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Part II of Maximilian, Prince of Wied's, Travels in the Interior of North America, 1832–1834

Early Western Travels 1748–1846 Volume XXIII

Early Western Travels 1748–1846

A Series of Annotated Reprints of some of the best and rarest contemporary volumes of travel, descriptive of the Aborigines and Social and Economic Conditions in the Middle and Far West, during the Period of Early American Settlement

Edited with Notes, Introductions, Index, etc., by Reuben Gold Thwaites, LL.D.

Editor of "The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents," "Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition," "Hennepin's New Discovery," etc.

Volume XXIII

Part II of Maximilian, Prince of Wied's, Travels in the Interior of North America, 1832–1834

Maximilian Alexander Philipp, prinz von Wied-Neuwied

LC

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PART II OF MAXIMILIAN, PRINCE OF WIED'S, TRAVELS IN THE INTERIOR OF NORTH AMERICA

Reprint of chapters xvi–xxvii of London edition: 1843

TRAVELS IN THE INTERIOR OF NORTH AMERICA, IN THE YEARS 1832, 1833, AND 1834 [PART II]

CHAPTER XVI¹ FIRST STAY AT FORT UNION, FROM JUNE 24TH TO JULY 6TH [1833]

1 This volume begins with chapter xvi of the London edition.— Ed.

Departure of the Assiniboin Steamer — Excursions into the Prairie — The arrival of several bands of Assiniboins — The Crees, or Knistenaux — The Visits to the Camps

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of the Indians — Their Departure — Death of Matsokui — Arrival of our Keel-boat — Preparations for our Journey to Fort Mc Kenzie.

Mr. Mc Kenzie had given us a comfortable lodging in his house, and we lived here very pleasantly, in a plain style, suitable to the resources of so remote a place; for we could not hope to meet with so good a table as we had had on board the steamer. We had, every day, fresh or dried buffalo flesh, bread made of flour, and also a good supply of coffee and wine. The first days passed rapidly in examining the fort and the immediate environs, while, on board the steamer, they began already, on the 25th, to unload and convey the provisions and goods to the fort, so that all was bustle and activity. Eight hundred packs of buffalo hides, each consisting of ten, were immediately embarked, amid a heavy fall of rain, which did much injury to these hides, which are tanned by the Indians. It was, therefore, necessary 12 to open every one of the packs, and dry them again. The furs in the interior of North America are free from a nuisance so common among us, I mean insects, especially moths, which are unknown on the Upper Missouri. Besides the buffalo hides, many beaver, bear, wolf, lynx, fox, and other skins were embarked. Of the wolf and lynx, sixty-two packs, each consisting of 100 skins. Some of the Indians were very troublesome while this was doing, continually asking and begging for various things, particularly tobacco, which they were too indolent to prepare, or to get from the forest for themselves. The tobacco which the Fur Company sells to them, to mix with their leaves or bark, is strong, clammy, and black, and is in twists, six or eight inches long. Most of the Indians now present looked wretchedly poor, and many of them had not even a pipe of their own. Several apartments in the fort were assigned to these visitors, where they cooked and slept.

[199] After we had made ourselves acquainted with the fort, we made excursions into the prairie, especially to the chain of hills, and Mr. Bodmer took many views of the country. In all such excursions it is not usual to go alone, at least not without being well armed, because the Indians, especially war parties, can never be trusted. The Assiniboin having taken in its cargo, was to depart on the afternoon of the 26th of June, and return to St.

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Louis; the Company, therefore, assembled once more on board, to dine together. About three o'clock, when the whole population of the place was assembled on the beach, we took leave of our travelling companions, Messrs. Sandford and Pratte, with whom some of the Company's clerks had embarked to return to the United States. In order to turn, the Assiniboin first went a little way up the river, and then passed the fort with the rapidity of an arrow, while a mutual salute of a discharge of cannon and musketry was reechoed 13 from the mountains, and handkerchiefs were waved till a bend of the river hid the vessel, which we had so long inhabited, from our view. On this day the Assiniboins had left the fort to go into the prairie; others, in part much better dressed, had arrived, but only as harbingers of a great number of their people, and of Crees,² who, in fact, came on the 27th of June, singly, and in companies.

² For the Cree, consult our volume ii, p. 168, note 75.— Ed.

These Crees did not much differ, in appearance, from the Assiniboins; they are robust, powerful-looking men, with lank hair falling over their shoulders, and a broad flat lock, cut off straight over their eyes; one man, however, had it hanging down to his mouth. Some had their long hair plaited in several tails; many wore skin caps adorned with feathers, and one had the whole tail of a prairie hen; several of them wore the leather cases of their bows wound round their heads, like a turban. Their faces were painted red, some with black stripes, and their dress was like that of the Assiniboins. Several of them wore long wolf skins over their shoulders, with the head of the animal on the breast, and the tail trailing on the ground. Their leggins had a quantity of long leather fringe; the men are said to be often much tattooed, and Franklin says, that this operation is painful, but we were assured that the contrary is the case. The women are said to be well made, and, in the north, they understand how to dye a beautiful red with the roots of *Galium tinctorium* and *boreale*, and black with the bark of the alder.

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The chief of the Crees was Maschkepton (the broken arm), who had a medal with the effigy of the President hung round his neck, which he had received on a visit to Washington.³ The present intention of these people, who

³ Catlin painted a portrait of this chief in 1832; and speaks of his visit to Washington under the care of John A. Sanford (probably in 1831–32), accompanied by several Assiniboin. See Catlin, *North American Indians*, i, p. 56.— Ed.

¹⁴ had no skins to sell, was to welcome Mr. Mc Kenzie, who is much beloved by the Indians, and frequently receives presents from them; and, on many occasions, they have carried him about, as in triumph, to do him honour, and prove their attachment to him. The Crees live in the same territory as the Assiniboins, that is, between the Saskatschawan, the Assiniboin, and the Missouri. They ramble about in small bands with the others, are poor, have many dogs, which carry their baggage, but only a few horses. They live, like the Assiniboins, in leather tents, follow the herds of buffaloes, of which they sometimes kill [200] great numbers in their parks. The Crees are reckoned at 600 or 800 tents; consequently, assuming the usual number of three men for each, there will be from 1,800 to 2,400 men for this tribe. Their customs, games, and religious opinions, are said to agree with those of the Assiniboins. Their language has an affinity with that of the Ojibuas, but entirely different from that of the Assiniboins, or Sioux, though many of the Crees learn the latter.

On the 26th of June, the arrival of a numerous band of Assiniboins was announced to us by several messengers; they intended to compliment Mr. Mc Kenzie, who had long been absent. All on a sudden we heard some musket-shot, which announced a very interesting scene; and all the inhabitants of the fort went out of the gate to witness the arrival of this savage horde. Towards the north-west, the whole prairie was covered with scattered Indians, whose numerous dogs drew the sledges with the baggage; a close body of warriors, about 250 or 300 in number, had formed themselves in the centre, in the manner of two bodies of infantry, and advanced in quick time towards the fort. The Indian warriors

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marched in close ranks, three or four men deep, not keeping their file very regularly, yet in pretty good order, and formed a considerable line. Before the centre, 15 where, in a European battalion, the colours are carried, three or four chiefs advanced, arm in arm, and from the ranks of this motley, martial, painted mass, loud musket-shot were heard. The whole troop of these warriors now commenced their original song, consisting of many abrupt, broken tones, like those of the war-whoop, and having some resemblance to the song which we heard, in the years 1813 and 1814, from the Russian soldiers. The loaded dogs, guided by women and children, surrounded the nucleus of warriors, like the sharpshooters that hover about the line. Thus this remarkable body advanced towards us, and many interesting features appeared the nearer they approached. All these Indians were wrapped in their buffalo robes, and dressed out in the most diverse and highly fantastical manner. Most of them had their faces painted all over with vermilion; others, quite black. In their hair they wore the feathers of eagles, or other birds of prey. Some had wolf-skin caps, notwithstanding the great heat, and these caps were partly smeared with red paint. Others had fastened green leaves round their heads; long wolves' tails were hanging down at their heels, as marks of honour for enemies they had killed, and the part of their dress made of leather was new and handsome. They had their guns in their arms, their bows and arrows on their shoulders, and, in this manner, these robust men, who were, for the most part, five feet eight or nine inches, and many six feet high, advanced with a light, quick step, in an upright posture, which gave them a perfectly military air; and this impression was heightened by the song which sounded from their ranks, and the loud beating of their drums. They advanced to within about sixty paces, then halted at a fosse running from the Missouri past the fort, and waited, the chief standing in front, for our welcome.

Mr. Mc Kenzie had sent two interpreters, Halero and Lafontaine, 16 to meet them, who shook hands with the chiefs, and then led them to the gate of the fort, which was shut as usual, and a [201] guard set before it, for too many Indians are never admitted at the same time, because they can never be implicitly trusted. On this occasion, only the chiefs and about thirty of the principal warriors were admitted, who sat down around the apartment

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which was allotted to such meetings. All the other Indians went first to the Missouri to drink, and then sat down to rest in the shade.

It was natural that we, as strangers, constantly remained with the assembled Indians, for there were many interesting subjects for our observation. The thick stone pipes, with long flat tubes, were handed round, and they showed us a remarkably handsome one, ornamented with yellow horsehair, which was intended as a present for Mr. Mc Kenzie. The whole company received something to drink; and many Indians, before they raise the vessel to their lips, dip the fore finger of their right hand into it, and sprinkle some of the liquid five or six times in the air, doubtless as an offering to the higher powers.⁴ They gazed on us with much curiosity, and the interpreter gave them an account of the singular strangers, who hunted after animals, plants, and stones, and prepared the skins of the former, of which they, of course, could not see the use.

⁴ Some of them assured me that the intention of this custom was, that their deceased friends or relations might participate in the enjoyment of this benefit.— Maximilian.

While tranquillity was gradually restored within the fort, a new and very interesting scene took place without. On the west side of the fort the Indian women were engaged in erecting temporary travelling or hunting huts, composed of poles, fixed in the ground, and the dog sledges set up against them, and covered with green boughs, as they had 17 brought only a part of their baggage. Horses were everywhere grazing, dogs running in all directions, and groups of the red men dispersed all round. The scene was highly entertaining; and the various occupations of cooking, gaming, and making preliminary arrangements, diffused life and activity over the prairie. I was particularly struck with one Assiniboin on account of his head-dress, which I frequently saw afterwards, and the interpreter called him to us. He wore, across his head, a leather strap, to each side of which a horn was fixed, and between them, black feathers cut short. The horns, which were cut out of those of an antelope, had, at their point, a tuft of horse-hair dyed yellow, and on the side hung leather strings, with feathers at the end, and bound with yellow

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porcupine quills. Mr. Bodmer made a very faithful drawing of this man, as he wished to be taken in his full dress.⁵ His name was Noapeh (a troop of soldiers), and his countenance and whole figure were characteristically Indian. We visited several of the newly erected huts, where the fire was already burning in the centre; we were everywhere asked for whisky and tobacco, of which only the last was here and there given. If we wished to obtain anything by barter, brandy was always demanded in payment, and, therefore, very little could be done. Late in the evening, the singing and the drum of this restless multitude were heard in the fort, and the noise and tumult continued the whole night. On the 28th of June we were early in motion, that we might lose no part of the new scenes around us. Noapeh was [202] brought at an early hour, and stood with unwearied patience to the painter, though his relations frequently endeavoured to get him away. He had put on his best dress, and had, on his breast, a rosette of dyed porcupine quills, eight or ten inches in diameter. On this day there was a great crowd

5 See Plate 45, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

18 of Indians in the fort, to barter several articles of their dress; part of them went away in the course of the day, for when we went to their camp in the afternoon we found most of the huts empty, and saw, at a distance, many Indians, seldom more than two or three together, returning in three principal directions. A great part of them went up the Missouri, parallel with the river, but avoided the wood on the bank, and traversed the prairie in a western direction; another part turned to the north-east, and these, about an hundred in number, went to join in a military expedition against the Mandans and the Manitaris. On occasions like the present, when many Indians assemble about the trading posts of the Whites, they are obliged to be constantly on their guard, because their enemies endeavour to obtain information of these moments, and take advantage of them for their sudden attacks. On the evening of this day, we had a violent storm of thunder, lightning, and rain, and, as the rain continued on the following day, the 29th of June, the expected arrival of more Assiniboins was delayed; they do not willingly travel with their leather tents in wet weather, because their baggage then becomes very heavy; several Indians, however,

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soon appeared, wet through and through, and covered with mud up to their knees, which, however, they did not mind. A sketch was taken of a tall young warrior,⁶ who preserved a most inflexible gravity of countenance till Mr. Bodmer set his musical snuff-box agoing, on which he began to laugh. Another interesting young man of the branch of the Stone Indians,⁷ whose name was Pitatapiu, had his protrait taken at a later period. His hair hung down like a lion's mane, especially over his eyes, so that they could scarcely be seen; over each of them a small

6 See background of Plate 65, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

7 For portrait of this Indian, see Plate 65, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

19 white sea shell was fastened with a hair string; in his hand he carried a long lance, such as they use only for show, to which a number of slips of the entrails of a bear were fastened, and smeared with red paint. This slender young man had his painted leather shield on his back, to which a small packet, well wrapped up, his medicine or amulet in horse-stealing, was fastened, and which he greatly prized. These people will not part with such things on any terms. The handle of his whip was of wood, with holes in it like a flute. He and several Indians brought word that his countrymen, from the environs of the Fort des Prairies, on the Saskatschawan River, would shortly visit us, to dispose of all their beaver skins. It made us shiver to see the Indians, in the damp, cold weather, run about barefoot the whole day in the deep mud, while we, in our room, sat constantly by the fire-side. They, too, greatly enjoyed the warm room, and a number of them were always sitting with us, to smoke their pipes, while Mr. Bodmer was drawing Pitatapiu's likeness. We took care that their pipes should be constantly filled, and, in general, tried every means to amuse them, that they might not lose their patience during the operation.

[203] On the 30th of June, at noon, a band of Indians had arrived, and twenty-five tents were set up near the fort. The women, who were short, and mostly stout, with faces painted red, soon finished this work, and dug up with their instruments the clods of turf,

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which they lay round the lower part of the hut. One of these tents, the dwelling of a chief, was distinguished from the rest. It was painted of the colour of yellow ochre, had a broad reddish-brown border below, and on each of its sides a large black bear was painted (something of a caricature it must be confessed), to the head of which, just above the nose, a piece of red cloth, that fluttered in the wind, was fastened, doubtless a medicine.⁸
We

⁸ See Plate 16, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

20 now saw the Indian women returning in all directions from the forest, panting under the weight of large bundles of wood, which were fastened on their backs. Their dogs lay about the tents; they were large, quite like wolves, and of different colours, chiefly of the colour of the wild grey wolf, and some spotted black and white. Reduced to skeletons by want of food, they could not stretch out their sharp backbone; but, for the most part, went crooked and contracted, looked about for old bones, and growled at each other, showing their white teeth. They were not so savage to strangers as the dogs of the Crows, at Fort Clarke, and if one of them seemed inclined to bite us, he was immediately very roughly kicked and beaten by the Indians.

