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CONTINUATION OF
AN ACCOUNT OF ADVENTURES IN THE GREAT
AMERICAN DESERT BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS,
DUKE PAUL WILHELM VON WÜRTTEMBERG

Edited by LOUIS C. BUTSCHER

(Moellhausen has just completed his account of the adventure in the Platte; and now Paul Wilhelm takes up the thread of the story again as we read it from his journal.)

I OFFERED THE courier of the mail-coach a hundred dollars to halt and pull the wagon across to the other bank. It was a tremendous undertaking. For after taking his own wagon across he had to return and hitch the stubborn, lunging, twisting, rearing beasts to our vehicle in the midst of the icy, rushing current, with the yielding, treacherous sand for a footing. The powerful beasts were taxed to the utmost to free the little wagon from the clutches of the sand that had settled about its wheels and running gears.

Moellhausen had in the meantime prepared more coffee. This revived my spirits; for since noon of the preceding day nothing had passed my lips, and the fast and the cold had taxed both body and spirit to the utmost. The warmth within the leather tent quickened my blood. This type of tent, in contrast to those made of sail-cloth, holds the heat even in the severest cold weather.

The Indians had appeared quite famished. It seems that even where the buffaloes are quite plentiful they suffer quite frequently from the pangs of hunger. These Cheyennes, just like the Snakes, do not amount to much in the matter of endurance despite their splendid figures. Usually there are only three horses and two bows for every four bucks.

The chieftain had such a miserable hunting-knife that I felt a great pity for him. So I took one of my own of English make from my trunk in the wagon and handed it to him. It was of the best English make.

His face lighted up with joy. Quite in contrast with the sober expression that had marked it up to this time.

He said something to me that I could not understand. But it must have been in acknowledgment of the gift. For it sounded like a profession of gratitude.

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Then he gave a sign to his followers, and these, with "hows" and smiles rode off. But the day had advanced so far that we had to strike camp only 18 miles below the ford.

During the succeeding two days the weather grew constantly colder. The glass showed 18°-22° Fahrenheit. Water froze in our five-gallon cask in a short time, and I was barely able to protect myself against the weather even though I was wrapped in a buffalo robe.

During the evening a half-frozen man who had travelled alone and on foot from Salt Lake Town sought shelter at our fireside.

(Moellhausen Takes up the Story Again.)

We had travelled two days since the crossing of the Padukah when, about the middle of the afternoon, we struck a place with fine grass which induced us to call it a day's drive, and to halt there till the following morning. We turned the horses loose. The weather had moderated to a surprising degree. Thus we felt for the first time in several weeks quite contented and even happy in the solitude of the immeasurable prairie.

We were reclining on the dense growth of short grass, soft and yielding as a feather-bed, and we discoursed about our peculiar situation. Over the events of the past several days. Then over the near future. A herd of buffaloes drew near us and we were just rejoicing over the prospect of singling out one of them in order to revictual our supply of meat which had become sadly depleted.

Just at the moment when I was ready to pull the trigger I heard voices. A small troop of horsemen approached whom we at once recognized as whites. At their appearance the buffalo herd took flight. I can hardly say whether regret over our loss or the pleasure of seeing people of our own kind was the stronger emotion.

As soon as they had sighted us they turned off the trail to greet us most heartily. They told us they were Mormons, on their way from the Great Salt Lake to Missouri. After a brief visit they rode several miles farther before settling down to camp. We could see the gleam of their fire throughout the evening.

* * *

We broke camp the next morning almost at the same time as they, but our friends of the evening before held the lead which increased steadily because of their stronger, fresher horses. Due to the wavelike character of the country we were now traversing, we lost sight of them at last.

Alone again on the great plain, we trudged onward as rapidly as the dwindling strength of our horses permitted us to go.

Suddenly there was a report of shots in the direction where we had last seen the Mormon travellers. This, however, did not disturb us. Rather did we reason quite hopefully that our friends had encountered a buffalo herd, and we were glad over the prospect of replenishing our slender supply of meat. It is an old custom of the prairie country that any traveller passing by a freshly-slain buffalo may cut as much flesh as he likes without bothering himself over first coming to an understanding with the huntsman who killed it.

We were gradually nearing the place where the shots had been fired. At last we could sight from a low ridge and beyond a slighter one farther on a group of people who to all appearance were scrutinizing some object that lay on the ground. We were confirmed in this impression, and the duke instructed me to ride over and cut out a generous piece from the dead buffalo. I was to wait for him farther on along the wagon trail.

I spurred my miserable beast into a weak gallop and in a few minutes I was on the other ridge from which I was able to view the scene in front of me. Quite contrary to my expectations I was not able to distinguish a single white man, but instead of that some twenty or thirty Indians who, judging from their savage costumes, were on the warpath. What was my surprise at beholding such a scene can easily be guessed! I turned my horse in haste and ran back to my companion in order to apprise him of the unwelcome news.

"If this is a detachment from a war party," rejoined the duke, not in the least perturbed, handed me my double-barrelled rifle, "we shall get to see them soon enough. Be prepared to fight for your life. But under no circumstances must you shoot except when there is no other recourse. Then be sure that you do not miss your man."

This was surely a piece of well-meant advice. But I cannot deny that it would have pleased me much more if there had been no occasion for it.

In the meantime I examined my pistol and placed the rifle in front of me slung across the horn of my saddle, while the duke was surrounding himself with a veritable arsenal of heavily loaded shotguns, rifles, and pistols.¹

1. These were all of the muzzle-loading type. Breach-loading firearms had not been invented at this period.—The Translator.

After these preparations we drove on. But we had hardly proceeded more than a couple of hundred yards when on a nearby hill there appeared on horses and afoot a whole band of savages intent on reaching the wagon trail ahead of us.

They were Ogallalas, and as fine a lot of warriors as one can encounter on either side of the Rockies. All were dressed in attire of the most varicolored stuffs. Faces, chests, and arms were painted in a truly satanic manner. Their hair was hanging in long braids down their temples, and the scalp-lock, fell down over the back.

They were heavily armed. Not only did they carry bows and arrows, tomahawks and knives, but also carbines and lances.

When they had approached to within fifty paces we stopped and aimed our rifles at the foremost of our unbidden guests. At the same time my companion gave them to understand that we would shoot if they made the slightest motion.

When the Indians saw that we were prepared to fight to the bitter end, they answered us with the customary sign of peace, after which the duke permitted them to approach us.

It is a peculiar characteristic of these savages that they respect a fearless mien and a show of personal courage. For in the knowledge that we were indisputably in their power they did not touch any of our belongings. They asked, to be sure, if we had any whiskey to which the duke replied with a negative sign. But they took nothing, even though they could have done so with impunity and it was easy enough to satisfy them in the matter of firewater, when the duke handed them the vinegar bottle. The chief who received it took a long draught from it. Then, with a show of utter disgust, he spat the fluid out again.

We waited only until, on the question of the duke as to whether they had any meat, one of the Indians hastened to their camp, returning with a good-sized piece from the rump of a buffalo and depositing it in our wagon.

In return for this the duke offered them a good hunting knife which was not accepted. Then the Indians went away and we resumed our journey.

We had no sooner separated than I became aware that an Ogallala was following me. I turned off to one side, but he followed all my movements with such a peculiar insistence

that I turned toward him with a questioning-look.

He was a fine-looking fellow, of perfect form. His horse he reigned easily with a single leather strap, and with it all he sat so firmly on his high saddle that horse and rider seemed as a single being. His features were almost indistinguishable beneath the thick layer of alternating red and yellow paint. From beneath the prominent forehead there shone a pair of eyes with such a dreadful, savage, almost maniacal expression that it froze the blood in me. I have never been able to forget that mien.

He was dressed in a hunting-jacket of bright blue cotton stuff fastened with straps of fine leather. Around his neck he wore, in addition to strings of white and blue waist there was a belt from which the scalp-locks, handsomely prepared, of his slain enemies were dangling. About beads, a collar of soft otter-fur, to which a number of bear's claws were attached. Not a few large brass-rings weighted down his pierced ear-lobes.

Such was the appearance of the fierce Dakotah. He now demanded in a raucous voice that I give him my bridle-bit in return for his lasso. He gave me to understand that he was about to declare war against the Pawnees and that he would need a better means for guiding his horse on that account.

Of course I made a negative sign, whereupon he dropped back again in my rear, in which position he continued to follow me in whatever direction I turned. I must confess that this fellow and his movements were making me feel exceedingly uncomfortable, so that I decided to call the duke's attention to his crazy behavior.

"Just ride in advance of the team," directed this man of iron nerve. "In this way, should he raise his weapon against you, will I be able to shoot him from his horse before he has time to draw."

This assurance sounded anything but comforting to me. Moreover there could not be the least doubt that such a step would prove our sure undoing. However, to please him I did as he had bidden. This forced the savage between the duke's gun and me.

We had not proceeded very far in this position when all of a sudden the savage ran up to my side, reached out with his free hand behind me and grasped, before I could fathom his purpose, my long bowie knife out of its sheath. Although I instantly turned about he could have shot me down quite easily. But this was evidently not in his mind. It was noth-

ing but the knife that had roused his robber's instinct, and once he had that in his possession he raced back to his camp.

"Your hunting knife!" the duke cried out when he had recovered from his surprise. "How are you hereafter going to cut up the flesh of the buffaloes without it?" "Ride at once back to their camp and demand the return of your knife."

"But if he refuses to give it back to me?" I asked, rather dubiously.

"Well, then just take it away from him; Prompt decision means everything in such a matter," was his cool reply.

"But if they should scalp me for it?"

"Then I shall avenge you. In that event we are quite relieved from all further worry about our return to Missouri."

"That is all very good," was my thought. But despite the melodramatic notions of the duke with reference to such an adjustment I felt that my scalp, unkempt and barbaric though it was to look at, was worth a trifle more than the knife. In all truth I would gladly have forgotten its loss in the certainty that the skin of my head was secure. It was quite flattering, to be sure, that the duke gave me credit for so much courage. But I was wishing with all my heart that he himself had possessed less of that martial quality, and that we might proceed peacefully on our way. However, I did not dwell long on these philosophical reflections, but handed the duke my rifle and rode unarmed back over the nearest hill toward the camp of the Ogallalas.

However interesting the Indian horde appeared in their warlike costumes, there were yet not a few things that inspired me with real apprehension. There was a horse, for instance, which they had just butchered, and for the flesh of which a number of warriors were quarrelling like famished dogs. But more especially fear-inspiring was the circumstance that five or six of the warriors sprang up at my approach and pointed their carbines at my head.

I endeavored to pacify them as well as I was able with signs expressing my peaceful mission. To my immense satisfaction I saw them lay down their rifles, and so I rode with apparent calmness into the circle about the camp fire.

Among the whole band there was only one warrior who wore in his scalp-locks an eagle's feather, the signal distinction of a chieftain. To this fellow I now walked up deferentially. I extended my hand to him with genuine courtesy. As I had no means by which to make him understand me in

words, I showed him my empty scabbard and pointed to the thief, telling him in good German—English or French he would not have understood any better—that he would oblige me immensely if he saw to it that the knife was restored to me.

If the chieftain did not understand my words, he evidently guessed their meaning. For he addressed himself to one of his horde and this latter quickly grasped a long spear and walked toward me. Its point consisted of the end of a sword to which a white badge was fastened. On this were painted a bloody hand and a bloody severed arm.

Later I found out that this was a magic or "medicine" talisman, placed against my breast as a guarantee of their friendship. At the time, however, when I felt its sharp point against my breast, I expected nothing else than that this philanthropic savage was going to plunge the sharp blade between my ribs.

