalas, sent the following letter to the agent, Dr. Royer:

"DR. ROYER: I understand that the soldiers have come on the reservation. What have they come for? We have done nothing. Our dance is a religious dance,

and we are going to dance till spring. If we find then that the Christ does not appear, we will stop dancing; but in the meantime, troops or no troops, we shall start our dance on this creek in the morning. I have also understood that I was not to be recognized as chief any longer. All that I have to say is that neither you nor the white people made me a chief, and you can't throw me away as you please. But let me tell you, Dr. Royer, that the Indians made me a chief, and by them I will be recognized so long as I live. We have been told that you intend to stop our rations and annuities. Well, for my part I don't care. The little rations we get do not amount to anything. But, Dr. Royer, if such is the case, please send me word, so that me and my people will be saved the trouble of going to the agency. We do not intend to stop dancing."

Meanwhile, the number of Indians about the agency increased, although the officer in comand was not assured of the position which some of them really occupied. The real sentiments of old Red Cloud, for instance, was a matter of uncertainty, although his son glibly protested that the Ghost-Dance was to the Indians nothing more than what the white men call a revival; that they had no intention of fighting; and that he himself was a strong friend of the whites, and would resolutely oppose any efforts which bad Indians might make to resist the soldiers;—for young Red Cloud was asserted to be one of the readiest and most accomplished liars that ever laid claim to the title of Indian warrior.

The uncertainty which beset the soldiers in dealing

with this tricky foe may be realized when we read that within a few days after writing the defiant letter which has been above quoted, Little Wound sent word to Dr. Royer to know if he wanted him to come into the agency and get his rations. Dr. Royer replied, diplomatically, that Little Wound could come if he wanted to; but this was not the cordial invitation which the chief wanted; and the agency was without his presence for some time longer.

The concentration of troops at Pine Ridge seemed for a time to have a salutary effect upon the hostile Indians near by; but shortly afterward the alarm was raised that the hostiles were retreating to the "Bad Lands," a large tract of rugged, mountainous country in the vicinity, where, by means of paths known only to themselves, they could reach fastnesses inaccessible to the troops, and furnishing an abundance of grass and water, despite the season, for their ponies. Thence they could issue at their pleasure, destroying all that came in their way. These forebodings, however, proved to be, to a large extent, groundless; some few bands indeed made their way to these fastnesses, but the majority of the hostiles remained about Pine Ridge, apparently waiting to be coaxed to come in. A few days after his message of inquiry, Little Wound concluded to accept the invitation so ungraciously given, and came in, bringing word that Short Bull himself was on the way thither.

November 30, Gen. Miles reached Washington, to consult with Gen. Schofield and the Secretary of War about the Indian troubles. As a result of the con-

ference, it was resolved to increase the rations of the Sioux to the amount allowed in 1887. It was thought that this would tend to uniting those Indians who were somewhat wavering, more firmly to the side of the Government; that those who could not be bribed by the prospect of more food would be alarmed by the reinforcements which were to be sent to the Northwest, and that then the ringleader could be arrested with safety, and the whole conspiracy broken up. For the present, the order to arrest Sitting Bull and the other hostile chiefs was suspended. This new policy had its prospects of success increased somewhat by a blizzard which swept over the country of the dancers about that time, in accordance with the prediction of Buffalo Bill above recorded.

But the lull was of short duration. News came that the Indians who had fled to the Bad Lands were busy fortifying their already strong position; for they had great stores of stolen provisions to last them through the winter campaign, and feared an assault by the troops which would result in the capture of these stores.

While matters were in this shape, Gen. Brooke requested Father Jutz, a priest, who was utterly careless of his own safety when a question of doing good was concerned, to go out to the hostile camp and talk with the chiefs with a view of making peace. Leaving the agency at noon on the 3d of December, accompanied only by Jack Red Cloud, the priest mistook the way, and the two wandered about all night, the weather being so bitter cold that they were compelled to move

briskly to keep from freezing to death. The hostile camp was reached about eleven o'clock the next morning, and after being peremptorily challenged, the priest and his companion were escorted by heavily armed guards to the presence of the chiefs, Two Strike, Short Bull, Turning Bear, High Hawk, Crow Dog, Kicking Bear, Eagle Pipe, Big Turkey and High Pipe. When Father Jutz had asked these chiefs of euphonious titles what were the grievances which had led them to put themselves in their hostile attitude, one of them answered for the rest:

"The Great Father has done another wrong. He has put a new line—a new boundary line between Rosebud and Pine Ridge Agency, that makes many of us leave our homes and give them to others. The Great Father broke the old treaty when he did this. We can no longer believe the Great Father. He says to us: 'Children, you shall never be moved again unless you want to move,' and then he goes right away and moves us. We are done with promises; and now we make a promise that we will fight, and the Great Father will find that we do not break our promise. We will now be very plain with you, Christian father, and tell you another thing, something of which you have already thought, perhaps. It is this: We are not coming in now, and will not lay down our rifles, because we are afraid of the consequences. We have done wrong—we know it. If we stop now, we will be punished. The Great Father will send many of us to his big iron house to stay many moons, and we would die. No, we will not go in and give up. We know the Great

Father better than he knows us, or cares to know us."