We had not been long in this camp, when another band of Assiniboins appeared at a distance. To the west, along the wood by the river-side, the prairie was suddenly covered with red men, most of whom went singly, with their dogs drawing the loaded sledges. The warriors, about sixty in number, formed a close column. They came without music, with two chiefs at their head, and proceeded towards the gate of the fort. Among them there were many old men, one, especially, who walked with the support of two sticks, and many who had only one eye.⁹ The first chief of this new band was Ayanyan (as translated by the Canadians,

⁹ I have spoken on this subject in the account of my "Travels in Brazil," the above defect being very common among the Brazilians. On the whole, it appears that there are more cripples among the North American Indians than in Brazil. A dwarfish Assiniboin frequently

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visited Fort Union, who was, at the most, between three and four feet high; his legs were short, crooked, and deformed. His head, and the upper part of his body, were perfectly well-formed; his countenance animated and intelligent, as is frequently the case with such persons. He wore a remarkably handsome dress, and rode his spirited horse exceedingly well. In the course of this journey in North America, I met with several Indian dwarfs; but not a single instance among the many Brazilians whom I have seen. Governor Cass likewise mentions a deformed Indian. On St. Peter's River there were two Sioux women, each of whom was about two feet and a half high; and there were similar dwarfs among the Blackfeet.— Maximilian.

21 *le fils du gros Français*), generally called General Jackson, because he had made a journey to Washington.¹⁰ He was a handsome man, in a fine dress; he wore a beautifully embroidered black leather shirt, a new scarlet blanket, and the great medal round his neck. The whole column entered the fort, where they smoked, ate, and drank; and, meantime, forty-two tents were set up. The new camp had a very pretty appearance; the tents stood in a semicircle, and all the fires were smoking, while all [204] around was life and activity. We witnessed many amusing scenes; here, boys shot their arrows into the air; there, a little, brown, monkey-like child was sitting alone upon the ground, with a circle of hungry dogs round it. In one of the tents there was a man very ill, about whom the medicine men were assembled, singing with all their might. Many people had collected about this tent, and were peeping through the crevices. After the conjuration had continued some time, the tent was opened, and the men who had been assembled in it went away by threes, the one in the middle always stepping a little before the others, and they continued singing till they reached their own tents. In another tent, belonging to a young married couple, we found a child hung up in a leather pouch, of very beautiful workmanship. These pouches, which serve instead of cradles, are so large that only the head of the child is visible. This pouch had, on the upper side, two broad stripes of dyed porcupine quills, and several very pretty rosettes, with long strings of different colours, and was lined with fur. I purchased it from the woman,

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10 Catlin, *North American Indians*, i, pp. 56, 57, gives an account of the reception of these Indians on their return from Washington (1832). The stories of American sights at first created a sensation among the tribesmen, but they soon began to doubt their authenticity, and set down their narrator as a liar and impostor. "General Jackson" killed himself the year after his return, partly because of illness. McKenzie had his remains interred at Fort Union. See *Larpeur's Journal*, ii, pp. 412–415.— Ed.

22 but, with many other interesting articles, it has never reached Europe.

On the 1st of July, in the morning, we heard that Matsokui, the young Blackfoot Indian, who had come here with us, had been shot, during the night, in the Indian camp. Berger, the Blackfoot interpreter, who was charged to have a watchful eye over this young Indian, had frequently warned him to keep away from the Assiniboins and the Crees, or some mischief would certainly befall him; but he had suffered himself to be deceived by their apparently friendly conduct, and had remained in a tent till late at night, where he was shot by a Cree, who had immediately made his escape. We saw the dead body of our poor travelling companion, laced up in a buffalo's skin, lying in the fort, and it was afterwards buried near the fort, in a coffin made by the carpenter. Kiasax had been more prudent; he had not trusted the Assiniboins, and had returned with the steamboat to his family. Mr. McKenzie told us, that he had witnessed a similar incident the year before. A Blackfoot whom he brought with him, was shot by the Crees at their departure, though he had previously been many times in their camp.

After the perpetration of this deed, a dead silence prevailed in the Indian camp; but about noon, two of the chiefs, attended by other Indians in procession, singing aloud, and among them General Jackson, came as a deputation to make excuses to Mr. McKenzie for this murder. They brought, by way of present, a horse, and a couple of very beautiful pipes, one of which was a real calumet, adorned with feathers and green horse-hair. They made an address to Mr. McKenzie, in which they solemnly asserted their innocence of the death of the Blackfoot, saying that the deed had been done by a Cree, who had immediately fled,

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and whom they had pursued, but in vain. Ayanyan is said to have spoken remarkably well on this occasion.

23

In the afternoon we again heard the Indian drum beating very loud in the tent of the sick man, and we went there to see their conjurations. We looked cautiously through the crevices in the tent, and saw the patient sitting on the floor, his head, covered with a small cap, sunk [205] upon his breast, and several men standing around him. Two of the medicine men were beating the drum in quick time, and a third rattled the Quakemuha (or Shishikue), which he waved up and down. These people were singing with great effort; sometimes they uttered short ejaculations, and were in a violent perspiration; sometimes they sucked the places where the patient felt pain, and pretended they could suck out or remove the morbid matter. Such jugglers are very well paid by the patients, and always regaled with tobacco. Many of the Indians went away this afternoon, because they could not find sufficient subsistence. Among others, General Jackson had taken leave. It was reported that some of the Crees had said they would take up the body of the Blackfoot that was shot, because there had not been time to scalp him; but such expressions were quite usual, and the grave was not disturbed.

The keel-boat from Fort Cass had arrived, on board of which we were to go to Fort Mc Kenzie. We had, therefore, a numerous company, but we were in no want of provisions, as our hunters had brought home, from their last excursion, the flesh of nineteen buffaloes. It was exactly a year to-day, July 4th, since we had landed at Boston. Mr. Mc Kenzie sent Berger, the interpreter,¹¹ and one Harvey, by

¹¹ Berger (usually called "old man Berger") had in his early days been in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company. Going to the Missouri with Kenneth McKenzie, he rendered valuable service to the American Fur Company. The daring with which he ventured among the hostile Blackfeet, together with his knowledge of their language and customs, succeeded in persuading a band of that tribe to visit Fort Union, and make a treaty of amity

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(1831). Berger's salary as Blackfoot interpreter was eight hundred dollars per annum. He was still living in 1845, when he had a hostile encounter with Alexander Harvey.— Ed.

24 land, to Fort Mc Kenzie, to which they proceeded on horseback, before us, along the north bank of the river. They had no baggage but their arms, their beds of buffalo skin, and blankets. They took some dried meat with them, but they chiefly depended for subsistence on their rifles. While the people were employed in loading the keel-boat with the goods and provisions for the tribes living higher up the river, we profited by this last day's stay in this place, to make excursions into the neighbouring woods on the river-side, and to the prairie. In a wood, below the fort, we found a tree, on which the corpses of several Assiniboins were deposited; one of them had fallen down, and been torn and devoured by the wolves. The blankets which covered the body were new, and partly bedaubed with red paint, and some of the branches and the trunk of the tree were coloured in the same manner. Dreidoppel, who discovered this tree, took up the skull of a young Assiniboin, in which a mouse had made its nest for its young; and Mr. Bodmer made an accurate drawing of the tree, under which there was a close thicket of roses in full blossom, the fragrant flowers of which seemed destined to veil this melancholy scene of human frailty and folly.¹²

12 See Plate 63, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

The Flora keel-boat was laden, and there was only the baggage of the travellers to be taken on board. This vessel was a strong-built sloop, about sixty feet long by sixteen broad, with a deck, a mast, and sail. The goods were deposited in the middle space; at the stern there was a cabin, ten paces long and five or six broad, with two berths, one of which was allotted to Mr. Mitchell, and the second to me; the other persons, three in number, spread their beds, in the evening, on the floor. At the back of this cabin there was a little window, with a sliding shutter, and, on each side, a port-hole, which, in fine weather, admitted light and 25 air. Round the vessel there was a ledge, about a foot and a half broad, on which the men walked backwards and forwards [206] when, the water being low, they had to propel the boat by means of poles. In the fore part of the vessel

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was the apartment for the *engagés*, and, on the deck, an iron grate for cooking: here, too, the game which we had taken was hung up. About half of our men were destined to tow the vessel when there was no wind. Formerly this was the only method of navigating the Missouri, till, about two years ago, the first essay was made with the steam-boat which now goes regularly to Fort Union. A voyage from Saint Louis to Fort Mc Kenzie used to take eight months, and is now performed by the steam-boat in a little more than a third of that time. The number of men, destined by Mr. Mc Kenzie for the voyage to the Blackfeet, consisted of double the usual crew of a keel-boat, and, including us travellers, amounted to fifty-two persons. I had taken many things, necessary for a long journey, from the Company's stores, but part of what I had brought from St. Louis had been left at Fort Pièrre, on the Teton River, the want of which I already felt, but had still more reason to lament in the sequel.

All necessary arrangements for our voyage being made, Mr. Mc Kenzie caused some fire-works to be let off before the fort on the bank of the Missouri, for the amusement of the people, which gave occasion to many jokes. The serpents dispersed the crowds of young Canadians, who had never seen anything of the kind before, and were called by their older, more experienced comrades, *mangeurs de lard*. 13

13 The British companies distinguished between “winterers”— old experienced employés, who devoted their entire time to the business of the company, and who were hardened to privations — and *mangeurs de lard* (“pork-eaters”), who were employed only for the summer months, chiefly in transporting the canoe loads from Montreal to the Upper Country and return. See F. J. Turner, “The Fur Trade in Wisconsin,” in Wisconsin Historical Society *Proceedings*, 1889, pp. 78, 79.— Ed.

CHAPTER XVII VOYAGE FROM FORT UNION TO MUSCLESHELL RIVER, FROM THE 6TH TO THE 28TH OF JULY

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Difficult Navigation — Remarkable Formation of the Eminences — La Rivière aux Trembles — Prairie à la Corne du Cerf — Successful Buffalo Chase — Wreck of the Beaver Keel-boat — The rude Manners of the American Hunters — Beaver Dens — Prairies of the Upper Missouri — Successful Bear Chase — Milk River — The Orignal — Grand Détour — Big-Dry River — White Mountain Castles — Difficulties of the Naturalist — Muscleshell River.

On the 6th of July, at seven in the morning, after we had taken leave of the inmates of the fort, our men began to tow the Flora. The American flag was hoisted on the fort, and several guns were fired, on both sides, as a farewell salute. The weather was warm and fine, so that the men who towed the vessel suffered from the heat, and frequently lay down on the muddy bank of the river to drink. Beyond the wood, where the dead of the Assiniboins were deposited in the trees, a bend of the river to the north made us lose sight of the fort, and Mr. Mc Kenzie, who had accompanied us so far, wished us a happy voyage, and rode back; on which the cannon of our vessel again fired a salute. We afterwards rowed in the boat to the south bank, where we landed several of our people to hunt, and rambled through the dense forest and the prairie. The ground, which was everywhere seen between the high grass, was an indurated whitish clay, on which the plants, of which we collected several, grew only in single spots. We saw no game, it being too near the fort; but we observed traces of stags and buffaloes, and numbers of their bones. The yellow-breasted *Icteria viridis* was singing among the thickets, especially in the rose bushes. We ascended the high, bare, clay hills, from the summit 27 of which we saw our vessel approaching. The prospect was very fine; we overlooked the windings of the river, the verdant moors, the forests, and the thickets, the prairies here and there extending beyond them, and the lofty fantastic chain of clay hills, of a whitish-grey colour, with some darker strata, or horizontal stripes, and regular perpendicular [208] clefts or ravines. The twenty-six men who towed our boat had been often obliged to put off the greater part of their clothes, to wade through the water, and the mud of the soft sand banks. The trunk of a tree, lying on a bank, broke the door of our cabin, and we were

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frequently obliged to row. For this purpose there were on the deck, two large and long oars, which were worked by three or five men, who walked backwards and forwards. At a large pile of driftwood on the bank, an immense tree swept our deck, as the people who were towing did not hear us call to them, and broke the stays, by which I received a severe blow, which might have proved dangerous. Often, too, we came so near the bank, that the earth covered the windows, and made our cabins quite dark. We had our dinner at four o'clock, consisting of salt pork, pemmican, hard ship's biscuit, and coffee. In the evening, when the sun was setting, and illumined the chain of hills with wonderful splendour, our hunters returned with a young deer. On this day Mr. Mitchell divided the crew of the vessel into watches, so that two men might always watch, who were relieved three times in the night. Powder and ball were distributed among the men, but they were forbidden, under penalty of five dollars, to fire, which might easily have attracted Indian war parties. On the following morning (July 7), the weather was agreeable and the sky clear; we saw many swans, but could not get at them. We had before observed these beautiful birds and wild geese on the sandy beach. The young branches of the thickets had suffered by the frost, and the river had 28 fallen four inches; to-day, however, the heat was so intense that we could scarcely bear it on deck. We observed that the stems of the poplars, to the height of five feet, or fifteen feet above the present level of the river, had the bark rubbed off by the ice. In this part there appeared, before the hills, cones of a most singular shape, burnt to a brick red; and the summits of the higher hills were often strangely formed in various angles. In the whitish strata of clay-slate between the clay are here and there apertures, arched above in the form of the gates or windows of knights' castles. The men who towed our boat killed, in the prairie, a large rattlesnake, the rattle of which we had heard on board the vessel. The hunters had seen some elks and deer; and Dechamp brought one of the latter on board. The towers had much labour at this part of our voyage, the current of the river being very strong; they were sometimes obliged to climb, in a long row, up the hills, where we saw them suspended, like chamois, in dangerous positions. Mr. Bodmer sketched some of these hills on the left bank.¹⁴ In other places, the *engagés* who were towing were obliged to make a way on the bank by cutting down large poplars and thick

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bushes, which often cost much time and trouble. Here they often met with rattlesnakes, of which they killed several. Mr. Bodmer came so near one of these snakes, that he had nearly been bitten by it; he, however, killed it by a blow, and brought it on board. On this occasion, Mr. Mitchell told us that he had once seen an Indian boy die in an hour and a half after having been bitten by one of these snakes.