This, however, did not come to pass. I was left unharmed. What was more, the purloiner of my knife was compelled to give me back my property, though this was not done without considerable protest on the part of the thief.

Once more in possession of my property, I was desirous of returning to the duke without any further loss of time. I pressed the chieftain's hand and assured him that I felt highly honored and very happy in his company, to be sure, but that I would feel even happier almost anywhere else on earth just at this time, a compliment which the chieftain answered with a solemn but discreet "How."

I extended my hand to several other Indians who were near, but when I approached the fellow who had been forced to yield me the knife and who was standing there leaning on his rifle, the features distorted with hate, he vouchsafed no word of reply to my good-bye, but turned his back to me as an especial token of his grudge.

Not in the least disturbed by this discourtesy I rode slowly away. Steadily I kept my eyes on the fellow, for I did not trust him. I may have gone some thirty paces, perhaps, when that devil raised his gun, cocked it and drew on me. I was about to motion to him that he should not carry the joke too far, for I believed his hostile gesture to be in jest, when something like a flash of lightning and a little cloud of smoke issued from the barrel of his weapon. At the same moment a bullet tore my cap from my head.

"A miss is as good as a mile," I reflected with a wry grimace as I stopped my poor nag in order to pick up my

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badly abused headcovering. Then I mounted once more, saluted the savages again and rode back to the duke.

I found him standing against the side of our wagon, a double-barrelled rifle in his hands. The report of the gunshot had worried him greatly as to my fate, a feeling that became intensified because the bullet intended for my head also whizzed uncomfortably close to his own.

But instead of pursuing our journey without delay this doughty iron-eater decided on paying the savages a visit. He was going to demand satisfaction for tis unwarranted outrage. In spite of my most urgent entreaties to desist from this reckless errand he walked over to his camp.

"I went straightway up to the chieftain," so the duke writes, "and advised him to save his lead for the Pawnees rather than to waste them on Mr. Moellhausen who was his friend. This proof of my courage and my knowledge of their character and sense of justice pleased the young chieftain exceedingly. He extended his hand to me and shook it heartily. Then he called all his followers together, had the pipe of peace passed around, took the medicine bag and the spear with the warshield and laid them at my feet while repeating several times: "Lau, lau, Capitana!"

In referring to the bullet aimed at my head the duke was told that it was fired merely as a parting salute for his friend. At this we both enjoyed a hearty laugh. The duke then assured me that from then on I was no longer a greenhorn, but a full-fledged veteran voyageur. But I reserved my grateful acknowledgment of this compliment to a more auspicious hour.

I realized at this time the utter hopelessness of our situation. Our horses were emaciated, worn out dispirited. There was this enormous distance of many hundred miles to span, with winter coming on. Our larder was almost empty and the prospect for replenishing it remote and not to be depended upon.

We had come out of our difficulties with the Indians far more successfully than I had expected. Our scalps were still where they belonged. But was there not constant danger lurking from similar encounters? The country was full of roving Indian bands. Would we be able to conciliate others as we had done those out of whose clutches we had just escaped by the merest chance. By an exceedingly narrow miss?

The duke had so often spoken of the furious snowstorms that swept the western prairies. Winter might overtake us

long before we could reach the shelter of the settlements. For aside from the Catholic Mission in the Putowatomie Nations there was not the slightest refuge from the raging gales that could sweep over that immeasurable domain that is as open as the outstretched palm.

It is an unappreciated blessing of Heaven that man cannot see into the future. Could we have foreseen what lay ahead of us, my dark forebodings would have turned to stark terror.

AN ACCOUNT OF ADVENTURES IN THE GREAT AMERICAN
DESERT BY DUKE PAUL WILHELM

Three days long we had travelled since our encounter with the Ogallalas (so writes the duke) when we approached the two forks of the Platte.

It was quite early in the morning when I stepped out of the tent to survey the neighboring country, as was my custom at arising. Turning my eyes toward the west I saw a small herd of buffaloes grazing quietly on the level plain, perhaps a thousand paces up the wagon trail. I had just decided to saddle Moellhausen's horse with the intention of riding slowly toward them, with my body bent down over its neck, when, at some distance to the right, two dark objects caught my eyes. These were apparently motionless. They were too far away to be distinguishable. Being quite motionless they might have been taken for dead buffaloes. Moellhausen now appeared in the opening of the tent, and I pointed out to him what I saw.

The atmosphere was peculiar. Distant objects seemed to change constantly in appearance. Objects at some distance from us, although apparently motionless, seemed to take on new forms even as we were scanning them. We could not make out what they were for quite a while. At first we took them to be a couple of buffaloes still lying on their bed-ground. Now they looked like small ravens. Again we thought that they might be Indians crouched on the ground. We even decided that they were wolves.

And so we contended with one another for some time about the identity of this puzzling spectacle until we recognized what we least desired to find. They were Indians!

As we were walking toward them they rose from the ground and moved resolutely toward us, while we, keeping the same pace, returned to our little wagon. When they

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reached us we found them to be young fellows so savage and filthy in appearance that I cannot recall any human beings that I had ever beheld roaming over the prairies who could match their repulsive exterior.

Their forms were enveloped in woollen cloths that might have been white at one time. Now, however, they were a dusky color between gray and a dun. A sort of cowl, or hood, of the same material served them for a head-covering. Their feet and legs were clothed in leggins and moccasins of tanned deerskin. In their hands they carried cavalry swords, which to judge from their polish, had not been their property very long. Undoubtedly they had been captured in a recent predatory raid. For the rest they were armed to the teeth. An enormous, wolflike hound followed at their heels.

At our approach they shouted "Cheyenne." They seemed to be peaceably inclined. But from the very first they aroused our suspicions, for they resembled the Kiowas more than any other tribe, these being the thievish rabble that have an especial hankering for robbing and murdering pale faces.

When they came near they began at once to beg in the most insolent manner. First of all they asked for whiskey. Of course, we refused their demand, and when they made as if they were going to grip our horses by the reins, we threatened them with our guns. Sullenly they let us pass, but at a distance of some fifty steps they were following us, and with not the best intentions in the world, as appeared quite obvious.

Moellhausen, whom the presence of these ruffians seemed to annoy almost beyond endurance, asked my permission to send a bullet through their heads. This I refused to grant in emphatic terms. At this point, however, I must let my young friend take up the thread of the story.

ADVENTURES IN THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT BY MOELLHAUSEN

My proposal (explains the latter) to kill the two rascals, was foolhardy when viewed in the light of future events. Moreover it was unjust as will be seen when the two sides, the one affecting the red man, the other the pale face, have been given a just and equitable consideration.

At this moment, however, my lust to kill was born partly out of my utter ignorance and inexperience in dealing

with the Indians, and for the rest because I had become embittered against them as being to blame for all the misfortunes that had befallen us.

And how childish and inconsiderate this feeling was, after all! How superficially I had adjudged their attitude toward the whites! How short-sighted my views with reference to the relations between the two races.

Here was a people hunted, persecuted, killed as one would kill wild beasts, on their own soil, in their own native land which they had inherited from their fathers. Here they had to bear untold wrongs too cruel for words that would describe their horror.

Was it not indeed most natural that they should regard every one of these as an intruder, an oppressor, an enemy? Why should they not view every white man with suspicion? Why, indeed, with any feeling less intense than quenchless hatred?

Mindful as they must be of the outrages they had perpetrated against his own race, why should he not seek to avenge them whenever he had an opportunity to do so?

Whosoever utters imprecations against this vengeful and irreconcilable spirit of the Indian race is utterly oblivious of the uncalled-for and execrable vindictiveness of the whites who demand in retaliation for the stealing of a single horse the sacrifice of many human victims.

"Thou shalt not steal!" says the self-styled civilized white man to the aborigines. In the same breath he plans on robbing the ignorant child of nature of his home, of the honor of his wife and daughter. He extinguishes in the red man's breast every spark of hospitality, destroys all faith in such preachments. He kills in him all potential good. He arouses his blackest passions.

"Thou shalt not kill!" commands the white man's God, and this white man's law the missionary reads to the untutored savage. Yet for a single murder committed by the latter entire tribes are destroyed with savage ruthlessness.

"Nowhere is a human being so utterly despised on account of his color, if it is not white as by this in all other respects so generous and noble race, the Anglo-Saxons," interrupted the duke my spoken reflections.

"The people who break out in coarse and cruel excesses against the copper-skinned race and the African as well; who deny that they are susceptible to civilizing influences; who, it would seem, are stubbornly bent on rooting them out to the last individual—these are not aware that they expose

their own ignorance, their lack of consistency and justice. They are not capable, in fact, of recognizing the true causes which led in the first place to these evils which by now have become so deeply rooted that they are past repair or cure."

The idea of shooting down the two Indians, was, therefore, turned down by the disgusted duke with the question, "By what right do you presume to kill human beings whose superior you are only by reason of your better weapons?"

"The right of the stronger," I answered coolly, "and the desire to rid myself of their sinister company."

"Even in the wilderness," interrupted the duke, "one should surely shed blood only in self-defense, even though the principle that might is right is, to my deep regret, still recognized as law.

"And you do not really believe that these two savages are the only ones in the vicinity? Do you suppose that we would survive their death a single day if their murder could be traced to our door, as it surely would?"

I did not reply. Riding alongside of the wagon I reflected whether, under circumstances as they were, it would be after all such a great misfortune to be scalped in a respectable manner.

The two Indians were following us from afar.

When we saw their band draw near (continues the duke in his journal) there was nothing to do but to await the turn of events with calmness. For iron nerve is often the only way by which one is able to pull himself out of a critical situation when confronted by a band of savages on the warpath.

From a rise in the plain we were able to survey the low ground ahead of us. Along this level terrain we saw a body of fourteen or fifteen warriors coming toward us. All were afoot, well-armed with cavalry sabres, carbines, rifles, bows and tomahawks. They were for the most part young bucks, in their exterior the exact replicas of the ones I have described.

Just as on a former occasion, I commanded them to halt, and permitted them after an exchange of the customary signs of peace to approach us.

At first they feigned peaceable intentions. They wanted to look at my weapons and demanded brandy and victuals, neither of which I deemed feasible to give them inasmuch as we now had no other meats but bacon which the Indians of the West hold in utter contempt.

Gradually they grew aggressive, even insolent. The situation became tense.

Just as I was going to utter an angry protest one of the two rascals who had first come to intrude on our course uttered a hideous cry and rushed at us. Quick as thought itself the rest of the band threw aside their loose outer covering and raised their weapons with the obvious intention of killing us instantly.

The attack was made so suddenly and from all directions that we were unable to use our firearms. To be sure, we tried to break through the human wall with our horses, but they saw this simultaneously. One of the bucks sprang in front of the team and struck the near horse on the head with his tomahawk so that the poor beast sank on its knees stunned by the blow. It rose instinctively, but was unable for the moment to advance a step. A few days later it died as a result of the cruel stroke.

We now felt that we were completely in their power. In front of each of us were six or seven of the blood-thirsty horde. I had seized my double-barrelled rifle; but hardly was it in my hands when they snatched it away. One of them aimed its mouth at my head. They also took the short sword with which I was wont to give a slain animal the coup de grace; and when I was going to reach for my trusty pistol they seized it also and tore it from my grasp.

With these weapons in their possession they grew more impudent. They dragged me from the wagon, jerked off my Mexican serape and my cap. At a signal they cocked their guns and bent their bows directly at my head. My own double-barrelled rifle and another gun touched my breast, and one of the younger savages held his bent bow with the arrow almost touching my right eye.

They give Moellhausen and me to understand that our lives were forfeited because we were Yankees and therefore their deadly foes, and that they must have our scalps.