This speech does not appear to have voiced the unanimous sentiment of the warriors; the older men at least admitted that to surrender would be the wiser course; and there came near being a quarrel which would probably have resulted in the death of the envoy, at least. Finally, however, after being required to swear most solemnly that he had delivered Gen. Brooke's message truthfully, he was promised that a delegation of the chiefs would come to his house, about four miles from the agency, for a conference with the officer in command. Thus was the dangerous mission happily accomplished.

After the conference with Gen. Brooke, the chiefs returned to state the results to their followers and companions. Short Bull and the three other chiefs, who had sworn to attend the conference, had broken their oath and remained away; and when Two Strike and his companions returned, there was a fierce discussion, which ended in an appeal to arms. There was a battle in which several were killed, and a final division of the hostile forces, under the leadership, respectively, of Two Strike and Short Bull.

The forces under the command of the latter chief at once set out for the Bad Lands, where they were sure of being enabled to hold the whites at bay for an indefinite length of time. It was supposed that they would seek some reservation in Northern Dakota, or else cross the line to Canada. Fifty lodges and a band of stolen ponies were with them. Pursuit was hastily determined upon. A troop of cavalry and

a detachment of infantry were sent along the line of the Northern Pacific to head them off; while Lieut. Casey, with his Indian scouts and a second troop of cavalry, took another route. Besides this, Two Strike, having appealed for assistance, three hundred friendly Indians, not, however, formally enrolled as scouts or police, were sent to his assistance, with orders to pursue and bring into camp the two chiefs and their followers, dead or alive. This was done at the instance of American Horse, Big Road, and Little Wound, with whom Gen. Brooke conferred upon receipt of the request.

It has been noted that the order for the arrest of Sitting Bull and other ringleaders in the movement had been suspended until the effect of the other portions of the new policy could be seen. It became clear, in the space of ten days after this policy was determined upon, that neither by a more plentiful supply of food nor by the fear induced by the presence of more troops could the more resolute of the hostile Indians be brought to yield. The order for the arrest of the chief was accordingly renewed; and a force of forty Indian police, supported by two troops of cavalry, left Standing Rock Agency for Sitting Bull's camp, on Grand River, forty miles away.

It had been reported at the agency that Sitting Bull had struck his tepees and was about to join the hostiles, who had been pillaging and burning along the White River. When the police first came in sight of the camp, it was evident that the report had not been false; the camp was on the point of moving.

They had set out at 1:45 a. m., Sunday, December 14, and encamped near Sitting Bull's village that night. Dawn showed that most of the tepees had been struck during the night, and they saw plainly that the war-ponies had been painted, and that the warriors were stripped for the war-path. Taking no note of these indications, however, they went boldly into the village and announced to Sitting Bull their object in coming. He professed his readiness to accompany them, for he was always ready to promise what was desired; but added that he must be allowed to make some preparations before his departure. They agreed to this. He gave orders that his horse should be made ready, and while he was engaged in other preparations in the tent, two of his captors, Bull Head and Shave Head, stood guard over him. Suddenly there was a howl without the tent; it was the voice of Sitting Bull's wife, lamenting her lord. At once, as if it had been a signal for which they had waited, two braves, wrapped in blankets, entered the tent; and almost before the quick-sighted enemies of their own race saw that they were there, had flung the enveloping blankets aside and begun to fire upon the police. Instantly the shots were echoed from all the camp. Sitting Bull had sprung upon his horse, and would have dashed away up the river, but he was surrounded by the police and compelled to remain in their midst.