14 See Plate 67, figure 1, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

[209] According to Ross Cox,¹⁵ the Canadians eat the rattlesnake; but I can affirm that we never saw an instance of it; on the contrary, they always manifested the greatest

15 For Ross Cox, see Franchère's *Narrative*, in volume vi of our series, p. 276, note 84.— Ed.

29 antipathy to those animals. This traveller likewise says that the serpent often bites itself, but I cannot believe this, as I never succeeded in any attempt to make him do so.

The next day, the 8th, we had again many difficulties. The river was shallow in places, and our men were obliged to get into the water to push our vessel on. In order to convey them from the boat to the land, there were no means but by laying a board, which had to be placed in a slanting position, so that it was no easy matter to climb up. On the left bank they were often prevented from proceeding, because the ground was so loose that it gave way under their feet. In this manner three Assiniboins had been killed, who sat down below the bank, when the sand fell, and buried them. The forest through which our men passed, had, in these parts, a very thick underwood of roses and buffalo-berries, and there were many very large frogs in it. At a place where the chain of hills recedes behind woods and thickets from the Missouri, we came to the mouth of a stream, with a soft bottom, which is called, by the Canadians, La Rivière aux Trembles, and, by Lewis and Clarke, Martha's River.¹⁶ Of all the hunters whom we had landed at this place, Papin alone brought a very fat deer; but it cost much trouble to take our hunters on board again, for the *engagés* who went with the boat for that purpose, fell up to the waist in mud, after taking off their clothes.

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They were forced partly to swim, partly to wade, in order to reach the land. A little further up, the labour of the men towing the vessel was still greater; for, on the other side of a sand bank, the river was covered with snags, the intervals between which were hidden by foam and small twigs. The

16 Now Big Muddy River, the first large northern affluent of the Missouri west of the Yellowstone. It rises on the borders of Assiniboia, flows nearly a southern course, and forms the eastern boundary of Fort Peck Indian reservation.— Ed.

30 men, in a long row, had to step or jump from one of these snags to another, the sand being too soft to bear their weight; but they frequently missed the snags, and fell between them, up to their arms, into the river, so that many of them, who had never before done such work, trembled all over, and returned to the vessel. When they had got over these difficulties, they reached the prairie, beyond which, at the distance of from 150 to 200 paces from the bank of the river, the most singular pyramids rose, like towers. Our hunters had killed an elk, a variable hare,¹⁷ and a large rattlesnake. The willow thickets on the bank, over which the goatsucker was hovering, and from the edge of which a large wolf stood looking at us, were full of mosquitoes, which, happily for us, were kept at a distance from the vessel by a slight wind, when we took up our quarters for the night on shore. If we shot a goatsucker, we found in his capacious jaws a ball of mosquitoes, which quite filled it, which are gradually collected and swallowed from time to time; so that the name, *mangeur des maringouins*, given to this bird by the Canadians, is very appropriate. During the night, however, those troublesome insects had found their way into our cabin, and sadly tormented us on the 9th, in the morning, for which reason we were very glad to proceed on our voyage, which, [210] however, began with new difficulties. Two deer swam through the river near us, and many shots were fired at them in vain, as well as at some buffaloes; yet our deck was quite hung round with game, especially portions of the large elks. Our men broke the large bones of these animals, and used the marrow for greasing the locks of their guns. The skins of such animals, killed on these voyages, belong to the Company, and are used to make shoes for their servants.

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17 The variable hare of the Upper Missouri appears to be the *Lepus Virginianus* of Warden. I lost all my fine specimens, and therefore cannot compare this species with those in Europe.— Maximilian.

31 About twelve pair of Indian shoes are made of one large elk's skin, the making of which costs a dollar; the skin of a Virginian deer will produce only five or six pair.

About ten in the morning a violent storm arose, accompanied with rain; the thermometer was at 71°, and the mosquitoes were very troublesome. On the bank we saw a long yellow clay hill, in the shape of a fortress, and before it smaller hills, with isolated cones, partly consisting of purple clay.¹⁸ Near these singular hills our hunters had killed a couple of deer, and brought with them the horns of a large elk, with seven antlers. We lay to for the evening at the wooded bank, where numerous beautiful shrubs were partly in flower. Early on the morning of the 10th, the hunters landed, and soon returned with the information that they had killed three buffaloes and a bear. As the distance was too great to bring the latter to the vessel, they had only cut off his claws; but some men were despatched to fetch the buffaloes. We traversed the forest into the open prairie, where the animals lay, at the distance of full half a league. In the forest we, for the first time, killed the magpie of this country (*Pica Hudsonica* , Bonn), which, in appearance, much resembles that of Europe; but differs considerably in its note and manners. Its nest was in a thick thorn bush, seven feet from the ground, and had two young birds in it. I have never seen these birds with more than two young ones; and the old birds are very shy in summer, and it is very difficult to surprise them. Not far from the magpie we found a couple of young owls, fully grown, sitting close to each other on a branch, while the note of the old bird was heard in the high trees in the vicinity. In the thick bushes we heard the note of the cheerful and agile *Icteria viridis*. The bushes of dog-wood, symphoria, and roses, were so full of mosquitoes, that when we had discharged our pieces, it

18 See Plate 68, figures 12, 17, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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32 was difficult to reload them. The heat was great, and not a breath of air was stirring to relieve us from those cruel bloodsuckers. In the neighbouring prairie we found the cactus plant, which we have before mentioned, covered with the most beautiful flowers, which attracted vast numbers of insects. About twelve o'clock the men returned with the buffaloes, and we went on board with them. They had seen several buffaloes, but could bring away the flesh of only two of those that had been killed. After leaving this place, the bank was covered with low bushes, so that we were in no danger from the falling of high trees; but large portions of the steep bank itself frequently fell down, and dashed the water even into our cabin. Messrs. Bodmer and Mitchell made an excursion into the wood, where they saw many wild pigeons, numerous traces of bears, and the corpse of an Assiniboin deposited in a tree. There was an undergrowth of black currants, in search of which our people always [211]went, whenever they had a moment to spare. Towards evening, when we lay to near the prairie of the north bank, a violent storm seemed to threaten the safety of the vessel, and it was therefore made as fast as possible, but it passed over, the clouds dispersed, and our fears were dispelled. At half past nine in the evening we saw a faint aurora borealis, the rays of which shot up into the sky; the temperature of the air was pleasant, but the sky was not free from clouds, which diminished the brightness of the meteor.

On the morning of the 11th of July, Mr. Bodmer took sketches of the singular chain of hills, near which our people experienced great difficulties from sinking in the mud, and were often obliged to swim; twenty-nine of them were employed at the towing-rope, till a very violent storm, with torrents of rain, compelled us to take shelter on the bank, under cover of a tall poplar wood. The rain penetrated through the deck into our cabin, and wetted our baggage; 33 luckily it was of short duration. We had now passed a place called L'Isle au Coupè (the cut-off), but the Missouri had here broken through at one of its large bends, and had formed a low island opposite to a marshy tongue of land; the channel follows the main breach, and beyond this the river is very broad: at this time it was high and full. *Helianthus petiolaris*, in full size and beauty, as well as the two species of willows (*Salix*

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longifolia and *lucida*) already mentioned, grew on the banks of the river; they are exposed to constant destruction; the river tears them away in large masses, and throws them into its rapid waves; but the ever-acting energy of nature is not to be restrained, and they soon appear again on the new alluvial soil, though, in general, only young, slender willows. We fired in vain at a couple of swans on a small stream called Porcupine River,¹⁹ the mouth of which is on the north side, and an elk, killed by Dechamp,²⁰ detained us some time to take the flesh on board. We then reached Two Thousand Miles River, so called by Lewis and Clarke, which joins the Missouri on the north side, from which, to the junction of the Missouri with the Mississippi, it is said to be 2,000 miles.²¹ At this place the forest joined an extensive prairie, covered with bushes of

¹⁹ Lewis and Clark so named this stream from the unusual number of porcupines seen near its mouth. The present Porcupine River is a branch of the Milk. The stream here so designated is now Poplar River, whose several branches have their rise on the southern border of Assiniboia; it flows nearly south into the Missouri, through Fort Peck Indian reservation. The station of Poplar, on the Great Northern Railway, is near its mouth.— Ed.

²⁰ Deschamps was probably one of the family of half-breeds who were later (1835) murdered at Fort Union. See *Larpenteur's Journal*, i, pp. 77, 78, 95–101; also note 124, *post*, p. 151.— Ed.

²¹ Probably Red Water Creek, just above Poplar River, but on the south, not north, side of the Missouri. In the Original Journals, both Lewis and Clark speak of this creek as on the “larboard side.” There is some reason to think that Maximilian was mistaken in his identification of these three rivers of Lewis and Clark — Martha's, Porcupine, and Two Thousand Mile Creek. The one called by him Martha's, or La Rivière aux Trembles, was probably the present Poplar, which would correspond to the French-Canadian name; but this was not the river named Martha's by Lewis and Clark (see *ante*, note 16). Maximilian speaks of Porcupine River as a “small stream,” while in reality it was the largest river passed above the Yellowstone, and Lewis and Clark considered it as a possible line of

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communication with the Saskatchewan. Maximilian's "Porcupine" would thus be either Tulle Creek, or some of the smaller northern affluents of this stretch of the river, which would also account for his misplacing Two Thousand Mile Creek.— Ed.

34 artemisia, where we found, on the ground, large cast-off elks' horns. Many isolated trees were quite dry, and of a silver-grey colour, doubtless through a prairie fire; in one of them we heard the chirping of the young of a pair of sparrow-hawks, which are very common here; the old birds flew anxiously about. Here, too, were numbers of the great fly-catcher (*Muscicapa tyrannus*). Elks and deer had traversed the prairie in all directions, and trodden many paths to the river. The prairie extended, without interruption, as far as the eye could reach; it is called Prairie à la Come de Cerf, because the wandering Indians have here erected a pyramid of elks' horns. As we perceived it from the river, we went to it, accompanied by Dechamp and Sancier.

About 800 paces from the river, the hunting or war parties of the Blackfoot Indians have gradually piled up a quantity of elks' horns till they have formed a pyramid sixteen or eighteen feet high, and twelve or fifteen feet in diameter. Every Indian who passes by makes a point of [212] contributing his part, which is not difficult, because such horns are everywhere scattered about; and often the strength of the hunting party is marked, with red strokes, on the horns they have added to the heap. All these horns, of which there are certainly more than 1,000, are piled up, confusedly mixed together, and so wedged in, that we found some trouble in extricating, from the pyramid, a large one, with fourteen antlers, which we brought away with us. The horns are partly separated from the head of the animal with the skull, and partly single horns. Some buffaloes' horns were mixed 35 with them. The purpose of this practice is said to be a medicine, or charm, by which they expect to be successful in hunting. As the drawing of this pyramid was begun, we were called away by signals from the vessel.²²

²² See Plate 21, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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A violent storm, which came up in the evening, was succeeded on the next day (the 12th of July) by a very high wind, which, as we attempted to proceed, twice broke the towing-rope, and we got into two successive whirlpools (*remoux*), twice turned the vessel round, and carried it with violence against the bank, so that the water came into the cabin, and the deck was covered with earth. As the wind did not abate, we lay to at the upper part of the Prairie à la Come de Cerf, and immediately dispersed in quest of game. The prairie was the same as yesterday, and the wind blew dust and sand into the air, and even into the closest chests in our vessel. We met with various species of birds, among which was a black and white finch, which appeared to me to be a new species, and in its mode of life greatly resembles the rice bird. Among the wormwood bushes we roused several variable hares, and saw the yellow-headed blackbird, many sparrow-hawks, and a large rattlesnake, which escaped into a hole underground. Elks' horns were everywhere scattered about, and it would have been easy to make of them a second pyramid like the one already mentioned. Several interesting plants were gathered, among which were the *Asclepias speciosa* , with large fragrant flowers, and a new species of *lactuca* or *prenanthes*. Just at the place where our vessel lay, were four old Indian huts, of some war or hunting party, composed of trunks and boughs of trees piled together in a square, in which some of our people made a fire to cook their meat. Scarcely 100 paces above these huts, was the Indian Fort Creek of Lewis and Clarke — a stream with a deep bed, in which there was now but very little water. The 36 wind, which was so violent at noon, abated towards the evening, and allowed us to proceed a little further up the river, till we lay to for the night. The air was very cool to-day, and made a striking contrast to the heat of yesterday; however, we comforted ourselves that we were not tormented by the mosquitoes. On the following morning, the 13th, it was just the same, and we were soon obliged to stop by the rising of the wind. We had seen a large bear, and accordingly took advantage of our rest to send our five hunters in pursuit of it. They did not, however, succeed in their object, but brought back, in place of it, some other game. The wood here was so thickly matted with willows, roses, dog-berry, and many burrs and other troublesome plants, and likewise so full of dry broken wood and rubbish, lying on the

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ground, that it was excessively difficult [213] to penetrate. I followed, alternately, the paths trodden by buffaloes, elks, bears, and deer, and at length got into such an intricate thicket, that it was not till after many hours of painful and fatiguing exertion, that I was so fortunate as to find our vessel; but all my clothes were completely torn to rags. On the inclined trunk of a tree, I saw an Assiniboin wrapped in skin; the tree itself was painted red; and on one of the boughs hung the saddle and stirrups of the deceased.

Though the weather had improved, we made but little progress this evening, because the river was too shallow, and we were not able to follow the south bank till the following morning (the 14th). Hereabouts, a chest and a cask were found, which belonged to the Beaver keel-boat, wrecked there in the preceding year, and was likewise under the command of Mr. Mitchell. As we had to contend with the soft sand banks in the river, and could not proceed without great effort, the vessel was put back, and brought into another channel, where we soon took in fresh game, for our hunters succeeded in killing five elks, of which, however, they could only bring away a part. Herds of buffaloes were in the vicinity, and several of these colossal animals crossed the Missouri in our sight. Dechamp, Papin, and Dreidoppel overtook these swimming animals in a boat, while four or five of our hunters got ashore before them, and two of these wild oxen were killed; a third escaped severely wounded, but one of those that were killed sank so deep into the mud of the river that no part of his flesh could be obtained. A white wolf appeared immediately after, and very composedly laid himself down on the bank, doubtless waiting our departure to commence his delicious repast. This part of the country was low and flat; wood, willow thickets, and prairie alternated along the bank. We here saw, for the first time, a beautiful plant, which is frequent from hence further up the river, the *Rudbeckia columnaris* (Pursh), the petals of which are half orange-colour and half brown. We lay to, for the night, near a wood on the right bank, when our people bathed, the evening being very fine and warm. The wood was lofty, shady, and beautiful; we looked into high, dark arcades, where the whitish trunks shone in the twilight; in front of it lay an old Indian hut; the night-swallow hovered high in the air, and numerous bats flitted across the surface of the water. The

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mosquitoes were not so troublesome; and at ten in the evening there was an aurora borealis, consisting of two columns of pale light, which rose high in the air, sometimes lengthening, and then again contracting. We never heard any noise accompanying these meteors.