I smiled in disdain at their threats and preserved the utmost calm. I told them that I was a Washi. Coolly I pointed at them with my ten fingers and cried, "Squaw-men!" With undisguised contempt I counted them, pointing my finger toward them, one at a time, until I had reached the last of them, then at Moellhausen and myself. Then I said with a sweep of the hand, "Fifteen." Pointing to my companion and myself, I said, "Two."

"You are cowards! Squaw-men! Two brave white

warriors are not to be cast down by fear of such odds against them."

I must state here that, while the word "Yankee" meant utmost abomination to them, that of "Washi" stood for "French Creole" or "Canadian," a name which they held in high respect and affection. In fact, all foreigners not Yankees are considered to be Washis.

This attitude of mine had an immediate effect. All weapons were lowered. All our stolen belongings were restored in a quiet, orderly manner, even to the most insignificant objects. The leader, who was the coolest and most reasonable among them, brought me my cap and serape with quiet dignity. There was a youth who had disappeared during the melee with my highly prized pistol. To make amends for this the young chieftain brought a fine six-chambered revolver and laid it in the wagon. Then he pointed to a dead buffalo some distance away, whereupon the little band took their leave with many protestations and gestures of friendship.

(During the attack on the duke, Moellhausen received similar treatment. It may interest the reader to have his own report of this encounter.)

MOELLHAUSEN'S ACCOUNT OF THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE INDIANS

I myself (he writes) felt the fists of an Indian in my neckcloth. He twisted it so tightly that my breath came only in short gasps. Thus he held me, my body bent away from my horse. All this time carbines and arrows were touching my breast and my forehead. These were held rigid, motionless as only Indians are able to hold them. This was my situation. I had the firm belief that my life was forfeited, and that it was only a matter of seconds when my soul would take its flight into the Great Beyond. In that extremity, I was even amused to see two Indians release their bows, then carefully, deliberately draw the arrows across their wet tongue, then put them across the bow once more, to make sure that nothing should halt their passage through my heart and brain.

The whole affair was of shorter duration than I am taking time to describe. They had even emptied both my saddle bags of their contents while the upper part of my body was balancing on the arms of the savage.

Among the things they had taken was my leather briefcase which was full of sketches of landscapes, Indians, buffaloes, and hunting-scenes. I believe that the sight of the

pictures made an impression on the redskins that led to our salvation. The sketch-book I never came to see again. In the same manner did I lose my neckerchief. The Indian who had carressed my throat so ungently within its strangling hold had it in his hand the last time I saw it.

"Dumme Kerle!"¹ scolded the duke in anger when he felt himself freed from the rough grip of a number of hands intent on murder. And "Tumme Kels! Tumme Kels!" repeated the Indians, as well as they were able, the words that seemed to please their ears.

Just as we were ready to leave the scene of our recent encounter, the young chieftain pointed toward a dead buffalo some two hundred paces down the road, with a gesture that we could help ourselves to as much of the flesh as we might wish to take.

Both of us acknowledged our gratitude for this mark of generosity with signs of sincere appreciation. Then, once more in possession of our liberty and our belongings, we urged our horses into a trot.

"We just barely saved our scalps this time," said the duke with a hearty laugh as he drew his fingers through his tangled locks. And I, too, raised my hand automatically toward the scalp lock of my head which quite unexpectedly was still in its proper place. I looked back toward the band of Indians that were now squatted down on the ground just where we had quitted them. They were looking intently at some object.

I immediately examined my saddle-bags and became aware that my sketch book was missing. I now no longer doubted what had been the reason for our almost miraculous deliverance. In their superstition they recognized something of magic in these pictures. And since this magic had undoubtedly proceeded from us it was a foregone conclusion that we were medicine-men, wherefore our lives were held sacred.²

1. Certain it is, according to Paul Wilhelm's graphic account, that the Indians had become entirely convinced that they were dealing with Washis, and not with Yankees, i. e., Anglo-Saxon Americans. It is hardly likely that there was time enough in the brief encounter to permit those Indians who opposed the duke, especially their chief, to have even a glance at the sketch-book. And it was this latter, the chief, who decided favorably the outcome for the two travellers.—The Translator.

2. It is hardly necessary to observe that Mr. Moellhausen was evidently unable to survey the scene in which Duke Paul Wilhelm played the chief role. Had he been able to witness what had passed between the Indians and that intrepid, masterful principal in the little drama he might have been considerably less impressed with the significance of the sketch-book as it affected the happy solution of their terrible predicament.

It was not easy to reconcile myself to the loss of my cherished notes and sketches. But, after all, there was no little consolation in the thought that they had helped us out of a situation that had so nearly ended in a tragedy.

I firmly believed (continues Moellhausen) that the duke would send me back for the sketch-book as he had done on that former occasion for the knife. Nor can I deny at all that this time I would have resisted such a naive demand more resolutely, for the memory of the unfriendly bullet was still too fresh in my mind.

About three hundred paces from the Indians we came upon the slain buffalo. Its body was still warm, so that it could not have been killed more than an hour before. Indeed it had the appearance as if the hunters had been disturbed in their task of cutting up the carcass by our arrival on the scene.

The duke turned off the road and drove our wagon close to the dead animal, whereupon we continued the work begun by the Indians without further delay. And rarely, I believe, did two people handle knife and axe with the zeal that we manifested, cutting off as we did one great chunk after another and throwing the coveted flesh into the wagon. Luckily the Indians had left the most desirable portions untouched, so that we were able to provide ourselves with a supply of meat that was tender and juicy.

Meanwhile the savages were still squatted down in the same place. They seemed to be engaged in matters of serious import. Nor did they appear to be inclined to molest us any further. It is hardly necessary to add that we had no particular desire to incommode them, even with our protestations of gratitude for their generosity.

As soon as we had stowed away as much of the buffalo meat as we could find room for we drove onward. We would have been in the best of spirits had not the wounded horse shown unmistakable signs of total prostration. We travelled till late that evening before making camp. With the fragrant roast meat before us we forgot the hopelessness of our situation.

(Here the duke takes up the thread of the story once more.)

During the next few days we proceeded down the river with a violent north-east wind that checked our progress considerably. The valley was bordered by low, wave-like, grasscovered hills. The nights were starlit, and during the day we were warmed by the autumn sun. Up to this time

we had been encountering large buffalo-herds and small bands of antelope; but gradually the former grew less frequent, until, now as we were nearing Fort Kearney, we had left the last of them behind us. The grass was still beautiful, and there were tracks and other signs of small detachments of buffaloes from larger herds here and there in evidence, even as far as the Little Blue. One could no longer depend upon finding any, however, even by going out on a special hunt for them. At the close of the fourth day after our encounter with the last Indian band—we arrived at the homestead of that hospitable American, Mr. Boots. I decided to stop over for a day of rest. I improved this as an opportunity for purchasing the supplies necessary for the rest of the journey to Kansastown. A large amount of maize for the horses was also bought. For this cereal is more peculiarly suited for horses and all other domestic animals than any other I know of.

Mr. Boots assisted us in the making of repairs on the wagon and harnesses. Since Mr. Moellhausen felt indisposed again he was unable to render any assistance in these necessary tasks.

While we were here as guests of Mr. Boots, a number of Pawnees from the great horde (grand Pawnees) came there, good-looking young people with pleasant smiling faces, all naked except for a buffalo robe thrown over their shoulders.

One of these, Nika-Paki, or Charlie for short, was a really nice, well-mannered, good-looking young fellow. He spoke English quite fluently; for he had been brought up among the whites. He wanted to go along with us to St. Louis. Mr. Moellhausen, who at this time was still an enthusiast for this type of Indian, had already started at his hobby, the proselyting business.

I did not interfere as I did not wish to offend him. However, I did secretly all I could to thwart his efforts. Indians, it must be said, are rarely useful on a journey as they dislike any kind of work. In fact, they can often prove very annoying.

That evening the Pawnees gathered about the warm stove for their evening meal which they evidently relished very much. It consisted of hot bread, bacon, potatoes, and coffee.

These roving Indians have become a veritable plague to the whites, for they are persistent beggars. They always demand food, and they are habitually inclined to thievery. With all my precautions I, too, had to make this experience again.

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The young bucks had caught a wolf whom they had chased with hounds and tortured to death. It was a loathsome spectacle. The animal had long hair and a face like a fox. It was 3½ feet long from tip to top and about two feet tall.

In the morning, after half a day of rest, we broke camp in order to reach our next stopping place, Fort Kearney, three miles away. A mighty prairie fire was raging toward the east, on the left bank of the La Platte which we had been following since our last encounter with the Indians.

The commanding officer of the fort drove out to meet me and offered me provisions. These I had to decline inasmuch as I had provided myself with a sufficient supply at the store of Mr. Boots.

Many Pawnees came up and greeted me. They were very friendly, for some of them recognized me. After a brief visit with these simple-hearted children of nature we drove on. The way led over a flat plain where the grass was abundant. When we were about six miles east of the fort, we struck camp at the side of the road. There was no water near by. The night was beautiful, but the prairie fire encircled the entire horizon and the smoke formed clouds of mist grotesque shapes and of somber colors.

The next morning I had driven about six miles farther on when I saw several small bands of Pawnees walking toward me rather briskly. A few only were mounted. All were showing in their dress and woe-begone expression the signs of utmost want and suffering. They bore only bows and arrows which was ample proof of their pitiful condition.

It is just such classes of Indians as these that become positive plagues to travellers on long expeditions such as I was engaged in. They can become a menace to life unless the white man possesses the necessary tact and resoluteness, two attributes which are essential to him when he is confronted by such savages on a lonely highway. It seems impossible to get rid of the rabble when they stop one with their insistent even insolent demands for food or clothing or money, and more than all, for fire-water.

But I made a virtue of necessity and distributed a handful of small silver coins among them. With these they seemed to content themselves.

There are occasions when the Indian rises to heights of courage, chivalry, generosity and self-denial, to lofty knighthood even. He is generally fearless in battle and proud in defeat.

Then again one may find him childish and timid as a woman, when he can descend to whimpering cowardice, when he is unashamed of acts so low that they would brand males of any other race with the ineradicable mark of outcasts.

A group of this type it was that approached me on this occasion. They claimed that the Sioux had slain two of their squaws, and that they needed firearms and powder and lead in order to avenge the wrong. Instead of coming to me as entreaters, they demanded these things in a most insolent manner.

When I replied that I was returning from the Far West and that my supplies were barely sufficient for the homeward journey, they made a show of climbing into my wagon. I immediately drew my revolver, the gift of the chieftain I had encountered near the junction of the Platte forks and cocked it, giving them a clear proof of my inflexible determination. I laughed in their faces, and it is almost unbelievable how their attitude changed in a moment to abject cringing cowardice.

What a contrast between these and the Pawnees of Cooper's portrayal!

At last, when I saw more and more small bands come up to me, I grew desperate and decided to drive the twelve miles back to Fort Kearney and ask the commanding officer for a escort until we should find ourselves out of reach of this rabble.

An old chieftain, of an appearance that inspired trust, came up to me, expressing sorrow over this resolution. He tried to make me understand through signs and words that I should turn in the direction of the great encampment which was about to break up. There the great chiefs would protect me and give me safe conduct. Other elderly warriors joined him and gave me their kindest assurances.

Thus it went on until more and more armed savages were drawing a tight cordon about my wagon. These latter were younger and would not listen to their elders. These grew unbearably insolent and made as if they would pull Moellhausen from his horse and me myself out of the wagon.

Just then came on a handsome big black horse a knightly figure, supple and almost fair of face, with the features of a Greek demigod. A magnificent mantle of scarlet red clothed him, held together by rosettes of hammered silver. Underneath this he wore a blue jacket that harmon-

ized uncommonly well with the brilliant red of the outer covering.