This movement, so quickly executed, was a surprise to the Sioux; they had not expected their wily old chief to fall into the enemy's hands. But almost instantly they recovered themselves, and Black Bird,

the stalwart son of the captive chief, called upon them to rescue his father. The women and children hid fearfully behind the bushes with which the camp was surrounded, while the braves dashed forward after the retreating captors. It was four to one, but the police manfully faced the foe, determined to carry their prisoner off with them. There was a furious fusilade from both sides; now an officer fell; now one of his men; now a painted brave on the other side. Sitting Bull, who was not shackled, shouted out orders to his men, which could be heard even above the din of the conflict. Suddenly a ball struck him; still he sat erect in his saddle, for it was only a wound in the shoulder. The blood dyes the rude travesty of a uniform in which he is arrayed, but he pays no attention to it. Through the smoke of the rifles, his clear, strong eyes see the tall, muscular form of a warrior of his own band fall to the earth; it is his son, Black Bird, who had first urged the others to rescue him. There is a deadlier hatred than ever in his voice and heart as he gives his next order. Still the fight goes on. So far were the police outnumbered by the band whose leader they have captured, that one of their number, at the first shot, has galloped off to give the alarm to the cavalry. Now and then, through the noise of the shots, can be heard the thunderous tread of the horses' feet, as they gallop steadily onward, coming nearer and nearer, until they seem to shake the earth. Before they had reached the scene, however, the great chief reels in his saddle. No one knows, no one will ever know, whether the shot came

from friend or foe, for the bullets fell like hail in that mad melee; but it has pierced the heart. Sitting Bull has been killed.

The cavalry brought up machine guns; and the soldiers, throwing out a skirmish line, kneeled and fired into the enemy's camp, while the Hotchkiss and Gatlings fired over their heads at the same living targets. For an hour and a half the fight continued; the hostiles sheltering themselves as opportunity offered, behind the remains of their village and in the surrounding brush. Then the firing ceased; the braves had fled, leaving their lodges and their families behind them to the mercy of the victors.

Occasionally during the day, there would be a stray shot from the shelter of the bushes, but that was all. Sitting Bull's band had fled towards the Bad Lands, whither they were steadily pursued by the cavalry; while the Indian scouts conveyed the body of the chief, and those of their comrades who had fallen, back to the agency.

The chief who thus perished had long been the leader of the discontented and hostile among the Sioux. At the time of his death Sitting Bull was between fifty and fifty-five years of age. Of his parentage, nothing is known; he is said by some to have been a half-breed Uncapapa; he signed the treaty of 1868 as an Ogallala; and some have asserted that he was a white child, adopted into the tribe after some massacre in which his relatives perished. His complexion was light enough to confirm the theory that he was not a full-blooded Indian, and his hair was brown. He was

a fine physique, although he had suffered from disease, as was shown by the small-pox scars which covered his face.

Ta-tan-kah-yo-tan-kah, as he was called among the Sioux, had been from his early manhood a daring and successful warrior. Twenty years before his death, he had slain enemies of all descriptions, men, women and children, soldiers, Indians, teamsters, frontiersmen, railroad hands and mail-carriers; he had proved himself "one of the ablest horse-thieves the country ever produced;" and as leader of the Strong Hearts, a Sioux brotherhood for making war, he led attacks upon two Crow villages, in one of which thirty scalps were taken.

Although not a chief of any particular prominence during times of peace, this reputation made him a favorite leader for all the discontented Sioux, whether they were regular "bad Indians," or semi-civilized reds who slipped away from the agencies for a little sport with the unruly of the tribe.

The famous old Seventh Cavalry, which had won such renown in the Indian wars under Custer's leadership, was now in the field; the enemy was the same tribe at whose hands the regiment had suffered so severely, and this was the first occasion since the Custer massacre that there had been any great trouble with the Sioux. They were burning to avenge the massacre of their leader and their comrades, nearly fifteen years ago; to fight again with the Sioux, and come off victors. When, therefore, they were sent in pursuit of the fugitive band, they went most willingly,

prepared to fight to the death should it be necessary.

At first it seemed that there would be no trouble with Big Foot and his men. The cavalry rode northward from Pine Ridge, and on the night of the 27th of December had encamped near Wounded Knee Creek. From this point scouts were sent out in all directions, to see if the hostiles were encamped anywhere within reach. The scouts were out all the morning of the 28th without result, and the officers in command began to think that the hostiles were farther off than their recent depredations had seemed to indicate. It was about noon of the 28th when one of the emissaries returned with the word that there was a hostile village about eight miles to the northwest of the cavalry camp. Major Whiteside, in command of this detachment, at once ordered four troops into the saddle, and they rode off at full speed along the trail indicated. Their approach was noted by the Indians, who formed in a line of battle imitated from their enemies, each man fully armed; for, in addition to the gun which each brave carried, and which was, in most cases, of the latest and most approved pattern, they had knives stuck in their cartridge belts which were strapped about their blanketed figures. The force was evidently about one hundred and fifty strong, while Major Whiteside had about three times that number.