This night and the following morning (the 15th) were very sultry; at eight o'clock, 75° Fahrenheit. Papin had shot a deer the evening before, but did not kill it; which was doubtless the cause of the loud howling of the wolves which we heard during the night; for these creatures make an incessant howling when they have found such a prize, and 38 contend for the booty, in which cases the weaker and the young come off the worst. The ground of this forest, and of the adjoining prairie, was a heated, very hard, dry clay, and the country reminded me, at this season, except [214] in the vegetation, of the summer in the Sertao of the province of Bahia, in Brazil. Numerous birds animated the thickets, and we were preparing to pursue them, when a large buffalo bull advanced into the river, and immediately sank in the mud. We hastened up and killed him with several shot. With Messrs. Mitchell and Cuthbertson²³ I soon afterwards reached the vessel; my American friends, heated as they were, threw themselves into the water to refresh themselves. Towards noon, when the thermometer was at 86°, our other hunters returned, who had killed several buffaloes, and wounded an antelope. They had seen a herd of at least 100 elks, and wounded one of them. Mr. Mitchell, with his rifle, had shot down a white-headed eagle from a high tree, where he was devouring a large fish. The evening was very pleasant, but the mosquitoes penetrated in such swarms into the vessel, that we were obliged to stop every aperture of the cabin, and consequently suffered from the heat.

²³ Alexander Culbertson, who afterwards was prominent as chief factor and partner of the American Fur Company, had, in this year (1833), entered its employ, upon recommendation of an uncle, John Culbertson, with whom he had been in Florida the preceding years. Born of Scotch-Irish stock in Pennsylvania (1809), he was a large man, of a mild temperament, and popular both with his subordinates and the Indians. He married a Blackfoot woman, and was for several years in charge of Fort McKenzie; he

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also built Fort Sarpy, Fort Lewis, and Fort Benton. In 1861 he retired from the company, having made a considerable fortune, and went to live in Peoria, Illinois. He nevertheless was frequently in the Indian country thereafter, and in 1863 was present at a Sioux attack upon the upper river (see *Larpenteur's Journal*, ii, pp. 350, 351). He also served as official interpreter for the government, in 1869 and 1874. What is essentially the journal of Major Culbertson's life in the Indian country, is published by the Montana Historical Society under title, "Affairs at Fort Benton," in their *Contributions*, iii, pp. 201–287. He most entertainingly describes Prince Maximilian's visit (see preface to our volume xxii).— Ed.

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Early in the morning of the 16th we perceived a herd of buffaloes, and resolved to go in chase of them; but six bulls, standing near the bank, got the wind of us, and all fled. We endeavoured to get near them, but without success; and, after a fatiguing excursion of six hours, returned back much heated, and did not reach the vessel before twelve o'clock, which had remained far behind. We then proceeded on our voyage, and soon after Dechamp and Papin came on board, who had killed some buffalo cows. Dreidoppel, whom we found further up the river in the wood, had lighted a fire, over which he roasted the loin of a large antelope, which he had killed; while he was busy in preparing the skin of this animal for my zoological collection, he suddenly perceived two large white wolves standing about ten paces from him, which did not appear to be at all afraid. He might have shot them both, had not the ramrod of his rifle been broken. The wood where we took Dreidoppel on board was full of gooseberries, of a pleasant acid taste, of which our people brought a great quantity on board. The shrub which bears these black berries is thickly set with reddish thorns, almost like *Robinia hispida*.

We were now in sight of the place where Mr. Mitchell, with his keel-boat, the Beaver, had suffered shipwreck in the preceding year.²⁴ On the present occasion, Henry Morrin, our pilot, was very apprehensive of what might befall us in this dangerous spot. We followed a narrow channel, between the southern bank and a low willow island, where we lay to for

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the night. Our hunters had soon perceived in this island two large elks, and we therefore stole along before the thickets, in order to cut them off from the forest.

24 For a description of this disaster, which was occasioned by a severe windstorm, see Montana Historical Society *Contributions*, iii, pp. 204, 205; two employés and one Indian were drowned. Mitchell sent an express to Fort Union with news of the catastrophe, meanwhile fortifying within a small barricade. Aid was sent, and the party enabled to proceed.— Ed.

40 Mr. Mitchell succeeded in mortally wounding one of them, which, however, went on for some distance, sprinkling the bushes with its blood. We followed the trace through a very intricate thicket, till the night obliged us to return on board without accomplishing our object.

At break of day, on the 17th, we heard the loud howling of the wolves, which were doubtless disputing about the elk that we had wounded the day before; but Mr. Mitchell did not wish to lose any time, and we gave up our booty. The place where the Beaver was wrecked was about [215] 200 steps from our night's quarters, and we went to look at it. At that time the Beaver had lain about 300 paces further up the river, but in a dark night was loosened from its moorings by a storm, driven down the river, and thrown upon a sand bank. Two men were drowned, and Mr. Mitchell had escaped by an immense leap from the deck to the shore. The greater part of the cargo, worth 30,000 dollars, was lost: the crew then built a small fort, or log-house, about forty paces in length, in which they remained till part of the goods were saved, and another boat came up to fetch them. In this melancholy situation they were in danger of a quarrel with a band of Blackfoot Indians. These Indians were returning by land from Fort Union, to which they had been invited, on account of the conclusion of the treaty of peace. The presents made to them by the traders were on board the Beaver, and the greater part was lost, which much incensed the Indians. The disputants had already taken up and cocked their pieces, and it was entirely owing to the resolute conduct of Mr. Mitchell that the matter was amicably settled. Since that time the bank of the river, at this place, has undergone a considerable change.

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Only the pickets, at the back of the log-house, were still standing; all the rest had been swept away. At that time the whole place was bare sand; now, it was covered with willows, five 41 feet high, and the river had carried away the bank for the breadth of, at least, 100 paces.

Soon after eight o'clock, the thermometer being at 80°, our vessel reached the place where one of the buffalo cows was lying, near which the hunters had passed the night, and we took the best part on board. The hunters of the prairies are often greater savages than the Indians themselves; they frequently eat the liver and other parts of the animals they have killed, without dressing it. We had gone but a little way along the southern bank, when we perceived, below the steep wall, a beaver's den, of which Mr. Bodmer made a drawing.²⁵ It consisted of a heap of twigs and logs, between four and five feet high, and the entrance was, as usual, below water. The inside of such a den consists of earth and clay, with pieces of wood, and contains several chambers, or divisions, in which these remarkable animals lie dry above the water. A bridge of earth, which likewise contained some wood, led from the land to the cone-shaped den, the interior of which I was, to my great regret, prevented from examining. In these rapid rivers, the beavers build only such light dwellings; but erect larger ones, skilfully provided with strong dams, only in stagnant waters, such as lakes, ponds, still arms of rivers, &c. &c. There are, however, some beavers here which live only in holes in the ground, the entrance to which is above water. Their chambers are then perhaps eight feet above the surface of the water, are spacious, and adapted to the number of animals that live in them.

²⁵ See Plate 17, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

We had sent people into the forest to cut hatchet-handles of ash wood, because further up there was no wood of this kind of a sufficient size. At noon the thermometer was at 81°; the hunters had killed an elk, and seen several bears. A thunder-storm, with a high wind, obliged us [216] to fasten ⁴² the vessel to the shore, and to take other precautions; but the storm soon abated, and our people caught about five-and-twenty white catfish.

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During our voyage, on the 18th of July, I could not help making comparisons with my journeys on the Brazilian rivers. There, where nature is so infinitely rich and grand, I heard, from the lofty, thick, primeval forests on the banks of the rivers, the varied voices of the parrots, the macaws, and many other birds, as well as of the monkeys, and other creatures; while here, the silence of the bare, dead, lonely wilderness is but seldom interrupted by the howling of the wolves, the bellowing of the buffaloes, or the screaming of the crows. The vast prairie scarcely offers a living creature, except now and then, herds of buffaloes and antelopes, or a few deer and wolves. These plains, which are dry in summer, and frozen in winter, have certainly much resemblance, in many of their features, with the African deserts. Many writers have given them the name of savannahs, or grassy plains; but this expression can be applied, at most, to those of the Lower Missouri, and is totally inapplicable to the dry, sterile tracts of the north-west, where a more luxuriant growth of grass may be expected, at best, only in a few moist places, though various plants, interesting to the botanist, are everywhere to be found.

On this day, at noon, we reached, on the south bank, an Indian fort, an expression which I shall often have occasion to use in the sequel; it is a kind of breastwork, which Indian war-parties construct in haste of dry trunks of trees. When such parties intend to stop for the night, they erect a breastwork, sufficiently large, according to their number, composed of trunks of trees, or thick branches, laid one on the other, generally either square or triangular. In this bulwark they lie down to sleep, after having placed sentinels, and are there able to repel an attack. This fort consisted of a fence, and 43 several angles, enclosing a rather small space, with the open side towards the river. In the centre of the space there was a conical hut, composed of wood. Near this fort, on the same bank of the river, there was a beaver's den made of a heap of brushwood.

After our hunters had returned, with the flesh of a buffalo, we had a favourable wind, which allowed us to use our sail. At a turn of the river we suddenly saw a couple of bears running backwards and forwards on a sand bank before the willow thickets. One of them

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at length went away, and the other ran along the strand, and fell on the dead body of a buffalo cow, which was half buried in the mud. While the keel-boat sailed against the stream in the middle of the river, a boat was put out, into which Messrs. Mitchell and Bodmer, and the hunters, Dechamp and Dreidoppel, threw themselves, and rowed along the bank towards the ravenous animal. The sight of this first bear chase was interesting, and we that remained as spectators on deck awaited the result with impatience. Dechamp, a bold and experienced hunter, and an excellent marksman, was put on shore, and crept unperceived along the strand, till he got to the branch of a tree, about eighty paces from the bear, in order, in case of need, to intercept his retreat to the thickets. The [217] ravenous bear sometimes raised his colossal head, looked around him, and then greedily returned to his repast; doubtless, because the wind was in our favour, and these animals are not remarkably quick-sighted. The boat had got to within fifty paces, when the pieces were levelled. Mr. Mitchell fired the first mortal shot, behind the shoulder blade. The other shots followed in quick succession, on which the bear rolled over, uttered fearful cries, tumbled about ten steps forwards, scratched the wounded places furiously with his paws, and turned several times completely over. At this moment Dechamp came up, and put an end to his misery 44 by shooting him through the head. The huge beast lay stretched out: it was fastened by ropes to the boat, and conveyed in triumph to the ship, where it was measured, and a drawing made of it. I much regretted that I had not taken part in the sport; but I had not believed that it was possible, in such an open, unprotected spot, to get so near the bear.

This grizzly bear was a male, about three years old, and, therefore, not of the largest size: he was six feet two inches and two lines in length, from the nose to the tip of the tail; the latter being eight inches. His colour was dark brown, with the point of the hair of a rusty colour, but new hair already appeared of a lighter grey, with yellow tips. This bear is known to be a very dangerous beast of prey, and is willingly avoided by the hunters: if fired at, he very frequently attacks, even if not wounded, when they suddenly come too near him. If he perceives a man in time, he generally gets out of the way, especially when he has

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the wind. Almost all the hunters of the prairie relate their adventures with the bears, and whole volumes might be filled with such stories. It is certain that many white men and Indians have been torn to pieces by these dangerous animals, especially in former times, when they were very numerous, and lived to a great age, as may be seen in Lewis and Clarke's Travels. Even last year, five of Mr. Mitchell's hunters, who had wounded one of these animals, were so quickly pursued by him, that they were obliged to take refuge in the Missouri. This species of bear cannot climb, and therefore a tree is a good means to escape their attacks. The true country of these animals on the Missouri, where they are at present the most numerous, is the tract about Milk River. Here there is no wood of any extent in which they are not found, but they are likewise seen everywhere in a north-westerly direction. In these solitudes, the long claws of this bear serve to dig up many kinds of roots in the prairie, on which he chiefly subsists, but he is especially fond of animal food, particularly the flesh of dead animals. There is no other species of bear on the Upper Missouri, for the black bear is not found so high up. At the place where we had killed the bear, it would have been easy to shoot many of these animals, by posting ourselves near the dead buffalo cow: the whole sand bank was covered with the prints of bears' footsteps, and trodden down like a threshing-floor; but our time was too short and too precious: we, therefore, proceeded on our voyage till a violent thunder-storm threatened us, and we lay to, by the high bank of the prairie, [218] where our bear was skinned. During the night, torrents of rain fell, which wetted our books and plants in the cabin.

On the following day, the 19th, we had another chase after a colossal bear, which swam through the Missouri to a dead buffalo; but our young hunters were this time too eager, and fired too soon, so that the animal escaped, though probably wounded, as fifteen rifles were discharged at him. Afterwards we saw several beaver lodges. The people towed the steamer in the afternoon, making their way along the bank, through a dense willow thicket. All on a sudden they cried that there were bears close to them; on which the hunters immediately leaped on shore. Mr. Mitchell had scarcely arrived at the head of the

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towers, when he perceived a she bear with two cubs. Dechamp came to his aid, and in a few minutes the three animals were in our power. Mr. Mitchell had killed the mother, which was of a pale yellowish-red colour; one of the cubs, which was brought alive on board, was whitish about the head and neck, and brownish grey on the body; the other was dark brown. The females of these animals are generally of a lighter colour than the males, which is the case with many beasts of prey, particularly the European fox. The live cub was in a great rage, and growled terribly; it was impossible for me to save his life.

After this successful chase we were detained by a high contrary wind, and it was, therefore, late when we reached the mouth of Milk River, on the north bank.²⁶ This river comes down in many windings, and constitutes the western frontier of the territory of the Assiniboin. Its waters are generally muddy and mixed with sand, whence it has its name. It contributes to thicken the waters of the Missouri, though Lewis and Clarke affirm that it is Maria River which chiefly contributes to dull their clearness; this, however, is not well founded, for most travellers, and we ourselves, found the waters of the Upper Missouri perfectly clear and transparent as far as Muscleshell River. Even the Maria is at times quite clear and pure. The Moose Deer or Original (*Cervus alces Amer.*) is said to be common towards the upper part of Milk River, and Dechamp himself had killed several of these animals on the Missouri, in the vicinity of this river. A little further up we lay to, for the night, on the south bank, where our hunters killed a bear and a very large buffalo. Mr. Bodmer made a drawing of the head of the latter magnificent animal, whose thick, coal-black, wavy frontal hair was eighteen inches long. Some of our *engagés* came up, cut up the whole animal, and eat the liver without cooking it. During the night we had again much wind, and were glad that we were able to remain in a safe channel of the river.