But instead of showing any inclination to help me he looked at me in undisguised hostility. He pointed with his rifle toward the river, six miles distant—for what reason I was unable to find out. Then he had some of his followers grasp the horse by the bits. At the same time he loosened a heavy whip from his saddle and struck them several times unmercifully across the head.

As this is a token of grossest insult, I grew furious and was about to aim my revolver which I still was holding in my hand, all cocked, intending to blow off the top of his head. This would have been easy to do as the insolent savages had not even deemed it worth the trouble to relieve me of this firearm.

But in a flash I became mindful of Moellhausen who, after all, was a ward of mine, and who would inevitably be doomed to death like myself for such an indiscretion. He saw in a flash what my thoughts were. But before he could make any defense, I threw down my revolver and the double-barreled rifle that lay across my knees. Then I began a violent invective against him and his rabble. I told him in the most scathing terms that Mr. Moellhausen and I were men, whereas he and his men were vile squaws whom the great Sioux would not deem worth scalping.

This produced an immediate change. The great cacique proffered me his hand and called me a great chief. In a moment the scene had changed, and all my former tormentors crowded up to me to beg my pardon.

The chieftain offered to trade his handsome horse for my mule or his English rifle for a bearskin I had. The latter I presented to him with my respects, but I declined every offer of barter with disdain.

We were just getting ready to start now when there was a slight commotion among the savages. Another chieftain rode up, evidently attracted by curiosity. He was also of superb stature and knightly bearing, a man of middle age. At the sight of me he stopped short. A cloud passed momentarily across his brow, then passed. There appeared a glad look, a look of recognition in his eyes. Then he stepped on the wheel, opened his arms, and embraced.

"My benefactor!" he cried in good English, "My king! You do not know me? Do you recall the battle of my people with the Mandans? Do you remember the chief of the Pawnees, Pawoka, the Eagle's Head, after our people were

crushed in the ambuscade of the Coulee? The Eagle's Head was to die, and I, his son, to be held as bondsman. But you pleaded for his life and my liberty with your friend, the great Mandan chief, and you moved the great heart of the man. You asked that our nations should make a treaty of friendship. That treaty was made, and for thirty-one summers it has lasted. The God of the Pale Faces be blessed!" And the man wept, a rare sight in a great warrior. Then he turned and spoke to his people. They shouted in a very paeon of acclaim. I was offered horses, the choice of their herd. But, whatsoever may have been my reason, I refused them. Many times was I to regret my stupid lack of foresight.

It seemed almost discourteous to break off this welcome encounter. But with mutual expressions of lasting friendship we parted, and I drove away with a lighter heart.

The day after this adventure a furious windstorm swept over the prairie from the east. This gradually veered until it blew directly in our faces. During the night the prairie fire reached us and soon a wall of flames surrounded us. It drove a rain of glowing embers against our leather tent to the very edge of the Little River where we lay encamped. A superb spectacle it was, but also a fear-inspiring one.

We would have fallen victims to the unchained elements had we not been just in time to reach the shelter of a little island in the middle of the stream. Here our horses were grazing calmly as if utterly unaware that a terrible death was lurking only a few steps away. They had come across to this haven of their own accord.

I cannot to this day understand how the poor beasts escaped death from suffocation. For, brief though the actual exposure to the terrific heat, it seemed in the smoke, the glowing sparks, the pitiless sting of cinders, the maelstrom of ashes whirled about in a blind fury, that every living thing must perish.

As to ourselves, I believe that it was only due to the tightly closed walls of our tent that we passed through the frightful visitation alive.

At the mouth of a slough not far from the lower end of this island, I observed a mighty buffalo which the prairie fire had probably driven there. I crept up toward him and with a shot through his heart I was so fortunate as to procure for us a large supply of excellent game-meat for the on-coming days.

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The storm wind blew with such violence that I led the horses down into the slough for shelter. It was tolerably comfortable for them in the hollow, and the grass in the soft muck was still green and tender. We decided to stay in the shelter of this little refuge until the wild storm subsided.

The hurricane, however, never abated even for a moment.

The wagon was constantly in danger of being blown over, and we were unable to find any place where it was not exposed to the full fury of the storm. In this extremity I decided to break up camp. But although the wind was blowing from the side, the poor beasts could scarcely drag the wagon forward. The sand and dust were so dense that our eyes and nostrils were filled, and our faces and hands were pelted so mercilessly that we had to protect them with cloths.

One who has never travelled on the steppes of Western America during the winter season can have no idea of its terrors. There is not a moment's surcease from the raging violence of the furious blast. It overwhelms the stoutest-hearted to be exposed to it through endless hours. The hopelessness, the utter loneliness are appalling. No human creature is fitted by nature to endure its numbing chill.

I have travelled through the vast deserts of Africa and Arabia when the simoon raged for days and nights. There the heat and thirst become so terrible that only children of the desert or white men of iron nerve can live through it. These extremes of heat and cold are equally intolerable, just as are the effects of the blinding sand.

We reached the headwaters of the Little Blue the same evening. It was impossible however, to make a fire. But fortunately there was a dead tree which the conflagration had set on fire. It was not entirely consumed by the flames, and Mr. Moellhausen was able to make coffee and roast some buffalo meat over the remaining embers. The wind never abated in fury and the cold increased throughout the night. Our suffering was intense although we slept in the wagon. The wagon cover, made of stout sailcloth, was whipped and lashed so that it cracked constantly like the report from a rifle.

The trail along the Little Blue leads through many deep and declivitous defiles. At one of these we lost over three hours. Although we hitched a horse ahead of the team in order to drag the small, lightly-loaded wagon up the steep slope the poor beasts were dragged back down to the bot-

tom three times, slipping and falling on their knees until these were bleeding cruelly. Then we decided to unload the wagon. After that we just barely succeeded in reaching the top of the incline, carrying the contents up to the wagon in armloads.

The banks of the little stream are bordered by low, but steep bluffs. It is a pretty little river, about thirty feet in width and two in depth. The water is clear, but so much ice floated by that we could not find out whether there were any fish in it.

The grass was still fairly good where the fire had not touched it, so that the horses were not suffering for want of pasture. One of them, a mustang, and also mule, had until now kept in condition and fine spirits. So it was with an American-bred chestnut mare, though this latter was no longer in good flesh.

For four days the journey along the Little Blue continued, through mucky, narrow bottoms, and across smaller creeks. A short time after breaking camp on the morning of the fifth day, it happened that the horse that carried the pack and was following the wagon without a lead-strap ran into a bog hole and sank so deep that it was impossible to pull it out. We were forced, after long and futile efforts to free the animal from its plight, to camp on this spot.

That night, November 11, a fearful snowstorm swept down upon us from the north and we had to lie over. The temperature was between 20 and 22 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. The horse had perished in the morass. Dread winter had set in in all its fury. This in view of the endless road ahead of us, filled me with a palsying dread.

According to my reckonings we were still 30 miles from the Big Blue and 120 miles from the Catholic Mission, the latter the nearest place where we might be able to obtain shelter and provisions.

Sugar, coffee, and flour were about gone. Fortunately we still had some buffalo meat left, also two whole smoked hams, about six pounds of bacon and the same amount of lard, and in addition some rice and salt.

This supply offered little encouragement for the dreary prospect of having to pass the winter on this bleak spot. If we had been halted on the Big Blue or the Vermillion, more subsistence might have been conceivable, as these rivers are full of fine, savory fish which it is easy to catch with bait when one chops holes through the ice crust. It would be possible to exist on such a simple diet; though, of

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course, the prospect was not particularly attractive. Of maize I still had about two bushels on hand, which I reserved for my chestnut who was not by nature adapted to subsist solely on the grass of the prairies.

The weather had grown considerably worse by the following morning. The glass was now down to about 30° below zero, Fahrenheit. The stormwind that was now partly laden with sharp icicles had become so frightful that my chestnut mare which had up to now held out uncommonly well froze to death during the night. This reduced my motive resources to the mule and the scrawny Indian pony.

In the night the wind fell, but it continued to snow. The tent, too, had become so cracked and full of little holes that it was no longer snow-proof; and whenever we tried to build a fire in it the smoke threatened to strangle us. For this reason we could no longer have a fire by which to warm ourselves.

This frightfully pungent smoke had come to affect my eyesight so seriously that I was suffering untold tortures. This condition grew worse and worse during the following day until I could see only as through a dense veil. Soon I was no longer able to read my own writing. Moellhausen's left eye became affected with the same trouble.

Now I became afflicted also with colic and unremitting headache. The glare of the snow grew constantly more intense and unbearable.

Notwithstanding my almost total blindness and pains in the vitals, I arose on the fourth day of our encampment on this accursed spot and we dragged ourselves fifteen miles farther onward until it grew dark, setting up our miserable tent, our sole refuge from the killing cold, on the bank of an almost dry and treeless creek.

The following morning—it was November 17—the miserable beasts were hitched to the wagon again, but they refused to pull it up the slope. Therefore we had to unload and carry everything to the top of the little hill. Even the empty vehicle they were hardly able to draw up the gentle acclivity. This consumed the better part of the forenoon, and during the rest of the day, our way leading over very slippery, hilly prairie which was crossed by a great number of ravines, we were able to make an advance of only seven miles in spite of the cruellest efforts.

On the morning of the eighteenth we again started out in order to make a creek called Sandy Hill Creek, where we

found a goodly supply of wood and running water. Here we stopped and pitched our tent.

We had scarcely finished the task when suddenly a storm arose accompanied with snow so dense that we could not distinguish the nearest objects. With the great snow masses that already covered the earth, and the lowering of the temperature to a point where my glass could no longer register, it seemed that the end of everything was near. The wind blew down the tent as often as we tried to pitch it anew.

A new horror was added! Great numbers of wolves appeared, it seemed out of nowhere. Their howl was ceaseless. They approached to the very door of our tent, and we were in momentary danger of being eaten up by them. Gradually our tent became buried in the piling snow masses.

Our supplies were now at their lowest ebb. My body was so injured from the cold and so exhausted from famine that it had now become too stiff to permit me to rise from my comfortless couch on the ground.

Through eight unending days and nights we were in these desperate straits, and death seemed imminent, not an hour away. Mr. Moellhausen, who was twenty-four against my fifty-four years, proved himself still stout-hearted and the personification of devotion. His courage did not desert him even in this fearful extremity. How my heart went out to him in this terrible crisis, I cannot tell in words. I resolved from the exercise of all the will-power I could still command to continue to face the impossible at the side of this intrepid companion of mine if God only willed to deliver us from this situation.

Our last horse, the Indian pony, now sickened and died. The same symptoms appeared with each of our horses before their misery came to an end. First of all their spine became cramped and extremely sensitive to the touch. Thick mucus was discharged from the nostrils, as if they had become afflicted with an acute attack of the glanders. This was followed by a sudden emaciation and deathlike faintness.

On November 25, when our situation had become at last hopeless and we had resigned ourselves to die, God sent us help. The mailstage from Fort Laramie came along. The driver and the passengers found us. But there was scarcely enough room for one more person.

Even this space was very unwillingly offered, and only after long entreaties and the promise of a large sum of

money. In addition I had to give the mule and a saddle to the passenger who was to be incommoded.³

Now it was to be a question of who should remain behind. We agreed to leave it to the toss of a coin, and chance decided in my favor. With deep grief and sorrow I left my loyal, gallant companion, with the promise to send him help from the colony at the Catholic Mission. A few miles on the way we chanced upon a band of Otoe Indians who were camping in the shelter of a little copse of brushwood. As these were settled rather comfortably, my new friends deemed it wise to arrange with these kindly disposed Indians to bring Mr. Moellhausen to their encampment and to give him good care and attention until he full recovered. The nobility of these children of nature was the more evident when they refused a generous compensation which my new travelling companions offered them for their promise to bring Mr. Moellhausen to Independence as soon as he should be able to resume the journey.