As the cavalry formed within about rifle-shot range, Big Foot came forward, alone, unarmed, and on foot, and signaled that he desired to speak with the commanding officer. The major at once dismounted, and went forth to meet the chief in conference.

"I am sick," began Big Foot, extending his hand, in token of peace; "my people here want peace, and—"

"I won't talk," interrupted Major Whiteside; "neither will I have any parleying at all. It is either unconditional surrender or fight. What is your answer?"

"We surrender," answered the chief; "we would have done so before, but we could not find you, and I did not find any soldiers to surrender to."

Major Whiteside did not pause to point out how evident was the falsehood of these statements; but when Big Foot's warriors raised a white flag, signaled his soldiers to surround the camp. A courier was dispatched to bring up the remaining troops of the regiment, and also a body of Indian scouts, to assist in disarming them; for although they numbered but a hundred and fifty men all told, it was not improbable that there might be trouble in disarming them. An Indian's gun is far more to him than the same weapon to a soldier; it is his friend when all others fail, his companion, his purveyor in the season when he must depend upon game for his food, the symbol of life and liberty.

At the command of Major Whiteside, the Indians sat down, arrayed in a semi-circle; he promised them immunity from harm, and added that fuller rations than they had yet received from the Government would be forthcoming. Then he asked them:

"How many of you are willing to give up your guns?"

There was a moment's pause; the warriors sat in

stolid silence; the troopers as silently awaited their action. Then slowly, from the line of dusky warriors, gun in hand, arose two! These came confidently forward and surrendered their guns to the military.

Encouraged by this example, other Indians, to the number of nineteen, came up to Major Whiteside and informed him that they had no guns to give up; but if they had possessed such treasures, he should have had them for the asking.

Perceiving that nothing was to be gained by such work as this, but that a prompt and thorough search must be made for weapons, and every man compelled to give up those which belonged to him, Major Whiteside gave orders that the tepees should be searched, and commanded the separation of the Indians into squads of about twenty men each, to be in turn disarmed by the troopers.

Gen. Forsythe was now in command of the force, the reinforcements having come up. The search of the tepees revealed about sixty guns, which had been hidden at the approach of the troops; besides war clubs and other weapons. The order was now given to search the warriors, who had been holding some sort of a consultation, in which their medicine man seemed to bear a prominent part, while the examination of the lodges was going on; but so far were they outnumbered by the soldiers, and so seldom does the Indian fight unless he has the advantage, either in numbers or position, that no fears were entertained of any trouble.

About a dozen of the braves had been compelled to give up their weapons, and the soldiers came to a

youth of about seventeen, whom some noteworthy deed of courage had caused to be placed among the elder braves. As they raised his blanket to see what arms he might have beneath it, he grasped his gun yet more firmly in his right hand, while with his left hand he threw a handful of dust into the air, uttering a loud cry as he did so. Instantly a shot rang out, then another, and another. The startled troopers, veterans as they were, were nonplussed for a moment. But it was only for a moment. The fire of the enemy was quickly returned, and almost as quickly as it can be told the whole village was one dreadful scene of battle.

There was no line of battle on either side; there were no orders from chiefs or officers; there was only a grim determination on the part of the soldiers to kill as many Indians as possible, on the part of the Indians to kill as many soldiers as possible. Small as the Indian force was, it received a considerable reinforcement from the squaws, who came to the side of their husbands and brothers and fought as determinedly as they. The artillerymen worked desperately to get their guns in position, but the soldiers and Indians were in such inextricable confusion in the village that the cannon proved useless in their hands. It is a notable fact that the Indians especially fear the big guns, and hence they did not spare the artillerymen in their fire. As rapidly as they could, the outnumbered braves sought sheltered places from which to fire upon the enemy; though many of them fell fighting face to face upon the narrow field of battle.

After the excitement attending the fight at Wounded

Knee had somewhat subsided, the older warriors among the Indians saw that they were apt to get the worst of it; they knew very well, by this time, that the assertion that their "ghost-shirts" would repel the white man's bullets was most arrant nonsense; and many of them began to see that the chances of the dead warriors coming to life to help them in the fight were very small indeed. But the younger braves still clung to hope, were still resolved to defy the enemy of their race. While the old chiefs urged the advisability of submitting to Gen. Miles, the younger men threatened to kill any one who left the hostile camp for the purpose of visiting the agency. At last, however, ten chiefs, Jack Red Cloud, Big Road, High Horse, Long Bear, Lone Hawk, and five of less note, were permitted to hold council with the general.