²⁶ Milk River was named by Lewis and Clark from the peculiar color of its waters, "being about the color of a cup of tea with the admixture of a tablespoonful of milk"— *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, ii, p. 10. It is by far the largest of the northern tributaries of the Missouri, rising in the main range of the Rockies in northwest Montana, and flowing in a generally eastern course on both sides of the international boundary line

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— the 49th parallel. The stream drains the territory between the Saskatchewan and the Missouri, and its valley is for many miles followed by the Great Northern Railway.— Ed.

Early on the morning of the 20th we reached the place 47 where the Missouri makes a great bend of fifteen miles, the distance across by land being only 400 or 500 paces. At this place the ice drives in, spring over the flat land, or sandy point, and the tall poplars at the end of it were rubbed smooth, on the lower part, to half the thickness of their trunks. This bend is called [219] Le Grand Détour, and there are several such in this river. The wind, in many of these bends, being too strong for the efforts of the towers, and the masses falling from the bank, often endangering our vessel, we lay to under the protection of the hills on the north bank of a narrow prairie covered with bushes, where I found the blue-grey butcher-bird, the magpie, and several common birds, many of which we shot; we also caught a great many butterflies, which were hovering about the flowers in the burning rays of the sun. Henry Morrin, our pilot, a very good marksman, brought in a large male antelope. The other hunters had killed, on the opposite bank, twelve buffaloes, viz., four bulls, five cows, and three calves, but brought away only the flesh of the cows, leaving all the rest to the wolves, the bears, and the vultures: they had missed a large bear. Towards evening we left our anchorage, but made so little progress, that, when night came, we were not above a couple of miles from Milk River.

On the 21st we came to the place where the buffaloes were killed the day before: part of the flesh of the animals, which had not been touched, was taken away, and a full grown young bald eagle was shot down from the nest. It was now the dry season, which, in these parts, continues from the middle of July to the end of autumn. The whole prairie was dry and yellow; the least motion, even of a wolf crossing it, raised the dust. We could recognise the vicinity of the herds of buffaloes at a distance, from the clouds of dust which they occasioned. All the small rivers were completely dried up. Even the Missouri was very shallow, which 48 it always is in summer and autumn. The prairie hills were now of a pale grey-green colour, with some bushes in the ravines, but all had a withered, sterile appearance. Soon after mid-day we saw a large buffalo bull standing on the bank, which

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seemed to challenge us, lowering his head and pawing the ground with his fore feet, so that the dust flew to a great distance around him. We landed the hunters, who got sight of a bear, but soon lay to, at the end of a prairie, near the mouth of Big Dry River, which joins the Missouri on the south side. Its channel, in winter, is several hundred paces in breadth, and in it was another narrow channel, in which, at this time, the water was only two feet deep.²⁷ The right bank of the stream is steep, and consists of grey clay; the left is covered with low willows; the whole surrounding country has a bare, desolate appearance.

²⁷ Big Dry River, which retains the name assigned it by Lewis and Clark, is the largest southern tributary of the Missouri between the Yellowstone and the Musselshell. It is, as described by Maximilian, a vast coulée, stretching to the Yellowstone watershed. When Lewis and Clark passed (May 9, 1805), there was no running water within it, although the bed was as wide at this point as that of the Missouri.— Ed.

Continuing our way but very slowly, we perceived, on one of the hills of the bank, some elks, and, by the aid of our telescopes, saw that they were large males with immense horns; and at this same moment, a black bear came from the thicket on the north bank, and began to swim across the river. The hunters immediately divided into two parties; the one, including Messrs. Mitchell and Bodmer, going by land along the bank of the river; the other in the boat, rowing after the bear. Unluckily our boat got aground, by which the bear got the start, and came too near to the hunters, who were posted behind the bank. As soon as he set foot on land, he was killed by several shot. He was not so large as the one lately killed, of a dark brown colour, and we contented ourselves with carrying off as trophies only 49 his head and fore paws. On account of the [220] high wind we did not leave this spot to-day, and the chase gave us much employment. Scarcely was the bear killed, when buffalo bulls came into the river in several places, which we should certainly have killed, if our young men had known how to restrain their ardour. In the artemisia bushes of the prairie, a porcupine was caught alive, which was not killed till it was on board the keel-boat, our *engagés* declaring that it was a great delicacy. This animal is

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of great importance to the Indians, on account of its quills, which they dye, and use to embroider their clothing, and for other ornamental purposes.

On the 22nd of July we again saw clay hills, of strange forms, of friable, blackish-grey clay, with angular or small roundish cones set upon them. It was only in the clefts and ravines between them, that there was any vegetation; otherwise, not a blade of grass was to be seen on them. On the south there was a couple of clay hills resembling the ruins of an ancient castle, of which Mr. Bodmer made a drawing. They appeared to us to have some resemblance to what are called "The Two Brothers," near Bornhofen, on the Rhine. The river makes here a very considerable bend. Buffaloes were grazing in the prairies, and the cries of the wild geese were heard on all sides. The hills, with their singular forms, which were almost always the same, now came near to the river; most of the conical tops were of a greyish-brown colour; others, blackish-grey; and many had a top of a burnt-red colour. Even from our vessel we could distinguish, on all these hills, bright points, which sparkled in the sunshine, which proved, on examination, to be caused by the brilliant selenite, which has been mentioned before, and which occurs everywhere in these clay hills, either in layers or in nests. On our excursion to-day, we brought back large pieces of this fossil. We lay to for the 50 night by a sand bank, the clay of which, where it had been wetted by the water, was cracked and deft in all directions. This clay might certainly be used for pottery; on the surface there were prints of the footsteps of all kinds of wild animals, but we saw no living creatures but myriads of tormenting mosquitoes. We had made considerable progress to-day, because a favourable wind had allowed us to use our sails.

On the 23rd, we passed a dried-up stream, of which we had seen many on the preceding days, and all of which are among the numerous streams mentioned by Lewis and Clarke under the name of Dry River. Our hunters had killed a couple of deer, and several buffalo bulls; and Papin had roused a covey of the beautiful large prairie, or mountain cock, but could not get a shot at them. These fine birds live in the prairie, on the Upper Yellow Stone and the Missouri, and we frequently met with them in the sequel. In the middle of the day our towers had great trouble in keeping their footing on the steep, clay hills, in the barren

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and crumbling mass of which they sank above their ankles, and were obliged to assist each other.

The singular clay hills continued on the 24th July. The left bank of the river consisted of a high clay wall, divided into cubical figures, rent with many small clefts, and partly of overhanging [221] masses, looking like chimneys, or pillars, which threatened, every moment, to fall. There was here a stream with little water, and a marshy bed, which is, perhaps, the Sticklodge Creek of Lewis and Clarke.²⁸ While the wind allayed the heat of the day, we rambled through the prairies on the bank; as far as the eye could reach there were the bleached bones of the buffaloes and elks,

²⁸ This creek is on the larboard (south) bank of the river, and was charted by Lewis and Clark; but it has not been identified, for the reason that this region has not yet been topographically studied.— Ed.

⁵¹ and their immense horns. A couple of sparrow-hawks, a kind of lark, and a flock of wild geese, which had made an excursion from the river into the prairie, were the only large living creatures that we met with here. Thousands of grasshoppers, many of them of beautiful colours, were hopping and flying about: numerous butterflies, but only three or four species, were hovering about the shrubs in these dry clay steeps, which were bare of grass. There were a great many ant hills, and mosquitoes, and several other kinds of troublesome stinging insects. On the offsets of the clay hills which bounded the prairie on our right, there were banks of sand-stone and clay-slate standing out; and the detached fragments of stone, which lay about near them, were covered with beautiful orange-coloured, yellow, bluish-white and blackish lichens. Several deep ravines, or clefts, were all dry, and opened towards the high, steep bank of the Missouri. At some accessible places these ravines were crossed by the deeply trodden paths of the herds of buffaloes, which wind through the whole prairie along the chains of hills and the bank of the river. As we looked round on an eminence, whence we perceived our boat sailing with a fair wind, we saw an immense buffalo bull, which approached us slowly, not suspecting any danger: we quickly hid ourselves behind some bushes on the edge of a deep cleft, and,

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as the majestic animal passed through it, we killed it with three well-directed shots. The magnificent creature lay stretched out about forty paces above the ravine, and only the advance which our boat had gained obliged us to leave our prize. At length, however, by firing some shot on the steep bank of the river, we succeeded in drawing the attention of our people, and they despatched a boat for us. We took advantage of the interval to make a second attempt at buffalo hunting, and Dreidoppel, who was endeavouring to drive some of these animals towards me, killed a young 52 bull, on which the boat arrived, the crew of which took away the tongues and part of the flesh of the buffaloes which we had killed. Much fatigued and heated, we reached our vessel at four o'clock in the afternoon, after having been exposed, since eight o'clock in the morning, without a drop of water, to the heat of the sun in the barren, withered prairies. During our absence, Mr. Bodmer had sketched some interesting tops of the neighbouring eminences, one of which²⁹ is called Half-way Pyramid, because it is half way between the Milk and Muscleshell Rivers. The whole chain of hills, with its manifold tops, ravines and hollows, was of a greenish-grey colour, with here and there some dark spots of pine forest; and this country, with its bright green meadows, with wood and willows on the bank of the river, has a most original, singular appearance.

²⁹ See Plate 68, figure 15, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

On the 25th July we rambled through the prairies on the north bank, where we found [222] blackbirds, flycatchers, and the *Fringilla grammaca*, and roused a large covey of the prairie cock, which flew up before us with loud clapping of their wings, but which, for want of a good pointer, we were unable to find again. We took nothing but a hare and an owl, with some birds which had assembled in great numbers to tease the poor light-shunning tyrant of evening. Mr. Bodmer sketched some more of the remarkable mountain tops.³⁰ Near that marked Fig. 16, some of our hunters returned with two black-tailed deer and a young fawn; and, soon afterwards, two buffalo bulls were killed, a great part of the flesh of which we brought away, because we were approaching the part of the country called Mauvaises Terres,³¹

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30 See Plate 68, figures 16, 18, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

31 The French-Canadian engagés applied the term “Bad Lands” to many parts of the West. Those districts now usually thus designated, are in the valley of the Little Missouri in North Dakota. The Montana stretch here mentioned 53 where we could not expect to find much large game. In the afternoon we saw some Indian huts under high poplars on the bank; and, on the northern bank, sketches were taken of singular mountain tops. In general, the bare grey masses of the eminences on the bank were so singularly formed that it was impossible not to wish that an able geologist might make a minute investigation of the chain. Their tops, like towers, pillars, &c., were contrasted with the clear blue sky, and the sun caused them to cast deep shadows. As we were sailing with a fair wind, I was obliged to submit to the necessity of rapidly passing these highly interesting scenes. The mountains continued to increase in height; they were more and more naked and sterile; their colour was whitish-grey, grey-brown, often spotted with white, the upper part disposed in horizontal strata, or in narrow stripes; and some isolated summits rose in the most grotesque forms, and the general appearance reminded me of the calcareous mountains of Appenzell, in Switzerland. In the steep wall of the south bank we saw, at a great height, the antlers of a stag projecting, which must have been imbedded in the alluvium, which was now washed away by the river. On these rude, naked mountains, the wild mountain sheep, called the bighorn, or grossecorne, becomes more and more numerous the further you proceed up the river. Our towers killed, in this part, a large rattlesnake, which had just caught some kind of rat, probably a goffer, and half devoured it. A thunder-storm, with high wind, suddenly caused our vessel to be in great danger; but the same wind which had at first thrown us back, became all at once very favourable when we reached a turn in the river, and sailed, for some time, rapidly upwards. This brought us to a remarkable place, where we thought that we saw before us, is in Dawson and Valley counties, and an outlying spur of this peculiar formation.— Ed.

54 two white mountain castles. On the mountain of the south bank, there was a thick, snow-white layer, a far-extended stratum of a white sand-stone, which had been partly

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acted upon by the waters. At the end where it is exposed, being intersected by the valley, two high pieces, in the shape of buildings, had remained standing, and upon them lay remains of a more compact, yellowish-red, thinner stratum of sand-stone, which formed the roofs of the united building. On the *façade* of the whole building, there were small perpendicular slits, which appeared to be so many windows. These singular natural formations, when seen from a distance, so perfectly resembled buildings raised by art, that we were deceived by them, till we were assured of our error. We agreed with [223] Mr. Mitchell to give to these original works of nature the name of "The White Castles." Mr. Bodmer has given a very faithful representation of them.³²

³² See Plate 70, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

There were similar formations on the north bank likewise; but the increasing storm did not allow us time to contemplate these wonders: our sail rent, and we were obliged to seek for shelter at the prairie of the south bank. We took advantage of the halt to explore the adjacent country, while the trees bent under the fury of the storm, and the thunder pealed in the very sultry air. We were now in a lateral chain of the Mauvaises Terres, a prolongation of the Black Hills, which here cross the Missouri. We proceeded on a sloping, rough flat, or prairie, which, with the usual vegetation, stretched along the river, and gradually becoming uneven and hilly, rose towards the mountains, and was covered, near the foremost hills, with diversely stratified fragments and blocks of yellowish-brown sand-stone. All around rose the wonderful chains of the lofty, bare, whitish-grey or grey-brown mountains, with their conical or singularly-shaped summits, sloped or stratified in divers ways, and dotted with scattered groups of dark green pines. It was during this day's voyage that these mountains increased so much in elevation, and in originality of character, that we seemed to be suddenly transported to the mountains of Switzerland. The Missouri, which is here rather narrow, winds its course, confined between the high ridges of clay-slate, sand-stone, and clay; and the torpid, naked scenery around is only animated on the bank by verdant strips of poplars and young shrubs. On the rough plain, at the foot of the hills, the vegetation was, for the most part, withered: the *Allium*

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reticulatum, with its white flowers, quite dried up; *Cactus ferox*, poor and shrivelled, and the bones of the buffaloes, bleached by exposure to the air, bore testimony, even in this solitude, to the uncertainty of life. The tracks of these colossal animals soon led our hunters to recent footsteps, and several of them appeared in the ravines; but thunderstorms, in the north-east and west, soon poured down torrents of rain, and scared the animals. When the weather cleared up, we approached nearer to the White Castles, and the illusion vanished.