As for me, I soon saw that my new companions were fine, good-hearted people who showed a most sympathetic understanding for the terrible experiences through which my companion and I had passed. This feeling of friendship cheered me beyond words. My gloom over the thought of Moellhausen had disappeared as soon as those arrangements with the Otoes had been made, and I was soon beginning to take a new interest in my future.

The succeeding ten days, however, were as hard as any through which I had passed before the mailcoach found me. The nights were terrible, exposed as we were to the deadly blasts of the gale. My body and limbs were frost bitten so that I could find no relief from the suffering that wracked me.

At last we arrived at the Catholic Mission of the Puto-watomies. But these gentlemen of the cloth showed little sympathy toward me, nor even the slightest consideration for the fate of my companion, the memory of whose pallid

3. In another manuscript, a more detailed duplicate of the one on which this translation is based, Paul Wilhelm writes that on this outward journey he had hidden a considerable store of provisions, and with these a large sum of money on a spot on the Little Blue, to be available on the return trip. When he looked for this cache on his arrival from the West, it was not to be found. He concluded that some camping party must have by chance discovered it and appropriated it. This accounts for his moneyless condition when the mailcarrier took him to Kansastown. After reaching that point he was able to command ample credit through communicating by telegraph with his bankers in St. Louis.—The Translator.

features I was unable to keep out of my mind even when my own body was passing through martyrdom.

When my disappointment on account of the cold and inhospitable reception by the Jesuit Brothers was so apparent, a Canadian half-breed of the same faith as theirs, but of Samaritan mould, volunteered to make a search for Mr. Moellhausen, and to bring him back to civilization even sooner than he might be able to return with the help of the Otoes. But I learned later that he never found Moellhausen, and he himself was not seen again. So it must be supposed that he lost his life on this unfortunate and tragic mission.

The Anglo-Americans who did not wish to be outdone in generosity collected among themselves the sum of two hundred dollars as a reward and gave it to the man.

We remained at the mission over night. The ill-concealed hostility of our hosts chilled us even more than the howling snowstorms, and the even lower temperatures that had set in during the night, after the brief spell of thawing weather of the preceding day due to a warm wind from the northwest.

Undoubtedly on account of this sudden warm spell the river Kansas had become released from its icy fetters; for huge ice-floes were rushing down in the rising torrent that threatened a score of times to crush the sides of our frail, flatbottomed ferry-boat.

On the opposite side a Swede was living on a lonely homestead. This kindly fellow insisted that we stay with him until we had recovered our strength and spirits. For my companions also were showing the effects of the indescribably harsh experiences of the trip. For the first time since my brief stay in Scott's Bluffs I had the blissful luck of sleeping in a comfortable bed. I have good reason to remember this noble fellow, Gustaf Larson, as long as I live.

The rest of the distance to Independence was again over slippery ice and through mountain-high snowdrifts. My condition when we arrived at this hospitable little place was critical. But every aid in the power of its citizens was offered me to raise my spirits and renew my strength for the rest of the trip to St. Louis.

My miraculous deliverance had been telegraphed from Kansastown to St. Louis and New Orleans. All the newspapers in the United States manifested their sympathy and rejoicing over my return to civilization which had long been despaired of. After a month of suffering I was now able again to find sleep on a comfortable bed.

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From lovable, hospitable Independence I travelled to Booneville in a post-wagon which in the west is called "mail-stage," and which is merely a lumbering farm-wagon useful only because of its high wheels and broad tires which render possible the passage over the endless miles of boggy forest-roads. The distance to Booneville is 104 miles by way of Marshall and Arrowrock. Booneville is just across the river from Franklin. There I stopped over a fortnight for rest and in order to recover my health which had been shattered.

There is a splendid tavern in Booneville where I enjoyed for the first time since I left St. Louis the comforts of civilization. Among my new friends I remember with great pleasure two countrymen, one of them Dr. Knickelaand, from Hanover, the other the leading merchant of the town, Mr. Kehle, from Gera, both of whom urged me to make my home with them.

There are still 180 miles intervening between here and St. Louis, and the roads are miserable, the conveyances wretched—surely a sore trial for an exhausted wayfarer to face!

Continuing my journey I made another halt of four days at Jefferson City. On the evening of my arrival I found that great demonstrations of rejoicing had been arranged here in my honor. My reception at the capitol of this great pioneer state was cordial beyond description.

Farther down the Gasconade had to be crossed twice. The ice was very unsafe. But with the aid of a long pole I managed to reach the other side. A part of my luggage slipped through and was lost, and several persons broke through. These were saved only with the greatest difficulty and at considerable risk to the rescuers. We had to spend the night in the open although we were wet to the skin and utterly unprepared for such an emergency.

The rest of the way to St. Louis was by way of Manchester and was very rough and tedious. Our post-chaise stuck fast in the quagmire a number of times, and we had to finish the last eighteen miles in a two-wheeled-ox-cart.

Just as in Jefferson City so was I received in St. Louis with a welcome that moved me to the depths of my heart. But I was obsessed with the fixed conviction that I would never get well in this city with the endless number of entertainments that I soon learned were being planned in my honor. I wanted, for the first time in my life, to rest, rest, rest! I longed for the warm, balmy air and the "dolce far niente" of the dreamy Southland.

The cold increased hourly. Never was such terrible cold known within the memory of the oldest settlers. In such weather, with the roads in an unspeakably bad condition and often blocked for days, with navigation interrupted, if not for long periods entirely stopped, it will be most difficult for the inhabitants of towns and cities to provide themselves with supplies of fuel and foodstuffs, even though the latter are plentiful on farms, and though the forest primeval is at no great distance from any populations, even from St. Louis itself.

The prevailing wind is from north-northwest, with the sky clear and the ground bare of snow. The temperature is 15' Reamur (34° F.).

The general character of the dwelling houses is of a lightness and a flimsiness that is surprising in a people like the Americans who love comfort and have every means near at hand to arrange their mode of living accordingly. It is for this lack of foresight that the people suffer so severely in times of cold. Fireplaces and castiron stoves radiate heat only within a short radius. Beyond that there reigns an arctic temperature, and walls, windows, and doors are hoary-white with frost.

(Post-script written after Paul Wilhelm's convalescence in New Orleans.)

My heart wells up many times during the day, and my eyes grow dimmed as I recall the deep sympathy and affection which was shown me by the people of the cities through the Missouri State, especially of Independence and Booneville. Many of the inhabitants offered me substantial pecuniary aid, a high proof of disinterestedness and philanthropy when you reflect that at this time money is lamentably scarce and times are hard because a great number of banks have gone into bankruptcy throughout the republic leaving the depositors penniless.

Of all the great virtues in the character of the Anglo-American the two most desirable are their magnanimity and self-effacement to alleviate sickness and misfortune, and their natural and spontaneous hospitality. This is the magnificent legacy born out of the earliest of the founders of the Republic, of their Franklin, their Jefferson, their Washington.

I have observed wherever I have been a guest that there is a natural devotion, a common interest in the home. In the most humble cabin, as well as in the finest mansion, I see that the housewife and mother in one is idealized.

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Nowhere else in all my extensive travels over the planet have I seen such downright adoration manifested toward womanhood.

And as long as these lofty traits, the hallmark of true knighthood, are the dominant and basic virtues of the American people the Ship of State will ride secure through any storms that may betide.

A FIGHT FOR LIFE: MOELLHAUSEN'S ACCOUNT OF HIS ABANDONMENT AND SUBSEQUENT ADVENTURES IN THE WILDERNESS

(Found among the journals of Duke Paul Wilhelm, a companion-piece to the latter's "Adventures in the Great American Desert.")

THE ADVENTURES OF MOELLHAUSEN: FORSAKEN!

WHEN I SAW the postwagon disappear on the bleak, frozen horizon I felt that the nadir of my misfortunes had been reached. Within the rude vehicle were the only white people, so far as I knew, in this ice-covered solitude hundreds of miles in extent, while the only living beings now about me were wolves.

These announced their presence and in ever increasing numbers. Their tongues lolling, their greedy gaze fixed on me, I could almost detect a cunning, calculating look in the blood-shot eyes when the moment for the general attack would be arriving.

This moment could have been the very next one. I might be able to fire two or three shots into them, at most. That which would follow at once was easy to guess.

My first task must be to put my firearms in good condition and to have them in readiness and instant reach. My arsenal consisted of two shotguns, one single and the other double-barrelled. These carried heavy charges of buckshot with deadly effect at 150 paces off. In addition, there was the duke's single-barrelled German rifle, with a range of over 300 paces; a six-chambered revolver made by the Yankee, Samuel Colt; four horse-pistols; my long-bladed hunting knife, and a heavy axe.

With these death-dealing instruments, I felt somewhat reassured and secure in an attack by savages, provided there were not too many, and that I saw them first. That a marauding band of these might pay me a visit at most any time I knew only too well.

So far as I had been able to study the nature of those terrible sharks of the prairie, the gray and white wolves, I felt that I could hold them at bay unless hunger at last might drive them to desperation. Whenever I looked out I saw small packs of them along the creek-bottoms. They shifted their position constantly, either only a step or two, or trotted a dozen or more steps, eyes always turned toward the tent, then stopping. Some of them would disappear through the dense underbrush, then emerge on the other side and trot up the hill-side where they would disappear. But for those that dropped out of sight there were always others drifting in, apparently from nowhere.

After a survey of the situation from my frail little fortress, the leather tent, I now set about to protect myself against the constantly increasing cold and the silently drifting, sinister snow. This snow, fine as sifted flour, seemed to find an entry in to my refuge through the tiniest openings, even no larger than pin-pricks.

Soon I had built a wall of snow, packed against the leather sides partly by tramping, partly by beating it with my shovel. I could notice at once that the fire was burning more lustily and that it diffused more warmth.

Next I went down to the little river and gathered a large supply of dry wood. This I dragged over the snow up the slope to one side of my tent-door. Last of all I brought up two pails full of water.

Now I began to arrange the interior of my habitation. First of all I gathered all the hides of buffalo, a large horsehide, and coverlets that we had brought with us when we set out from Kansastown and laid them out with a view to comfort and warmth.

Then I made a little excavation directly under the hole in the center of the tent-roof, Indian-fashion. This I made narrow and two feet long. As the ground was frozen I was unable to dig it more than a few inches deep. But I knew that the fire would melt the frost in the earth so that I could have it at any depth I wished within a day or so.

My provisions consisted of a few remnants of buffalo meat, a little rice, some coffee and tea, and a quantity of maize. This latter, intended for provender for the chestnut mare that had perished in the snow several nights before, became now a welcome addition to my larder.

Carefully I now set to work to divide these very meager supplies into rations. I believed that help must arrive from the Mission of the Putowatomies within a fortnight at the

latest, and accordingly the division was made in fourteen portions.

When I had done all this I felt very tired. While working I felt animated and almost cheerful. But no sooner than I was inside of the tent my spirits began to sag. As soon as I had prepared my simple evening meal over the little fire and eaten it I made ready to pass this first night alone in the solitude of the vast wilderness.

When you know that a fellow-being, be it only a child, is near about, you can never feel so altogether alone. The human voice, even when it is the plaintive cry of a little one, has something cheery and sociable about it to make even the wilderness endurable. But with your own voice it is different. I made one attempt to talk to myself in the ordinary tone of conversation. But with a shiver I ceased. My voice had something dreadful, unnatural, unrecognizable about it as it resounded in the narrow limits of my habitation. When it died away it seemed as if it were a mocking, horrible echo from a specter out of one of the corners of the tent.

