

way, they will feed upon their brother and not ours.'

"We returned to camp. Morning was dawning, and yet no signs of the hunters who had started for the fort. There lay the trains, without a hoof to move them on their way.

"Soon, far off on the prairie, a little speck was seen. Larger it grew. It was the hunters returning, and with them a company of cavalry. They reached camp—a hurried consultation. The officer who commanded them divided his force. One body, consisting of forty cavalymen and all the hunters, should cross the river and scour along the northern shore. I was with this party, and it was commanded by a lieutenant named Stokes."

"Who was that, Harry?" inquired many voices of the Stokes who lay at the camp-fire.

"My brother Percy, who was stationed out here some years ago," replied Harry Stokes.

"He was a brave fellow, any way, I can say that for him. The other party, of about the same number, were to move along the southern bank, under command of the captain; I do not remember his name. We crossed the river—for the Platte was very low—and rode on for about five miles. We began to think we would not find a trail; when, suddenly, we came upon a camp-fire still smoking. We rode down to the river, and saw the tracks of oxen. They had crossed here. The lieutenant ordered us forward on a brisk trot, the trail growing fresher.

"'There they are, just entering the bluffs,' said a hunter.

"On we rode, with a hurrah, after them. They were disposed to show fight.

"'Charge!' said the lieutenant.

"In we went, pell-mell. With true Indian cunning, while they were showing fight to us, a small body was quietly driving away the stolen stock. But the lieutenant flanked them.

"'Go for them, hunters!' he said to the detachment from the train.

"Just that minute a loud 'hurrah' was heard. The party under the captain had found the crossing-place, and were fording the river. The hunters, on their fleet steeds, headed off the party with the mules and oxen, and poured a volley from their revolvers into the redskins, that made them tumble upon all sides. Indians were now flying over the river, into the bluffs, and scattering in every direction. It was a great victory for us. We had recaptured our stolen stock as well as twenty Indian ponies. We counted thirteen savages lying dead on the field, and we must have wounded many more. We returned to camp that night. Next morning the trains rolled on their way; and thus ends my story."

"And it's worth telling," ejaculated Eaton, with a serious look.

"I am afraid I have drawn largely upon your stock of patience," said the wagon-master.

"Not at all, not at all," replied several voices. "We have been deeply interested, and hope you will join us often at our camp-fire."

"Thank you; I will as often as I can," returned the old man.

An hour later all the camp had retired to rest.