On the 26th of July, in the morning, we again viewed the White Castles in another point of view. The pretty squirrel, called, by Say, *Sciurus quadrivittatus*, lives in the clay ground of these parts; our towers caught one, which we kept alive, for a long time, in a cage. Round the trunk of an old tree the Indians had built a conical hut with pieces of wood; but in the whole voyage from Fort Union to Fort Mc Kenzie, such huts were the only signs of human beings, and we did not see a single Indian. Game was now scarce in the Mauvaises Terres, and Morrin was the only person who killed anything to-day. In these parts the singular, perfectly spherical sand-stone balls are also found in the clay hills, which have been already described at Cannonball 56 River; they are sometimes double, and, here, generally of the size of canister shot. The prairies were so covered with grasshoppers that the whole surface of the ground seemed to be alive; and where the dry leaves were still lying they caused a constant rattling noise. That species was most [224] numerous which makes a humming noise when flying. Their wings are greenish-white, with a large black spot; the thighs of a beautiful orange-red, and the sheaths of the wings a dirty white, with three blackish transverse stripes.

In the afternoon, there were everywhere, on the banks of the Missouri, fragments of rock and stone, which proved that we were approaching the more solid kinds of rock which would succeed the clay mountains. The river, which was narrow, not more than 100 paces in breadth, made, at a certain place, a sudden, very short bend in a northern direction. The south bank, which was exposed to the shock of the waves, was rent in such a remarkable manner, the clay walls so cleft, split, and washed out in a thousand varieties of fragments,

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cones, pyramids, and isolated points, that it was not without great difficulty, exertion, and loss of time, that the towers were able to proceed. The whole of this bank is perfectly bare, and of a greyish-brown colour; no plant can grow, because the masses of clay are always ready to fall in, and are subject to perpetual change. The great heat obliged the towers to drink frequently, which they effected in a singular, often dangerous position, lying flat on the ground, with their heads downwards, and their legs above on the slope of the bank. Beyond the bend, the river was again 180 paces broad.

The night was pleasant, and on the 27th of July, at day-break, we left the keel-boat, and followed the track of a large bear, which had dug up roots everywhere; unluckily two of our hunters had proceeded up and caused an alarm in the forest. A wilderness full of thorns and briars joined the wood to the hill, where the mosquitoes were excessively troublesome. Under its tall slender poplars grew high grass, or a thick undergrowth of roses, mostly very nourishing food for the wild animals, which we saw in several places. In the high trees there were flocks of blackbirds, some fly-catchers, which built in old hollow poplars on the bank, and a beautiful swallow (*Hirundo bicolor*, Bon), which we had not before seen, and in pursuit of which we spent so much time that our boat got considerably ahead of us, and we had to make our way through the prairie, where the thorny bushes sadly rent our clothes. Where the bank of the river was a steep wall, we saw a great number of bones of animals imbedded in it, and very often the skulls of buffaloes, from which the earth had been half washed away, projecting over the river. Wearied by our long excursion, we refreshed ourselves with the cool waters of the Missouri, and reached the boat soon after noon. Messrs. Mitchell and Cuthbertson returned about the same time, when the thermometer was 85°, from an excursion, in which they had a delightful prospect from the heights. To the south-west, they had seen at a distance the Little Rocky Mountain range, like blue clouds; to the south-east, Muscleshell River. In the green extensive hollow towards the mountains, they saw the whole prairie covered with herds of buffaloes. They brought from the heights beautiful impressions of shells, of which we had found some, on this day, on the bank of the Missouri. With much labour they had ascended three different

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eminences, on the last and highest, at which they arrived, excessively heated, they were met by a high bleak wind. Here they observed a very [225] strange formation of stone, namely, a pillar supporting a slab like a table, consisting of a friable stone — doubtless sand-stone. They had likewise seen from that eminence the mountain known by the name of the Bear's-paw.

58

The following morning, the 28th of July, gave me another occasion to reflect on the rude manners of our crew. For some time past we had made a numerous and interesting collection of natural history, many articles of which we were obliged, for want of room, to leave on deck. The skins, skulls of animals, and the like, some of which it had cost us much trouble to procure, were generally thrown into the river during the night, though Mr. Mitchell had set a penalty of five dollars on such irregularities. In this manner I lost many highly interesting specimens; and on board our keel-boat, with the most favourable opportunities, it was hardly possible to make a collection of natural history, if I except the herbarium, which we kept in the cabin, under our eyes, so that we brought but a small part of what we had collected to Fort Mc Kenzie.

In order to find Muscleshell River, which could not be far off, I landed early, with Messrs. Mitchell and Cuthbertson, on the south bank, where there was a fine shady poplar-grove, with a high undergrowth of roses, dogwood, and goose-berries. Through this thorny disagreeable thicket we followed the tracks of the wild animals, which led us to some open places covered with high grass; and beyond the wood a verdant prairie, where we gathered many interesting plants. We, however, did not find Muscleshell River, which was further up, and a storm with heavy rain drove us back to the boat, where we arrived wet through and through. At eleven o'clock in the forenoon, however, we reached the mouth of the river which we had sought for.

Muscleshell River, the Coquille of the Canadians,³³ joins the Missouri on the south-west side, and at its mouth, which

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33 The Musselshell, a principal southern tributary of the Missouri, rises east of the Big Belt Mountains, and flows east and northeast, parallel to the Yellowstone; it thence makes an abrupt turn northward into the Missouri. Lewis and Clark give its Indian name as “Mah-tush-ahzhah.”— Ed.

59 is seventy paces broad, both its banks are covered with poplars, partly high trees, partly bushes. About eight hundred paces upward there are, on its banks, high hills, covered with greyish-green short grass, and spots of pines. Its course is for a long time nearly parallel with that of the Missouri. We were told that the distance from Fort Mc Kenzie to its banks is only between thirty and forty miles, and that it is only five or six miles from its mouth that it turns towards the Missouri. Lewis and Clarke reckon 2270 miles from the junction of these two rivers to the mouth of the latter. Wandering Indians are found only occasionally on the banks of the Muscleshell, but they are said to be at all times about its sources. It is reckoned that its mouth is half way between Fort Union and Fort Mc Kenzie: we could not hope to reach the latter in less than seventeen or eighteen days, though the navigation of the Missouri, from the mouth of the Muscleshell upwards, is more easy than before, because its course is straighter, its banks more rocky, and there are neither branches of trees nor drift-wood in its bed.

CHAPTER XVIII VOYAGE FROM MUSCLESHELL RIVER TO FORT MC KENZIE, FROM JULY 28TH TO AUGUST 9TH

Grouse Creek — Teapot Creek — Meeting with some Persons belonging to the Company — The Skeleton of the Bear — Chase of the Prairie Dogs — Little Rocky Mountain Range — Elk Island, and successful Chase there — The Mauvaises Terres, a Continuation of the Blackhills — Elk Fawn and other Rapids — The Bighorn and Chase — Thompson's Creek, the West Boundary of the Mauvaises Terres — Judith River — Meeting with the Gros Ventres des Prairies on Bighorn River — Observations on these Indians — The remarkable Country about the Stone Walls — Citadel Rock — Stonewall Creek — First

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Sight of the Rocky Mountains — Bear's-paw Mountain — Maria River — Arrival and Reception at Fort Mc Kenzie.

We did not make any long stay at Muscleshell River, for after our hunters, who had made an excursion into the neighbouring wood and prairies, returned, at noon, with a buffalo and an elk, we proceeded on our voyage. Dechamp brought some impressions of shells, which abound on these banks of the Missouri. Beyond a prairie where the hills, which were seventy or eighty feet high, came close to the river, we found Mr. Bodmer and Dreidoppel employed in collecting most interesting impressions of shells, and very beautiful baculites,³⁴ of the latter of which there were large, very fine, opalescent specimens. The edge of the bank, which was scarcely two feet broad, was covered with these fragments, which fall from the higher part of the rocky wall. The prairie now alternated with woods of tall poplars, and these trees, probably, do not form, in any part of the globe,

³⁴ The fine collection of all these impressions and petrifications made on this occasion has, unfortunately, not reached Europe. See, on this subject, "Synopsis of the Organic Remains of the Cretaceous Groups of the United States," &c., by S. G. Morton, Philad., 1834; and "Transactions of the Geological Society of Philadelphia."— Maximilian.

⁶¹ such fine and lofty forests as they do here. Impressions of shells and baculites were collected on the bank, the last of which, a painter, who lately travelled on the Missouri, has stated to be petrified serpents.

[227] On the following morning, the 29th of July, the river was rather turbid, and there must have been heavy rain higher up. Nothing particular occurred on this day. At six in the morning of the 30th, we came to a stream which is, doubtless, the Grouse Creek of Lewis and Clarke.³⁵ There were a couple of islands, which we took to be Lewis and Clarke's Pot Islands, and a stream near them, for their Teapot Creek, a name which, like many others given by these travellers, amused us much.³⁶ We could not help observing that

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such names are not well chosen, especially as it would not be difficult to find better ones, even by merely retaining the generally harmonious Indian names.

35 Probably identical with Beauchamp Creek. Just above this was the site of Fort Hawley, built in 1867 by the Northwestern fur Company.— Ed.

36 Coues, *Lewis and Clark Expedition*, i, p. 32r, identifies Teapot as the present Yellow Creek, a northern affluent between Beauchamp and Rocky creeks. It is also called Kannuck.— Ed.

Toward seven o'clock in the evening, as we were sailing by the eminences which resembled the lower mountains of Switzerland, we were much surprised to see a boat, with three men, which soon afterwards came alongside our vessel. It had on board, Doucette, the Blackfoot interpreter, and two engagés, from Fort Mc Kenzie, who had been sent to meet us; they had left the fort three days before, where they told us there were 150 tents of the Piekanns, or Blackfoot Indians; the remainder of this tribe were scattered about Maria River. They likewise said that the Fall Indians, or Gros Ventres des Prairies,³⁷ had encamped on Bighorn River,

37 For a general sketch of the Blackfeet, see our volume v, p. 225, note 120; for the Grosventres of the Prairies, Franchère's *Narrative*, in our volume vi, p. 371, note 183.— Ed.

62 to wait for us: that those Indians, however, had not at this moment any articles for trade, but hoped to receive some presents. This was no pleasant information for Mr. Mitchell, as he was not just then in a condition to make many presents, and, besides, did not much trust those Indians. Not far from the place where we now were, Doucette had shot a large bear, which was left on the bank of the Missouri, a piece of news which was very agreeable to me, and of which I resolved to take advantage.

This morning, the 31st of July, being very fine, I set out early, with Messrs. Mitchell and Bodmer, Doucette, Droidoppel, and the two brothers Beauchamp, all armed with rifles,

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or guns, to look for the bear, which had been killed the day before. The *engagés* carried ropes and hatchets. In the thick underwood and high grass of the forest, we first killed a rattlesnake, and, after proceeding a good half league, reached the bank of the river, where we found the bear still untouched. He was feeding on a buffalo cow, drowned in the river, when Doucette shot him through the heart, on which he ran up the bank, which was about ten feet high, and fell dead at the top. After taking his measure, the skin was stripped off, and the flesh cut from the bones, to prepare the skeleton. The bones having been partly cleaned, were tied together, and drawn up, by a rope, into a tree, intending to take them on our return, after they had been a little more cleaned by the birds of prey and insects. As soon as this work was finished, we followed the vessel, which, meantime, had got considerably the start of us; yet, in the prairie beyond the wood, we stopped at a large, so called, village of the prairie dogs, to kill some of these animals. They sat in parties of two or three on the flat little eminences of their burrows, uttered their cry, which is not a bark, but a shrill squeak, and vanished. Making as little noise as possible, we sat [228] down near the burrows, 63 and succeeded in killing six of these pretty animals, which are not so shy here as at other places, and we often got within thirty paces of them. Laden with our booty, and with the plants we had collected, we proceeded by the paths trodden by the buffaloes and elks through the thick willow copses, along the river, and were just in sight of the keelboat, when, taking advantage of a favourable wind, it hoisted its sail, and left us no alternative but to follow it as quickly as we could, for three or four hours. Our fatiguing way led through a rough prairie, covered with hard grasses, with the *epinette de prairie*, *helianthus*, and prickly cactus, through thick skirts of the forest, with a thorny undergrowth of roses, gooseberries, and burrs, where the fatigued and heated hunters refreshed themselves with the wild berries. We then had to climb over rough sand-stone hills, sometimes obliged to slide down, and at length reached the Missouri. On a wooded point of land, on the river side, we met with several of our hunters, but the whole booty of our fatiguing day's work consisted of a wild goose, an owl, and six prairie dogs. We had waded through many muddy, half-dry streams, and seen, in the blue distance, the range of the Little Rocky Mountains, about thirty miles off.³⁸ After our return to the vessel, a herd of

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buffalo cows afforded another opportunity for a chase, and our hunters killed two of them and a bull, which furnished us with some meat. On the 1st of August, early, Mr. Mitchell sent two *engagés* to Fort Mc Kenzie, to give notice of our coming.³⁹ We landed them on the south bank, laden with their arms and beds. We lay to at the wooded island, called, by Lewis and Clarke, Tea Island,

38 Little Rocky Mountains are a short range in Chouteau County, Montana, forming part of the watershed between the Milk and the Missouri. They are but thirty miles north of the latter, and rise to an altitude of about five thousand feet. Lewis and Clark called the range North Mountain.— Ed.

39 According to the French edition of Maximilian's *Travels*, the names of these *engagés* were Croteau and Rondin.— Ed.

64 in the channel on the north bank. As some elks had been seen, the hunters were landed on the island, and in a short time we heard firing in all directions, and in half an hour they had killed four elks, an elk fawn, and a young deer. On account of the number of animals found on this island, we agreed to change the foolish name of Tea Island to Elk Island.⁴⁰ Mr. Mitchell, who had often travelled this way, always found the island full of elks, and once, of buffaloes. On this day he brought from it a large eagle and a rattlesnake; and Mr. Bodmer had taken, in the neighbouring prairie, a large *Coluber eximus*, above four feet in length.