The sun dipped low behind the rising bank of snow-clouds sending its last beams across the illimitable snow fields that seemed to sound the signal for a weird concert, no longer strange, to be sure. But now, with my brave companion and leader gone, the howling resounded doubly dismal.

A whole horde of prairie wolves formed the chorus, a quarter of a mile away. Their ki-eye was ear-piercing, now sounding like the gibber of ghouls, now like the laughter of madmen released. To their long drawn-out treble there were soon added the deep notes of the great, shaggy wolves.

For minutes this eery baying would cease. Anon a leader raised his penetrating cry again, when immediately the whole choir fell in in wild discord. And the howling stormwind bore these savage notes far out upon the solitary land.

In the slough, where nothing was left of the dead horses but the brightly polished bones—and of harnesses and halters only the iron-rings—there now ensued a furious battle. The wails that came from the smaller combatants, the prairie wolves, were borne to me on the air like messengers announcing the death-throes of the victims that had incautiously ventured too near their monstrous cousins who with their huge jaws set with teeth sharp as steel shears would rend them hors de combat with a single slash.

As long as it was light I peered out of the darkness of

my tightly-closed tent in an endeavor to count the great horde that had collected about the bones in the slough, but at last I had to give up the attempt. It was a childish diversion, I must admit. But it distracted my mind from gloomy thoughts for a brief space. A moment only and sleep overpowered me. The thousand conflicting emotions of the day and my frenzied haste to make everything ready for some degree of liveableness had brought on a terrible fatigue, bodily and mental.

Just as the sun had risen above the crest of the eastern hills I woke up. Hunger was gnawing at my vitals. "One night has gone by," I thought to myself as I cut a notch in one of the tent-poles. "If only the other thirteen would pass as safely! Or better, if the people I am expecting to deliver me could come much, much sooner!"

It must have been somewhere between the twenty-sixth and twenty-eighth of November, and according to this reckoning I expected that I would spend Christmas at the Mission. I was far from suspecting at that moment how far I was wrong in my reckoning.

Could I have just then been able to foresee the unutterable sufferings, the horrors that I was destined to endure, I doubt not that I would have ended it all with a bullet!

The day went by slowly, gloomily. I passed some time dragging more firewood to the tent-door to insure myself of an abundant supply against the contingency that even so short a walk might become impossible during a long-continued blinding snowstorm.

To my utter horror I now noticed that a paralyzing weakness had gone into my feet and knees, so that I was reeling like a drunken person as I tried to walk along. If this became aggravated, if it did not abate, I could see myself slowly freezing and starving to death.

In a sorrowful mood I was sitting in front of my tent. My eyes were absently watching as the seething, boiling water in the little kettle was tossing the kernels of maize upward and sucking them back again in a mad whirl.

I had just stuffed my little clay pipe with dry willow leaves mixed with a little tea and was blowing the acrid smoke away from my nostrils when I saw several horsemen approach from the north. They were driving some horses ahead of them loaded with heavy packs.

Prepared for all eventualities I awaited their coming

calmly and motionless. I soon recognized them to be Indians who were returning from a beaver-hunt, in haste to reach their settlements on the Kansas. Therefore I knew that I would have nothing to fear from them.

When they had come within rifle-range one of them advanced toward me. Arrived at the tent he addressed me in fairly good English. Immediately he dispelled any suspicions I might have felt when he told me that he was a Delaware. Soon he was sitting at my side by the fire in the little habitation, while his companions, a set of wild-looking young fellows, were making themselves comfortable by a fire they had built outside of the tent.

Long and earnestly the older man talked to me, in an attempt to persuade me to leave all my belongings as well as those of my chief, the duke, to the wolves and roving Indian bands and to go with him to their wigwam on the Missouri.

"The wolves," he warned, "will draw closely and ever more closely about you. They will leave you no rest, neither by day nor by night. And if they delay in their purpose of devouring you, then the Pawnees who rove over this region will plunder and afterwards scalp you."

I turned his kind and generous offer down and tried to convince him that within two weeks at the latest people with horses were sure to arrive from the Catholic Mission, in which event I would be able not only to salvage my belongings, but also to go in a little wagon. In my present weak state, and crippled as I was, it would be utterly impossible to make the journey on horseback, and much less on foot.

"The help you expect," spoke the kindly Delaware, "cannot reach you. The palefaces will not come. They will not risk their good horses and their lives to ride against the terrible storms from the Missouri to this place for any cause, even to save your life, which, as they believe, in spite of the most urgent pleas from your friends, is already past saving.

"But I note well that the word of a paleface prevails against the counsels of the savage. You have the choice. May you not delude yourself in false hopes!"

I persisted in my resolution, and I had cause to repent it often and most bitterly.

At parting this noble fellow gave me a haunch of venison from a deer which he had slain that morning. Then he pressed my hand mutely and pursued his way in a southeasterly direction without looking back again toward my tent and disappeared with his followers behind the near hills. I was alone once more.

It is not possible to describe my sufferings during the several days that followed. I was lamed to such a degree that I had to creep back and forth on my hands and knees in order to fetch water from the creek and to drag wood in small bundles from the timber by a rope fastened about my waist. My head was whirling from the least effort. I was reeling like a man out of his senses. I was beginning to lose my memory. I was unable to reason. My faculty to think grew blurred. My mind was wandering toward utter darkness. Worry and the terrible cold may have been the cause.

The stormking was now constantly shrieking and howling across the barren waste and threatened to bury me alive. During the nights I did not dare to close my eyes; for the wolves, maddened by hunger, were growing hourly bolder and more ravenous. Relentlessly their circle drew more tightly about my little refuge. I would listen to the crunching of their footsteps on the snow as they were scurrying and leaping about, snarling and gnashing their formidable teeth.

In terrible suspense I harkened to every noise, waiting for the moment when the first should attempt to rend the tent opening.

That moment arrived and I quickly fired at random, right through the thin tent walls out into the black night. Terrified, they scampered off, to repeat their assault a few hours later with the same tenacity.

During the day, when these brutes that shun the light would not dare to draw near, I was able to rest. But, oh, what kind of rest this was! Among the litter that surrounded me in the small space, like chaos itself, I had discovered a small vial of laudanum. This and a box of quinine were now the only drugs that were left from the store we had brought with us from civilization.

By means of a strong draught of this liquid which I had swallowed after finishing my all too scant breakfast, I managed to fall into a dead slumber.

Gayly-colored pictures now danced about me in sweetest dreamland. I was now quite insensible to the cold, to hunger, to the torturing pains that had racked me waking and sleeping. I was relieved of all physical discomforts. I was deliriously happy.

But as I awakened to naked reality once more, all the terrors and agonies came back, it seemed, a hundred-fold greater than before.

There I lay, my limbs all stiff and paralyzed. The few pieces of clothing which the Pawnees had left me sufficed no longer to protect me from the cold whenever I ventured outside of the tent. A buffalo-hide thrown over my shoulders was all that I could find to shelter me.

Nine days I had suffered and endured in this manner. Nine notches I had now made into the tentpole, one on each morning at awakening, when it was only by the most torturing efforts that I was able to drag myself as far as the wood-pile just outside the tent-door to bring in barely enough wood necessary for the life-giving fire.

Moodily, gloomily, I meditated over my hard lot. Deliverance by ordinary means seemed no longer to be hoped for. Without having arrived at any decision, without caring for any consequences, I again reached for the laudanum flask and drew it to my lips. I drank in the soothing liquid in long draughts. I almost emptied the vial. Then a stupor shut out all the horrors of body and mind.

How long I may have lain there I do not remember. But it was black night when I awoke. The storm was raging and straining at the tentpoles, almost drowning the howls of the wolves. An unbearable thirst was torturing me. My feet and lower limbs had become numb from cold.

With an almost superhuman effort I managed to blow a few tiny live coals into a blaze. When I had started a crackling fire, I began to eat handful after handful of snow. But no sooner was my thirst slaked to a bearable degree than the pangs of hunger reappeared.

Like one gone stark mad, I reached for the raw buffalo-meat and began to rend and devour it with wolfish greed, hard-frozen though it was. Never had anything passed my lips that tasted so delicious.

With no regard for the future, I now roasted piece after piece over the red coals. In my ungovernable greed I had devoured no less than three days' rations!

Toward morning, to my glad surprise, I felt quite free from the incubus that had oppressed me through that eternity of nights and days. The torturing illness had vanished as if by magic, and it was sweet to be alive. Yes, life was fair, was rapturously fair even though the surroundings were not any more hopeful than before.

Leaning on my rifle for a support, I strolled about for a little while. The movement filled me with exquisite pleasure, like Burgundy wine.

In a few days I had recovered so far that I was able to walk up a slope back of the tent so that my eyes could rove again over the landscape. It was by no means less dreary. Yet it no longer depressed and terrified me as it had done before.

But in proportion as my strength returned, so did my slender supply of provisions grow ever more alarmingly small. I now bent all my willpower to think of means whereby I might be able to increase my food supply. My hope for news or help from the Mission I had by this time abandoned completely. Once and for all, I resigned myself to the hard alternative, to stay out the entire winter where I was. At first, to be sure, it was a bitter thought. But gradually dark despair softened into submission to the inevitable, and from this submission came a spirit of peace and calm.

Until now I had steadfastly refrained from taking recourse to flesh from wolves. In the end, hunger—hunger like mine which few mortals have been doomed to suffer—does easily dispel nausea, and it did not cost me a hard struggle, even the first time, to chew on the tough, stringy, sinewy meat, which had no particle of fat on it, and which was not unlike a piece of sole-leather with respect to tastelessness.

Now when I had finished my first meal of wolf-meat, I had to admit to myself that it had turned out quite contrary to my apprehensions. I had as much as I could wish for, for the first time since we crossed the La Platte southeast of Kearney, six weeks before. For six weeks I had had insufficient nourishment, at first, two meagre meals a day, and since our encampment on Sandy Creek, only one.

For days, meat and boiled maize had been my sole diet. Now the maize was also gone, and my supply of salt was almost exhausted. Perhaps I dreaded the time when there was no longer any salt more than I had the petering out of all the other food supplies together. It is easy to imagine my relief, even downright joy, when I found that wolf-meat was actually palatable and delectable. Now there was no longer any occasion for worry that death from slow starvation was to be my lot. It was an easy thing to slay a wolf each day and pick only the best parts of the carcass, then to scatter the rest far and wide over the snow. The latter would serve as bait as long as there were wolves, and these would last indefinitely unless they all should finally succumb to hunger, too.

There was an abundant supply of powder, lead, and

ignition caps. For this I felt profoundly grateful to the superior judgment of the duke whom I was inclined to criticize when he purchased such enormous quantities the day before we departed from Kansastown.

All I needed to do now was to raise the little flap at the right of the tent door. The small opening was large enough for a full view over the banks of the stream below. When the first of the wolves appeared, on the approach of twilight, I was already lying in wait with my gun ready on the instant. The first slinking brute to emerge from the bushes was doomed to fall a victim to my trusty rifle.

Since the setting out from Kansastown, I had practiced unremittingly in the use of the several kinds of firearms we were carrying. The target might be wild life of any kind or motionless objects. My mentor, a crack shot himself with both pistol and long range weapons, gave me no peace from daylight till dark. I had to shoot from the moving wagon, from the saddle, from a position flat on the ground, or kneeling or standing.

We had two long-range rifles of a most modern type that could deal death at three hundred paces, quite an improvement over the American rifles of that day which could not be relied on for the killing of big game at a distance greater than two hundred paces.