But the result was far from being what they had hoped or expected. Gen. Miles had his plans well laid; the submission of these Indians was now, he knew very well, but a question of a very short time; and he proposed to have matters settled so that there would be no difficulty in the future. He flatly refused to listen to their complaints, then; telling them that there was nothing for them to do but to surrender unconditionally; if they had complaints to make, they would be at liberty, after their surrender, to go to Washington, and lay them before the authorities there.

Unlike most Indian wars, and contrary to the predictions of most persons who fancied themselves to be prophets, the rising had come to an end without a great or decisive battle. There had, indeed, been nu-

merous fights, of greater or less magnitude, of which that at Wounded Knee was by far the most important; but the end was brought about by a determined exhibition of the power of the Government, and constantly keeping before the minds of the Indians the hopelessness of the struggle for them.

It is not our purpose to discuss here the cause of this rising, at least from the white man's standpoint. Gen. Miles has said that it was in consequence of a far-reaching plot, which was to spread among the hundred thousand Indians of the Northwest; and that it was the disaffected Mormons who had laid and fired the train. It is not yet time to say whether this be so or not; but having in the earlier pages of this chapter given something of the views of the whites as to the origin of this outbreak, it is but justice to add here what the Indians have to say for themselves. The words are those of Red Cloud, as reported by Father Craft, who is, as will be remembered, of Mohawk blood.

"Everybody seems to think that the belief in the coming of the Messiah has caused all this trouble. This is a mistake. I will tell you the cause.

"When we first made treaties with the Government this was our position: Our old life and our old customs were about to end; the game on which we had lived was disappearing; the whites were closing around us, and nothing remained for us but to adopt the same ways and have the same rights with them if we wished to save ourselves. The Government promised us all the means necessary to make our living out

of our land, and to instruct us how to do it, and abundant food to support us until we could take care of ourselves. * * * * We did not get the means to work our land. The few things given were given in such a way as to do us little or no good. Our rations began to be reduced. Some said that we were lazy and wanted to live on rations and not to work. That is false. How does any man of sense suppose that so great a number of people could get to work at once, unless they were supplied with means to work, and instructors enough to teach them how to use them?

"Remember, that even our little ponies were taken away under the promise that they would be replaced by oxen and large horses, and that it was long before we saw any, and then we got very few. We tried, even with the means that we had, but on one pretext or another we were shifted from place to place or were told that such a transfer was coming. Great efforts were made to break up our customs, but nothing was done to introduce the customs of the whites. Everything was done to break the power of the real chiefs, who really wished their people to improve, and little men, so-called chiefs, were made to act as disturbers and agitators. Spotted Tail wanted the ways of the whites, and a cowardly assassin was found to remove him. This was charged upon the Indians because an Indian did it; but who set on the Indian?

"I was abused and slandered to weaken my influence for good and make me seem like one who did not want to advance. * * * * Those who held us pretended to be very anxious about our welfare, and said our

condition was a great mystery. We tried to speak and clear up this mystery, but were laughed at and treated as children. So things went on from year to year. Other treaties were made, and it was all the same. Rations were still further reduced, and we were starving. * * * * The people were desperate from starvation; they did not think of fighting—what good would it do? Some said they saw the Son of God. All did not see Him. I did not see Him. If He had come He would do some great thing as He had done before. We doubted it, because we saw neither Him nor His words. Then Gen. Crook came. His words sounded well; but how could we know that a new treaty would be kept any better than the old ones? For that reason we did not care to sign. He promised to see that his promises would be kept. He, at least, had never lied to us. His words gave the people hope. They signed. They hoped. He died; their hope died with him. Despair came again. The people were counted, and wrongly counted. Our rations were reduced again. The white men seized on the land we had sold them through Gen. Crook, but our pay was as distant as ever. The man who counted us told all over that we were feasting and wasting food. Where did he see this, How can we waste or eat what we have not? * * * * Our rations were again reduced. * * * *There was no hope on earth, and God seemed to have forgotten us. Some one had been talking of the Son of God, and said that He had come. The people snatched at the hope. They screamed like crazy men to Him for mercy. They

caught at the promises they heard He made.

"The white men were frightened and called for soldiers. We heard the soldiers were coming. We did not fear. We hoped that we could tell our troubles and get help. A white man said the soldiers meant to kill us. We did not believe it, but some were frightened and ran away to the Bad Lands. The soldiers came. They said: 'Don't be afraid; we come to make peace, and not war.' It was true. They brought us food, and did not threaten us. If the Messiah has really come, it must be in this way."