40 This island no longer exists; it was below Cow Creek, in the present Chouteau County, Montana.— Ed.

Near Lewis and Clarke's Bighorn Island, we again saw most singular summits on the hills. Entire rows of extraordinary forms joined each other,⁴¹ and in the lateral valleys we had interesting glimpses of this remarkable scenery, as we were now approaching the most interesting part of the Mauvaises Terres. I have already described these mountains when speaking of the White Castles, but here they begin to be more continuous, with rough tops,

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isolated pillars, bearing flat slabs, or balls, resembling mountain-castles, fortresses, and the like, and they are more steep and naked at every step. Often one may plainly perceive hills or mountains that have evidently sunk into the marshy valley. Many strata inclined at an angle of 30° to 60°, and others perfectly horizontal. The course of the Missouri among these mountains is pretty straight, only narrow plains or prairies, covered with artemisia and the prickly bushes of the [229] pulpy

41 See Plate 68, figure 20, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv. Bighorn Island is not specifically mentioned in the text of the *Original Journals*, but it was passed on the day (May 25, 1805) when Drouillard first brought one of these animals to camp. See *Original Journals*, ii, pp. 71–76, with small drawing. In Clark's "Summary Statement of Rivers, etc.," it is named Ibex Island; *op. cit.*, vi, p. 61.— Ed.

65 thorn, lie on its banks before the mountains, which frequently come very near to the river, with large blocks of sand-stone at their foot, between which fragments of selenite are always seen. It were to be wished that the geologist and the painter might devote a considerable time to examine this part of the country, step by step; they would furnish a work of the highest interest. In many places the loose pieces had slipped down so as to form buttresses; in other parts the mountains were spotted with groups of pines. We here collected several plants, and Mr. Bodmer made a sketch of the mountain tops.⁴² The pretty striped squirrel, which lives in small round holes in the clay walls, was here frequently seen, and I conjecture that, if these mountains were closely examined, several species of this animal would be found. The country was so interesting that we waited with impatience for the morning of the 2nd of August, when a bright warm sunshine illumined the singular eminences which surrounded us. Several sketches were taken of them, but very few in proportion to their number, for large folio volumes might be filled with such representations. We saw several islands, among which was doubtless Lewis and Clarke's Good Punch Island, a name which is unworthy of being transmitted to posterity.⁴³ It is, in fact, difficult to find all the islands mentioned by those travellers, as many of them have certainly been since destroyed, and others arisen in their room. At seven o'clock in the

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morning the thermometer was at 80°, and we came to a rapid, which we passed by the aid of the towing-rope and the poles. At a bend of the river we thought we saw the ruins of an old castle, and then reached the mouth of Lewis and Clarke's Windsor or Winchers

42 See Plate 68, figure 28, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

43 Our author misread the name of this island on the map. Lewis and Clark named it "Goodriches Island," for one of the men of their party; see *Original Journals*, vi, p, 61.— Ed.

66 Creek,⁴⁴ where those travellers say they had the first sight of the Rocky Mountains, which, however, was certainly only the Little Rocky Mountain range. At this creek, the real pass of the Mauvaises Terres begins. The Missouri, while passing between these mountains, does not receive any lateral stream whatever, and few animals inhabit these heights, except great numbers of mountain sheep.

44 Likewise named for one of the party, Richard Windsor. This is now Cow Creek, draining the western borders of Little Rocky Mountains, and entering the Missouri from the north.— Ed.

Dreidoppel, who landed on the bank of Windsor Creek, heard a loud noise resembling what appeared to him to be that of a waterfall, which we could not examine. After one o'clock in the afternoon, we came to Lewis and Clarke's Softshell Turtle Creek, which may be considered as the western boundary of the Mauvaises Terres. Here we saw some buffaloes, and heard the cries of the prairie dogs. Mountain tops,⁴⁵ with singular pinnacles, look like the Glacier des Bossons in the valley of Chamouny; in other places, the mountains were regularly rounded, and divided into small cones. After a thunder-storm the evening was fine and serene. We saw some wild sheep on the hills, in pursuit of which some of our young men ascended without success. On the bank of the river they found pieces of petrified wood, of a grey or blackish colour, which is here very common, in large pieces, and entire trunks.

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45 See Plate 68, figures 21, 25, 26, in the accompanying atlas, volume xxv of our series.—
Ed.

On the following morning, the 3rd of August, we were at a second rapid, called Elk Fawn Rapid, which we passed as before.⁴⁶ The mountains here presented a rude wilderness, looking in part like a picture of destruction; large blocks of

⁴⁶ Lewis calls these “Elk Rapids,” but Clark gives the name as “Elk & Faun Riffle,” since “in the rapid we saw a Dow Elk & hir faun.” Coues thinks this the present Lone Pine Rapids.— Ed.

⁶⁷ sand-stone lay scattered around, among which [230] a small squirrel is found, probably of an unknown species. Some spots were covered with a low plant, with white flowers, and there are several species of grasses, on which the mountain sheep, or bighorn, is said chiefly to feed. Some of these mountains reminded us of the Mettenburg and the Eiger, in the canton of Berne. A few pines and junipers appear here and there, and on the declivities small patches of grass, like Alpine meadows, so that we could fancy ourselves now in Switzerland, now in the valley of the Rhine; but the naked rude character of the Mauvaises Terres seems to be unique in its kind, and this impression is strengthened when you look up and down the river. Only the croaking of the raven was heard in this desolate waste, which even the Indian avoids, and very unwillingly visits these steep mountains. As those people generally travel on horseback, they prefer the open prairies beyond the mountains, where they usually find the herds of buffaloes. We passed several rapids, one of which was called Dauphin's Rapid, after one of our *engagés*, who had fallen into the river at this place.⁴⁷ This last rapid gave us much trouble, till a favourable wind enabled us to use our sail. When the vessel lay to on the south bank, we sat down upon the hills, and contemplated the singular conformation of the vast, rude landscape, while part of our people were surrounding a large fire on the bank, till night spread her sable veil over the scene.

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47 Dauphin's Rapids became a prominent landmark on the upper river. They were located about six miles below Judith River, and formed a troublesome obstruction. According to Culbertson's reminiscences, they were named for Antoine Dauphin, who was here detected in a liaison with a Blackfoot woman. He was one of the first victims of smallpox in 1837.— Ed.

On the 4th of August the tracks of the wild sheep were seen in all directions, and our hunters immediately went in search of them. When we were returning with the plants we had collected, Papin came back with two large female bighorns, which he sent on board the boat; they were strong muscular animals, somewhat resembling in shape and colour the European wild goat (*Capra ibex*). The chase of these animals, in these hot and dry mountains, is very fatiguing. In Switzerland the chamois hunter everywhere finds springs and water to quench his thirst; this is not the case with the hunter in the Missouri mountains, who must descend to the river when he desires to cool his parched tongue. The bighorn generally lives in small or large companies, on the declivities and tops of the mountains, but in the evening, and at night, comes down to the lower ground, where there is more food; and, even in the daytime, is often seen towards the foot of the mountains. They are shot with a rifle, and good marksmen do not find it difficult to kill them, because, standing in elevated positions, they afford him a good aim. Small projections and stones suffice them, like our European wild goats and chamois, for a footing, or with a sudden leap, with their four feet together, to fix themselves firmly upon them, at which time their white-grey colour offers a certain mark to the long American rifles. The females, and the young animals generally, keep in companies, but the old bucks remain separate from them, two, four, or six together, and are easily recognised by their size, and their colossal heavy horns. Even small, young animals are very swift, and it is extremely difficult to get one alive. Mr. Mc Kenzie had promised a hunter to give him a horse if he would bring a young bighorn alive; but, up to this time, he had not been able to procure one. The names of bighorn and grosse corne, given to this animal by the English and [231] French, are properly taken from the large thick horns of the ram, which often weigh forty pounds the

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two, and make the animal's head appear quite small. Many travellers have spoken of this animal; for instance, Brackenridge, who calls it argolia, or argalia; and Richardson, who has given a pretty good drawing of it.⁴⁸ After I had taken the dimensions of our specimen, Mr. Bodmer made an accurate drawing of the head; and, as it was not possible to save the skins from the hungry engagés, they were given up to the cook. Our dinner consisted of bighorn flesh, which is something like mutton, but has an unpleasant peculiar taste, so that I cannot agree with Ross Cox, who calls it delicious meat; probably because he could find nothing better in many parts of the interior of North America.

⁴⁸ For Brackenridge's *Journal*, see our volume vi. Maximilian here refers to the eminent Scottish naturalist, Sir John Richardson (1787–1865). He entered the navy about 1807, was in several naval battles, and finally joined Sir John Franklin in both his exploring expeditions. In 1848–49 Richardson commanded a search expedition for Franklin. His published works are many, the one here noticed being his *Fauna Boreali Americana* (London, 1829–37), which he issued in collaboration with two other scientists.— Ed.

After passing several rapids, during a violent tempest, we reached Lewis and Clarke's Thompson's Creek,⁴⁹ which is considered as the western boundary of the Mauvaises Terres.⁵⁰ The appearance of the country was considerably altered; the eminences were flatter, the valley more open, and the bank of the river was more covered with green bushes. We were suddenly aroused from these contemplations of the surrounding country, by discovering that our vessel had sprung a leak; we therefore hastened on shore; the water had already risen into the cabin; the people unloaded the boat with all speed, and soon found the leak, which they stopped, so that in an hour and a half it was reloaded, for which we were indebted to the number of our crew.

⁴⁹ Now Birch Creek, named by Lewis and Clark for John B. Thompson, “a valuable member of our party. This creek contains a greater proportion of running water than common”— *Original Journals*, ii, p. 90. It is on the north side of the Missouri, rising in Bear Paw Mountain and running directly south.— Ed.

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50 Under the 2nd August, Softshell Turtle Creek is spoken of as forming this boundary. — H. Evans Lloyd.

On the 5th of August we passed Lewis and Clarke's Bull Creek, the mouth of which is in a pleasant country; and 70 at six o'clock we were near Judith River, which had, at that time, several very shallow mouths on the north bank of the Missouri.⁵¹ At half-past seven, when we lay to, to give our people time to get their breakfast, we saw five Indians coming round a hill on the south bank, whose firearms glistened in the bright light of the morning sun. They fired their pieces, and sat down on the bank, on which Mr. Mitchell and Dechamp immediately rode over to them. Several women, with their dogs drawing sledges, soon joined them, and the boat brought four men and a woman, who had a thick club in her hand, on board. They were tall and well made, and very different from the Assiniboins; they belonged to the tribe of the Gros Ventres, called by the English, Fall Indians. They had no covering on the upper part of the body, except buffalo skins. They sat down in the cabin, where they smoked their pipes, and had some refreshment. A troop of Indians now appeared on the bank, whom we saluted with a cannon shot, on which our visitors desired to be taken on shore. The boat brought back a chief and medicine-man, called Niatohsa (the little French man, or the French child), of whom Mr. Bodmer immediately took a very good likeness. This man wore his hair tied together in a thick bunch over the forehead, which only people of his description are allowed to do. As he spoke the Blackfoot language, Doucette was able to converse with him, while we proceeded rapidly, with a fair wind, and twenty-seven men towing us.

51 Bull Creek was so named by Lewis and Clark because (May 29, 1805) a buffalo bull charged through their camp then lying at the mouth of the stream. It is now Dog Creek, a southern affluent two miles and a half below Judith River. The latter is the largest southern branch west of the Musselshell. It rises between Sunny and Little Belt mountains, in what is known as Judith's Gap, and flows nearly north, on its way receiving many affluents. It was so named by William Clark for Miss Julia Hancock, who afterwards became his

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wife. Fort Chardon (or Fort F. A. C.) was built near its mouth in 1844, being destroyed the following year.— Ed.

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[232] Meantime, a number of Indians, on foot and horseback, had assembled on the bank, who hastened before to inform their countrymen of the approach of the traders, which is an event highly interesting to them. The sight of the Indians, all in motion, sometimes stopping to look at the vessel, and firing their pieces, gave great animation to the prairie. Being detained by a violent thunder-storm, it was one o'clock before we reached the place where the Missouri flows through a rather narrow gorge, from the remarkable sand-stone valley, called the Stone Walls;⁵² a white sand-stone hill appeared before us on the north bank, as the first specimen of that formation; and on the left was the mouth of Bighorn River,⁵³ between considerable hills, on which numbers of Indians had collected. In the front of the eminences the prairie declined gently towards the river where above 260 leather tents of the Indians were set up; the tent of the principal chief was in the fore-ground, and, near it, a high pole, with the American flag. The whole prairie was covered with Indians, in various groups, and with numerous dogs; horses of every colour were grazing round, and horsemen galloping backwards and forwards, among whom was a celebrated chief, who made a good figure on his light bay horse. While this was passing, several Indians had been on board, many of whom swam across

⁵² See Plate 74, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

⁵³ Now Arrow River, rising in Baldy Range and flowing northeast, forming part of the boundary between Chouteau and Fergus counties. There is, however, an inadvertence in the use of this name. Lewis and Clark at first named Judith's River Bighorn, later abandoning this cognomen for its present name. The next stream above, on the south side, the explorers named Slaughter River for a herd of buffalo slaughtered by Indians below its cliffs. The published map, however, errs by placing here two rivers — Bighorn

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(which should be an alternate for Judith) and Slaughter Creek beyond the stone walls. Clark's "Summary Statement," Original Journals, vi, p. 62, gives this correctly.— Ed.

By a typographical error the Crow name for the Bighorn is given wrongly as "Ichpnaotsa" instead of "Ichpoa-tassa" (close articulation, ich guttural, tassa soft, short, and without emphasis).— Maximilian.

72 to us; among them, a tall man came on board in this manner, shook off the water, and went without ceremony into the cabin, but Mr. Mitchell drove him out, and gave him to understand that none but the chiefs could be admitted there; he then had the Indians told to go back to their camp, where he would visit them.

While the camp was saluted at intervals with cannon shot, and the Indians answered with their guns, the keel-boat, which had hoisted its flag, was anchored on the north bank, opposite to the tents, a very necessary precaution to prevent our coming directly into contact with all the Indians at the same time. About forty Indian warriors, drawn up on the bank, having made a running fire, and our cannon again saluted, Mr. Mitchell, with the interpreter, Doucette, took the boat and rowed across. He alone had pistols, the others were unarmed. On the summit of the bank, all the Indians formed a long red line, and immediately below, on the water's edge, sat the chiefs, in a detached small body. After Mr. Mitchell had seated himself by them, and had some conversation with them, he invited them to accompany him on board, and brought us eight of these chiefs, who sat down in the cabin to smoke their pipes. Among them were several men of a good open character; but one was a very bad man, Mexkemaustan (the iron which moves),⁵⁴ whom Mr. Mitchell had turned out of doors the year before, at Fort Mc Kenzie, on account of his bad conduct. We were now entirely in the power of these people, and had every reason to fear the vengeance of this man.⁵⁵ Prompted, doubtless, by his own interests, he behaved, to our astonishment, in a most friendly manner; shook hands with us, and, like his comrades, gratefully accepted the presents which were made him. He wore

⁵⁴ See Plate 20, in accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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55 This was the same tribe, possibly the same band, with whom the battle of Pierre's Hole occurred the preceding summer. See our volume xxi, pp. 69–75.— Ed.