My teacher was not satisfied with any performance that was less than perfection. He would grow almost insulting in his impatience when I took a long aim. I had to learn to find the range in distance, on level ground and on hilly, at a wink of the eye. "Faster! Faster!" was his constant command. When I tarried a second, he would shoot and spoil my chance.

He had a way with him that was irresistible. He succeeded in changing my naturally sluggish, leisurely habits of action until they became tense and automatic. A glance at the object and a touch at the trigger became a simultaneous act. An American invention called the hair-trigger added immensely to the accuracy of the aim, as this required only the slightest touch of the forefinger to fire.

It was usually necessary to use all haste to reach my victim. For I soon learned that these animals were cannibals. They would devour their own comrades as unhesitatingly as the kill of other animals. Often I would slay a big brute at a distance of two or three hundred paces. Then there would ensue a ferocious battle. In the twinkling of the eye, the carcass, still palpitating, would be torn in a

dozen bits. In fifteen minutes only the clean-gnawed white bones were left scattered on the ground.

I had the foresight to lay up a store of flesh sufficient to last a number of days. This froze solidly in a short time and thawed only when placed in a kettle of boiling water or when held on a forked stick over the fire. For there were days at a time when the snow blew over the plains with such an intensity that it was impossible to see a dozen paces beyond my eyrie. At such times the cold within my little refuge was as intense a few feet away from the hearth-fire as out in the open.

Slowly the days passed, and infinitely more slowly the nights. But my rambles extended farther out from day to day. My spirits had risen once more so that I was singing or whistling while I walked or when I was busy gathering wood, or carrying water, or preparing my simple meal. This had the effect of driving away gloom and nostalgia and worse things. For I had caught myself repeatedly in certain queer aberrations which gave me not a little cause for apprehension.

And so I had cut the twenty-sixth notch on the tent-pole, my improvised calendar. As usual, after my early supper, I had thrown my buffalo-robe about my shoulders and fastened it tightly around my waist with a belt. Then I took my rifle under my arm and followed the beaten trail to the top of the nearby hill. The snowstorm of the previous night had wiped out my tracks so that the trail was only an indistinct line, and the walk over the snow crust that broke as soon as my weight would come down on it became terribly fatiguing. But I persisted in going on to the crest.

The sun was within an hour of setting. Its rays fell obliquely over the endless snow surface of the wilderness. Not the lightest breeze was astir. The exertion had warmed me up despite the biting cold so that my buffalo fur felt uncomfortable. My breath had formed tiny, milk-white pearls on the black fur that almost hid my face.

Arrived on the hill-top, I now scanned the horizon in all directions as had been my habit from the first. To my terror I noticed a pair of human forms that were coming out of the north and directly toward my camp. I say in terror, for the sight of a human being had grown to be so unusual that I was far from feeling glad over this that I considered in advance as a decidedly unwelcome intrusion. A queer foreboding seemed to tell me that there was something about these two arrivals foreshadowing evil.

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Since they were at first almost indistinguishable shapes, I was uncertain whether they were mounted or afoot. But since they were coming from a region whence only Pawnees were likely to come, it seemed to me that I must form a plan of action without a moment's delay. Undoubtedly they had seen me, perhaps even before I had discovered them. Therefore I must ascertain their intentions. I asked myself at once what the duke would do under the circumstances. For we had often discussed various kinds of eventualities and how we might face them.

I was convinced that he would advise me not to await their coming in the tent. I must be prepared for anything of a hostile nature. If their intentions were evil they should purchase my scalp at a good price.

There was perhaps a scant hour's respite in which I must get ready for them. For if they had reached the spot where I had discovered them they would be able to survey my little domain and hold me there indefinitely.

So, without delay, I hastened back to my tent and gathered up all my firearms and ammunition. I put, before carrying these to a safe retreat, a sufficient supply of firewood on the glimmering coals so that a cloud of smoke would continue to pass up through the opening at the top of the tent that served as a chimney. Then I took the weapons, including my axe and hunting knife, and laid these on top of the woodpile, fastening the tent opening in such a way that it must appear as if it had been done from the inside, by the person or persons at the heart fire.

Sandy Creek was about a hundred and fifty paces away. I ran in almost a half-circle about the tent. It had a high bank on the other side that was thickly covered with underbrush. It provided a safe hiding-place.

Carefully I placed my feet into the tracks which I had left behind on my return, a short while before, from a walk after water. Walking backwards with the minutest care my tracks appeared as those of one who had just come from the little creek-bottom. Even a crafty savage would be deceived, since there would not be any particular reason to excite suspicion that the person they had seen would attempt to dupe them.

The creek was frozen over. The wind had blown the ice clear of snow and it was smooth as a polished mirror. In order not to leave any marks from the hobnails such as were left of the soles on my shoes, I took these off. Then I walked down the creek until there was a fringe of brushwood on the

right bank, too. Putting on my shoes again, I climbed up the opposite bank, pushed into the brushwood, and retraced my steps until I was opposite my water hole again. From that point I had an excellent view of the tent. Securely ensconced in a well-protected place of hiding, where the tall grass could be tramped down on the snow and make a comfortable spot on which to sit, I awaited events. The brown grass in front of me was tall and dense so that I was able to observe from behind it every movement of my intruders without running the least risk of detection.

The minutes passed with infinite slowness. The strain of waiting grew ever more tense. The effort of the walk to the top of the hill had made me perspire. Now that the sun was near the western brim, it had already grown considerably colder. The chill caused me to shiver, caused my teeth to chatter in spite of my most determined efforts to refrain from it. I had been holding my double-barrelled rifle in the crook of my left arm in order to have it in immediate readiness the moment it was necessary to use it.

I could not endure the cold that had gripped my body as with an armor of ice. So I left the gun in my little retreat and stepped farther back into the bushes, where I began at once to stamp the ground and at the same time beat my arms and hands in a most energetic manner. My very life depended on the success of these violent efforts to quicken the flow of blood in my veins.

At last I felt warmth returning to my limbs and body again, and now I relaxed gradually in my extreme exertions and crawled back to my little observatory.

Now the heads of the two wanderers bobbed up from behind the hill beyond the tent. In a few moments more they were standing on the crest in clear outline, although the shadows were already lengthening as the red disk behind the two forms disappeared from view.

They were Indians. It was too far and the light too insufficient now to make out whether they wore warpaint on their faces. They were standing erect for only a moment, examining the tent from their eyrie, then bent down to look at my foot-prints. They then walked swiftly toward the tent and when they were quite close, they threw off their buffalo-ropes.

My eyes were following their slightest motions. They carried no firearms. But they had long, powerful bows, and the quivers which they carried at the back were well

filled with darts. The light for a few moments was perfect for accurate observation. They actually seemed only a few steps away.

I was unable to suppress a shiver even though my body was warm again, when I saw them slink about the tent, silent as shadows. There was a stillness in the air that was almost torturing. It seemed to me that they must be hearing the beats of my heart just as I myself could plainly hear them.

Now each moved the belt that carried the quiver until it was directly in front, then raised the bow and tested the tautness of the string. They exchanged a glance then that seemed to express satisfaction. Their hostile, murderous intentions could no longer be misunderstood. Under no circumstances could I therefore allow either of them to escape if I could prevent their return in a few days with a whole horde of their tribesmen.

After the two had exchanged some signs, they separated. One of them followed the tracks in the direction of the creek for a dozen paces while the other, eyes fixed on the tent and holding a dart placed on the bowstring, was slowly, ever so slowly, walking around the tent.

Noiselessly he had made the circuit just as his mate came back from his inspection. He was trying to raise the flap of the little opening, but it being fastened on the inside with a tight knot, he gave it up.

Now they exchanged signs anew. The larger placed his right hand against the cheek, then pointed to the curling smoke, evidently to indicate that someone inside was sleeping. Then he motioned where they should take their position so that their missiles, dispatched through the tent walls at right angles must pierce the heart of the sleeper without fail. This he showed by finger movements.

A horror gripped me. Were I lying in the tent, I would be a dead man the next moment. Only too well had I read their signs! "Here lives only one man. He reclines at the hearth-fire and he is sleeping. Three, four, five arrow-shots will finish him, and then we can make away with rich booty."

These were their thoughts, while I, the only witness of their treacherous designs, was squatting down in the snow and watching their signs and gestures.

My heart was now pounding as if it would burst, and the blood was racing through my veins as I saw the savages, each, send four or five death-dealing arrows into the tent.

In this moment I felt plainly, oh so plainly, with what tenacity man even in the most desperate extremity clings to life. For I was now ready to dispatch the two fiends with a glee that I had never thought myself capable of feeling. I waited only for the most opportune time.

Nothing, of course, had moved within the thin leather walls. The Indians listened intently. Cautiously they approached the tent-door. One of them laid down the bow, gripped his tomahawk and bent down on his knees in front of the door, while the other was standing guard a few paces away, with drawn bow.

In the meantime I had picked out the head of the kneeling figure. In the moment when he was stretching out his hands toward the flap I drew back the hammer of my rifle. Slight though the noise was it seemed as though the two had heard it. They stopped short, startled, and cast their eyes all about.

The kneeling figure now seemed for the moment the less dangerous of the two. Hence I changed the aim so that the naked breast of the other, who was standing ready to dispatch his bow into the tent as soon as the door strings had become unfastened, now became my target.

I fired and at the very instant of firing the Indian's sharp eyes must have discovered me. For quick as a flash he sighted me and sprang to one side. But the bullet had struck him after all and he fell to the ground with a shriek that froze the marrow in my bones.

The second had jumped up. The surprise had stunned him, and this gave me time to seize the gun that was loaded with a charge of buck shot. This he received in the face and throat and he fell without a sound across the body of his groaning comrade.

Now my foes were dead and past all power to harm me. The realization of this, far from yielding me the slightest exultation, cast a gloom, a horror over me. I had taken human life. I had not been the aggressor. Beyond a doubt my deed was justifiable.

But for all this reasoning I was in a stupor, like a doddering idiot. I wanted to shriek. Something within me seemed to be at the breaking point. My remorse was unbearable. An hour before I had had no suspicion that anything so frightful as that was impending. There was then no blood-guilt upon my soul.

And how did I know that this was to be the only time I

would have to resort to murder? Before rescue might come—and this was now such a remote probability that I no longer gave it a thought—how many times would I be confronted with the same alternative, to slay another or to be slain myself. My mind was groping for help, for support, and I did not know whither to turn to find it.

By actual reckoning perhaps twenty minutes had elapsed since I had started out of the tent to hide in ambush. No scruples then troubled me. I deliberately planned to defend my life as dearly as I could. It seemed the most natural thing in the world to prepare myself for resorting to any of these extremes in order to free myself from these savages.

But, strangest paradox of all, while I was thus raving about my deed and railing at myself as at an inhuman fiend, I was reloading my rifle. Then I walked mechanically up toward the bloody scene.

A terrible groaning escaped from the throat of the undermost form. At first my eyes refused to turn in the direction of the two bodies. The groaning grew more agonizing and it awakened me out of my stupor.

The lifeless form of the younger savage was lying prone in front of me. The tomahawk was still gripped in his right. The murderous buckshot had penetrated into his throat, his eyes, his temples. The many little holes from which the blood was still trickling had disfigured the swarthy face so that it presented a hideous sight.

I rolled the body over so that I would not have to see his face again and turned to the fellow that was still alive. An older man he, with long black hair matted with blood and almost concealing his face, all but the eyes. And from their coal-black wells glittered into mine a fire of grimmest hate.

The bullet had entered beneath the left shoulder through the chest. Whether with deadly effect I was unable to tell. But the gaping, bleeding wound and the agony in his distorted features and the groans and the gritting of his teeth aroused my deepest pity. I bowed down over him and sought to make him understand by signs and soothing words that I must move him from the bitter cold to the fire in the tent; that I would wash and dress his wound and do everything in my power to have him get well again. I would immediately cover him with my own bedcovers and care for him tenderly and do my best to win his friendship.

This restored my peace of mind somewhat, and I felt confident that God would grant me this means to shrive my

soul from blood-guilt, if I could bring one of the two back to life and strength. The old fellow made as if he understood my good intentions. A wild joy suddenly lighted his features as he was expressing his satisfaction through the Indian "how, how."

Oh I was glad! I was joyous, happy. The prospect of saving the sufferer's life, of winning his friendship, of having him for a companion in my awful loneliness! Already soothed from the coveted solace I was bustling around to see what preparations I could make for his reception into the tent. But before I had made much progress his ever louder groans called me back to his side. As soon as he saw me he pointed with the forefinger of his left hand to his right arm which was bent under his body in a most uncomfortable position. With signs he entreated me to release it.

I knelt down close to his side to do his bidding. Hardly had I caught hold of the arm at the elbow when, without my slightest suspicion, his other hand which unknown to me was claspng a knife shot up from his body with the speed of lightning. While his left gripped me by the shoulder he plunged it twice with the right in the direction of my breast, but fortunately with insufficient force.

I tried my best to parry both thrusts with my right arm while with my left I drew, almost instinctively, my own hunting knife that I was carrying, Indian fashion, at my back in a belt.

My pity all gone, I now buried it twice in his bosom. There came a slight gurgle from his throat, from the direction of his chest. A stream of blood issued from the mouth. His body quivered, stretched out slowly as a rattle in his throat gave the unmistakable sign that the end had come.

When I rose from the ground I felt warm blood trickling down my arm, and only now did I realize that I was wounded. In beating off the first knife-thrust that sharp blade had opened the skin of my right arm from the palm of the hand to the elbow. The second thrust had caught the arm at almost the same place but did not follow it as far as before though it made a deeper, trough-like gash.

The night that followed was the most terrible of my whole life. Many were the times that I was beside myself while, wrapped in my bedcovers, I was endeavoring to cool my wound with snow.

Sleep was entirely out of the question. In an incredibly short space of time there had, it almost seemed from no-

where, an enormous horde of wolves collected, drawn by the scent of the freshly flowing blood.

I rose from my reclining position to put fresh wood on the fire. This would keep me safe from them as long as I had the strength to feed the flames.

They came ever nearer to the human shambles, howling, snapping their jaws at one another with a ferocity that nothing can describe. It was terrifying.

The glare of the flames was reflected in countless blood-shot eyes. It seemed as if they were demons bent on destroying each other. The stench of their own blood now entered into the tent to sicken me. I discharged my rifle into the pack as often as I in my weakened condition could reload it. But this now had little effect on the frenzied monsters.

Only a slight cessation, then the wolf-pack began anew the vicious snapping of the teeth that would come together like jaws of steel, and the surviving ghoulish forms that were magnified in the steam from the sweat and gore of the awful conflict would growl and yap and strain and tug at a freshly fallen victim, only a moment before a comrade. They would pull and strain and tear the body still quivering with life. Then bones would crunch until nothing was left.

Thus passed the endless night filled with horrors so gruesome that they far surpassed the horrors of hell the great Dante had painted.

Even if my physical suffering had permitted me to sleep; if my mental state had abated from the terrors of what had befallen during the early twilight hours; even though certain death was sure to follow an unguarded moment, all this was meaningless through that death-in-life which held me in a trance-like state through that eternity of terror.

Dawn came and the noise of the conflict subsided. Sated, exhausted, filled with the instinctive fear that approaching sunlight brings, the decimated brutes now vanished like unearthly specters.

Then I arose, shivering, more dead than alive. I was determined to drag away the two slain savages, to efface every vestige of the gruesome spectacle. Even the dread that the tribe from which they had come on their mission of death would send a searching party was not so powerful as the accusing finger that pointed to my own blood-guilt.

I sought among the shambles of the night's conflict for the buffalo robes of the savages. They were stained with the blood of the wolves. I spread them out, rolled a body, horribly mangled and half-devoured on each, then dragged

them in turn to the creek. With my axe I enlarged the hole in the ice and pushed them in the swift current of the stream where they quickly disappeared.

The labor had been superhuman. Only the strength given me by sheer desperation had enabled me to finish it. When I had staggered back, my task fulfilled, I chanced to see two small bundles tightly wrapped in smoke-tanned deer-leather. These contained dried buffalo meat. The hateful scent of the smoked-tanned leather had undoubtedly preserved them from the greed of the wolves.

In spite of my utter weariness the pangs of hunger persisted and I tore at the food with the greed of the shark-like brutes that had turned the night into a hell for me. Then I must have fallen back on my rough couch into a deathlike sleep.

It was nearly sundown when the cold and the pain from my swollen arm aroused me. My supply of wood was nearly gone. I must rally in spite of pain and weakness, to drag a fresh supply to the tent before darkness prevented me from my search.

My perseverance, even though it cost me untold agonies, saved my life. Without a fire I could never have passed through the night that followed. A blinding snowstorm, more furious than any in all that terrible winter, swept down on me from the land of ice and snow. Every moment throughout the night the strain against the tent walls made the poles creak and bend. Every blast was more furious than the one before. No human being could have survived the fearful cold without the protecting walls of the tent with all its deplorable insufficiency.

Well it was that I had found the little bundles of meat the savages had brought with them. I had no other food supplies. The twin horrors of cold and hunger would have finished me. For the storm lasted two days. My sufferings were almost unbearable. Great frost sores covered my body. My arms were swollen and feverish. It seemed impossible that I would survive this new visitation. But when the storm abated at the end of the second day the sun came out in all its glory as if prophetic of better days.

The Christmas season was approaching. The solitude had become almost a thing accepted, a thing of habit. Mechanically I performed such daily tasks as sufficed to keep

me alive. Vanished forever were all the terrors of the wilderness, and with feelings of utter indifference I looked forward into the future. Gone was all desire to lift the impenetrable veil from it. Indeed I would invariably feel a something akin to a disagreeable disillusion whenever I would ask myself what was to be the end of this hermit life.

Sadly my heart would then turn back to the past, when my eyes feasted for the first time on the fairy splendor of a Christmas-tree, around which were gathered loving, smiling people.

My Christmas joys were now of a different and a simple kind. A small quantity of tea which I discovered among some rubbish I mixed with dry willow-leaves. This was a genuine solace to me. For with this mixture I would fill my pipe and smoke it. Reclining against a roll of bedcovers I would find a rare delight in the red glimmer within the little bowl and in the fragrant smoke that I would blow in little clouds up toward the roof of my little palace.

Then there was the chimney hole. I was able to catch most exquisite glimpses of the star-lit heavens. The stars were glittering and twinkling like so many Christmas candles. Often they appeared to quiver and quake from the cold, just as I myself. But for all that they shone down upon me as clearly as they had been wont to do in my care-free childhood years.

On a certain morning as I was in the act of stepping outside I caught sight of a flock of prairie chickens that had alighted on the branches of a tree along the banks of the creek. My heart fairly rejoiced at the prospect of a fine roast for Christmas day. After such long and wearying lack of any variety whatsoever in wholesome and appetizing food, with never a change from wolf's flesh for which I had by this time conceived an almost overpowering distaste, it was but natural, though perhaps ungrateful to Providence, that my heart should constantly turn with indescribable longings to the pictures of good things to eat.

This desire became on the instant irresistible. I took up my shotgun, examined it and then put it away again knowing full well that the timid birds would never allow me to get near enough for a charge of fine shot to be effective.

So I took up my long-barreled rifle. A fine, proud cock was within full range of my bullet. The hunter's irresistible greed for prey was in my blood, and I took up my position

so that it would enable me to bag two members of the wary flock.

Of a sudden I happened to step on a small dry twig that I had failed to notice. It crackled ever so little, but it was loud enough to startle the timid birds and they whirred instantly to a safe distance.

The days were going by in a soul killing monotony. Hope and despair alternated uncounted times. I had now cut forty three notches in my tent-pole. Six endless weeks of suffering and privation during which death was lurking never far from the threshold of my little refuge.

For hours through the day I would lie prone on my bed in a state that, I might say, was the vague borderland between slumber and waking, between dreaming and reality.

On this particular day, about the noon hour, I was reclining on my back, my eyes vacantly staring to a patch of blue through the hole above me, when all of a sudden I was startled out of my reverie by a noise like human footsteps.

With a movement as quick as flash of lightning I was on my feet, the trusty rifle in my hand. Peeping warily through my little hole in the tent-door, ready for any emergency, a reassuring outcry which I had often heard Indians utter on approaching our wagon struck my ear.

"Antarro how." (halloo, a friend!) it was.

At these words that sounded like sweetest music I stepped outside. Then, in good English, I heard:

"You are in a pretty tough fix, my friend!"

Naturally I was expecting to see a white man, perhaps a Mormon or a fur-trapper, wherefore I answered, even before I had seen the speaker: "Welcome, my friend!"

What was my surprise and, I must add, disappointment, to see before me instead, an Indian unspeakably dirty and wild-looking!

He was holding a gun fully five feet long in his right, and I gazed at him with ill-concealed disgust not a little mingled with suspicion. Indeed I was about to raise my own weapon, ready to forbid his nearer approach, when he exclaimed:

"You can speak to me in English. I can understand you very well."

"But you are an Indian," I parried, only half-convinced of his sincerity.

"My father was a white man, but my mother was red, I

myself prefer to live as an Indian. I am of the tribe of the Otoes. With five others of my tribe and with our squaws I am returning from a hunting trip up the Nebraska.* Our wigwams are on the Council Bluffs.

"The fire from your wigwam has attracted us hither.

"Our camp is located in a deep ravine about two miles from here. Soon my comrades will join me.

"If you wish to come with me to my tent, come and wander with us to our village on the Missouri.

"The way is far. Much snow covers the earth. We must hasten. Our beasts are laden with much booty of the chase and from the traps, and there will be little space for your belongings."

"Our women will lace warm moccasins on your feet. They will provide you with leggins of deer-leather. Thus you will not leave tracks of blood in your trail on the snow.

"Decide at once what you resolve to do. But give me to eat first. I am hungry."

"I know the Otoes as brothers of the pale faces," I answered. "I shall go with you, and be it even unto the ends of the earth!"

After a march of four weeks we reached the village of the Otoes. I lingered during the four months that followed my return to civilization on a neighboring farm near a fur-trading post. But I kept up a constant intercourse with my Indian friends.

I remained as a brother to the tribe. Their thousand services and kindnesses, unselfishly tendered, touched me. They had nursed me back to robust health with tender, unaffected solicitude. In no other way could I have recovered from my hard experiences so completely.

Again I say, as I said to them while I pressed their hands at parting, that I felt thrice blessed in the enjoyment of their generous and cordial hospitality, and I vowed that I would never cease to think of them with the love of a brother.

I have never returned to them. I doubt not that they would be overjoyed to see me again and to welcome me with the same love that they showed me at all times while I lived in their midst.

The last moment, when I saw in their black, shining eyes

*The earlier name for Platte river.—The Translator.

the inexpressible, wordless sadness because of the parting, I was unable to restrain the tears from bedimming my eyes. Yes, I have never ceased to think of them and of their unselfish affection.

To them I am indebted for much. I doubt not, for the preservation of my life, and even more, for my reason. Never, no, never can I forget them. My loving memories of them shall be a priceless possession through all the years to come.

I shall remain, as were their wishes and my promises when they adopted me into their tribe, their blood-brother, even to the moment when I shall be called hence to give an account of my earthly acts before the justice-seat of the All-father whom the North American Indians call their "Great and Good Spirit."