73 his hair in a thick knot on the forehead, and had a deceitful, fawning countenance. While we were engaged with these chiefs, we saw a number of men and women, from all parts of the bank, swim through the river, or cross [233] over to us in their round boats, made of buffalo skin, and our keel-boat was suddenly entered on every side and crowded with them. Tall, slender men covered the deck, thrust themselves into the apartments, and we were really overwhelmed with them. They all demanded brandy, powder and ball, and brought to exchange with us, skins, leather, and dried and fresh meat. The leather boats, laden with their articles for barter, were brought alongside the keel-boat, drawn by one swimmer, and pushed by another, and in this manner we were soon hemmed in, so that it was necessary to ask the chiefs to clear the vessel; they, indeed, induced the greater part of the young men to leap into the water, though only to enter the boat soon after on the other side.

Our situation was everything but agreeable, for these same Indians had entirely demolished a fort, on the frontiers of Canada, two years before, killed a clerk, and eighteen other persons, besides murdering several other white people in those parts; they had, in addition to this, had a quarrel with Lewis and Clarke,⁵⁶ and no confidence could we therefore place in them, though Mr. Mitchell affirmed that he always transacted business with them with pleasure, and had never had any proofs of the treachery imputed to them. If it was their intention to treat us in a hostile manner, there was no way for us to escape; and how easily might the most trifling dispute with these rude men lead to a breach, by which fifty whites, in the power of eight or nine hundred

56 Possibly the first is the massacre at St. John's house, referred to by John McLean in *Notes of Twenty-Five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory* (London, 1849), i, pp. 234–237.

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For Meriwether Lewis's difficulties with the Grosventres of the Prairies, consult *Original Journals*, v, pp. 218–227.— Ed.

74 Indians, would have had no chance. They were therefore treated with much apparent confidence and familiarity, and everything went off very well. A favourable wind for using our sail was very welcome, in assisting us to escape from this perilous situation. Doucette had been sent on shore with some goods, and instructions to barter with the Indians, and thus, in some measure, to satisfy their desires. We on board saw our people on shore closely surrounded by a great mass of Indians; the noisy traffic was long continued, though Mr. Mitchell had repeatedly given orders for the return of the boat. We were obliged to wait a long time, and already began to be apprehensive for the safety of our dealers, when we at length saw the boat, overloaded with Indians, put off from the bank, on which orders were given to proceed immediately on our voyage. About fifty robust Indians joined our men in towing, and we were drawn along very rapidly; our keel-boat was so crammed with people, that it drew much water. In this singular company we began to pass through the most interesting part of the whole course of the Missouri, namely, the Stone Walls; but we could not breathe freely enough duly to appreciate the surrounding scenery, before we were quit of our trouble-some visitors. The chiefs were repeatedly informed that the boat was ready to carry them on shore, and they had all received presents, with which, however, some of them were not satisfied; at length they were all sent off, with an intimation that they might go to Fort Mc Kenzie, to their allies, the Blackfeet, where the goods would be landed, and the barter conducted as they desired. We lay to for the night, on the right bank, at the fore part of the Stone Walls, and a number of Indians, especially women, who were found concealed in the vessel, and turned out, kindled fires near us. Many articles were missing, and we had given much more than we received, [234] yet we were truly glad at having 75 come off as well as we did. A strong watch, with an officer, was set for the night.

The Gros Ventres des Prairies are originally, it is affirmed, a branch of the Arrapahos; they lived chiefly in the country about the Saskatschawan (Rivière aux Rapides), but roamed

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about in all the prairies which border on the territory of the Blackfeet and Arrapahos Indians; Alexander Mc Kenzie, and other travellers, call them Fall Indians, because they lived near the falls of the above-mentioned river.⁵⁷ They are well made, little differing in appearance from the Piekanns, and other Blackfeet. They ornament their large buffalo robes in a peculiar manner, with narrow parallel transverse stripes of porcupine quills, and many little pieces of scarlet cloth fastened to them in rows. This way of adorning their robes is said to be likewise usual among the Arrapahos; their shoes, like those of the Blackfeet, are generally of different colours; their tents, and household utensils, are quite similar. I saw many war clubs among them, made of the long end of an elk's horn; daggers, with handles made of the jaws and teeth of a bear, are not uncommon among them.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ For Sir Alexander Mackenzie see Franchère's *Narrative*, in our volume vi, p. 185, note 4. For the Blackfeet and Arapaho see our volume v, p. 225, note 120. The tribal affinity between the Grosventres of the Prairies and the Arapaho was recognized by frequent visits of the former to the land of the latter. Consult Chittenden, *Fur-Trade*, ii, pp. 852, 853. — Ed.

⁵⁸ See p. 105 for illustration of Grosventre dagger.— Ed.

These Indians were formerly very poor, had bad tents, and could not buy any fire-arms; they have, however, recovered of late, and supplied their wants. They are addicted to begging, like all the Indians; steal sometimes, especially the women and children; but, in this respect, the Crows are said to surpass all the other tribes. These people had lately been compelled to make vigorous efforts to ransom about thirty of their men, who had fallen into the hands of their 76 enemies — the Crows. In their engagements with this tribe, they lost so many men as to occasion among them an undue proportion between the sexes. Well informed persons affirm, that they have at present not many more than 200 tents, and from 400 to 500 warriors; though others have assured me that their number far exceeds this. Alexander Mc Kenzie estimated them, at the time of his journey, at 600

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warriors. They possess many dogs, and at present more horses than they formerly had. In case of distress, they sometimes eat the dogs; of late they have conducted themselves very well in trading, and behaved peaceably towards the Whites; whereas they were formerly enemies to the Americans. The buffalo skins, dressed by them, are said to be now better than those of most of the other Indians. In the main, their customs agree with those of the Blackfeet, and they dispose of their dead in the same manner. They are reputed to be brave in war. Their language is the most difficult of all those of the Missouri and the Rocky [235] Mountains. The Fur Company had not a single interpreter for this language, though great pains had been taken to procure one.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Most of the Grosventres used the Blackfoot language as well as their own, which is described as difficult by all travellers to this region.— Ed.

The Indians who had passed the night near our vessel returned very early, on the 6th of August, to their camp, that they might be able to travel in one day to Fort Mc Kenzie. The night, which was very cool, had passed over quietly, and we had every reason to be satisfied with the behaviour of this numerous band of Indians, for few other tribes would have conducted themselves so peaceably and moderately on a similar occasion. This, it is true, was for their own interest, since they had hitherto been sufferers from the bad reputation which they had among the Whites.

At break of day the weather was extremely cool and disagreeable; the thermometer at half-past seven was only at 77 58°, and a bleak wind prevailed, which enabled us to use our sails. The part of the country called The Stone Walls, which now opened before us, has nothing like it on the whole course of the Missouri; and we did not leave the deck for a single moment the whole forenoon. Lewis and Clarke have given a short description of this remarkable tract, without, however, knowing the name of Stone Walls, which has since been given it.⁶⁰ In this tract of twelve or fifteen miles, the valley of the Missouri has naked, moderately high mountains, rounded above, or extending like ridges, with tufts of low plants here and there, on which the thick strata⁶¹ of whitish coarse-grained friable sand-

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stone, which extends over all this country, are everywhere visible. As soon as we have passed Judith River this white sand-stone begins to stand out in some places, till we have passed Bighorn River, and entered the narrower valley of the Stone [236] Walls, where the strata extend, without interruption, far through the country, and lie partly halfway up the mountain, and partly form the summits. They are the continuation of the white sand-stone which occurs in such singular forms at the Blackhills. At all the places which are bare of grass,

60 The *Original Journals* speak of Stonewall Creek and “those imence nateral walls.”—Ed.

61 Similar sand-stone strata are said to occur in other parts of North America; and, in South America, Poeppig seems to have met with them, as he describes them in the following passage: — “Towards noon we approached the highest point on this road, the Alto de Lacchagual (4718 metres, according to Rivero). We were much struck with the sand-stone rocks, which we approached about the half way of the journey, after having already seen them ever since the morning, in different directions before us. As isolated masses, of the most varied forms, they extend in rows along the ridge of the far-stretching chain of hills, and form, in many places, really gigantic walls. Low groups, probably only broken fragments, lie scattered irregularly around, but high, apparently regular pillars rise far above them in the distance, that look partly like basalt, for which they are taken at Lima; partly like works constructed by art. By their symmetrical arrangement they sometimes seem to be the ruins of an immensely large building; at others, appear like large regular quadrangles with square gates, between what seem to be high bastions. The form of the inverted cone occurs here as among the rocks at Adersbach, only the proportions must be conceived as suitable to the Andes, for many of these dark pillars are, undoubtedly, several hundred feet high. The eye exerts itself in vain to discover the termination of these stony columns. They vanish at a great distance in the north-west, between similar lines, which appear to meet them at a certain angle. At one place only we approached them close enough to be able to examine at least the lowest fragments;

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we saw, however, little more than a very soft, coarse sand-stone, of a whitish colour, which has become black only by the action of the air, and decomposition of the surface. These remarkable groups have no particular name, and no popular tradition is connected with their romantic forms, as in the Hartz. The Peruvian possesses, in this respect, less imagination than the Chileno, who makes something out of every rock, the form of which is unusual; sees a church on the summit of the Andes of Santa Rosa, and, in a lateral valley of the road from Mendoza, fancies that he discovers a palace, and a long procession of monks performing penance.”— (Reisebeschreibung, Vol. II. p. 48).— Maximilian.

78 they are visible, and there we see horizontal or perpendicular angles and ledges resembling walls, some of which contain caverns. This sand-stone formation is the most striking when it forms the tops of more isolated mountains, separated by gentle valleys and ravines. Here, on both sides of the river, the most strange forms are seen, and you may fancy that you see colonnades, small round pillars with large globes or a flat slab at the top, little towers, pulpits, organs with their pipes, old ruins, fortresses, castles, churches, with pointed towers, &c. &c., almost every mountain bearing on its summit some similar structure.

Towards nine o'clock the valley began to be particularly interesting, for its fantastic forms were more and more numerous; every moment, as we proceeded along, new white fairy-like castles appeared, and a painter who had leisure might fill whole volumes with these original landscapes. As proofs of this we may refer to some of these figures, which Mr. Bodmer sketched very accurately.⁶² In many places the clay formed the summits of the hills; in these parts there were patches of *Juniperus repens*, and on the bank of the river, small and narrow strips covered with artemisia and

62 See Plate 67, figures 6–9, and Plate 68, figures 22–29, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

79 the thorn with flesh-coloured leaves (*Sarcobatus nes*). Long tracts of the sand-stone strata perfectly resembled a large blown-up fortress, because the stratification everywhere

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gave these walls a certain regularity, while, at the same time, they bore marks of having been destroyed by violence. In several places where the sand-stone summit appeared plainly to represent an ancient knight's castle, another remarkable rock was seen to traverse the mountain in narrow perpendicular strata, like regularly built walls. These walls consist of a blackish-brown rock, in the mass of which large olive-green crystals are disseminated.⁶³ They run in a perfectly straight line from the summits of the mountain to the foot, appearing to form the outworks of the old castles.⁶⁴ The surface is divided by rents or furrows into pretty regular cubic figures like bricks, which renders their similarity to a work of art still more complete. The breadth of these perpendicular strata seldom exceeds one or two feet. One of these walls was particularly striking, which ran, without interruption, over the tops of three mountains, and through the clefts between them, and connected the three masses of white sand-stone on the summits in so regular a manner, that one could hardly fancy they were natural, but that they were a work of art. All these eminences are inhabited by numerous [237] troops of the wild mountain sheep, of which we often saw thirty or fifty at a time climbing and springing over the sand-stone formation. These harmless animals often stood on a lofty peak, far beyond the reach of our rifles,

⁶³ The extensive collection of all kinds of rock in this remarkable sand-stone valley, was unfortunately lost in the fire on board the Company's steam-boat in the year 1834, and I am, consequently, unable to determine more particularly the kind of the above-mentioned rock, standing out in narrow perpendicular walls. Lewis and Clark call it a conglomerate; but this expression seems to me not to be well chosen.— Maximilian.

⁶⁴ See Plate 67, figure 4, and Plate 68, figure II, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

⁸⁰ while the outlines of their forms were clearly defined against the bright blue sky. As we passed a hollow lateral valley, we were shown the place at which the hunters of the keel-boat had, last year, hemmed in a whole herd of these animals in such a manner that not one escaped.

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Early in the afternoon we came to a remarkable place where the Missouri seems to issue from a narrow opening, making a turn round a dark brown rugged pointed tower-like rock on the south, to which the traders have given the name of the Citadel Rock.⁶⁵ This singular isolated rock seems to consist of clay-slate, grauwacke, and a conglomerate of fragments of rock in yellowish clay, and is joined to the south bank by a ridge. On the bank opposite to it the white sand-stone runs over the ridge of the hills, which Mr. Bodmer has very accurately represented.⁶⁶ After we had doubled the Citadel Rock we lay to on the south bank, and our people took their dinner. We did not stop long, and had to contend against a cold, very high wind, while the country was flatter and more open, with only a few of the oddly-fashioned rocks. Immediately above the Citadel there is a similar dark brown much smaller rock, and soon afterwards we saw, on the north bank, a jagged conical rock, which stands quite isolated on a hill covered with short grass. Two other less remarkable tops follow, of which the towers (according to the course of the river) resemble a small castle, while the other hills in this part have again the flat and rounded forms. A herd of wild sheep looked down upon us from these heights. We had, however, not yet taken leave of the extraordinary sand-stone valley, on the contrary, we now came to a most remarkable place. The stratum of sand-stone, regularly bedded in low hills, runs along both banks of the river, which is rather narrow, like a high,

65 See Plate 18, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

66 See Plate 74, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

81 smooth, white wall, pretty equally horizontal above, with low pinnacles on the top. At some distance before us, the eye fell on an apparently narrow gate, the white walls in the two banks approaching so near to each other, that the river seemed to be very contracted in breadth as it passed between them,⁶⁷ and this illusion was heightened by the turn which the Missouri makes in this place to the south-west. Looking backwards, the high, black, conical rock rose above the surrounding country; and on our right hand, there were, on the bank, dark perpendicular walls, seemingly divided into cubes, in the form of an

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ancient Gothic chapel with a chimney. Some pines grew singly about these walls, where there appear to be regular gateways formed by art. A little further on there was, on the north bank, a mass which much resembled a long barrack or some other considerable building,⁶⁸ the corners of which were as regular as if they had been hewn and built up by a skilful workman. Beyond the rocky gate a herd of buffaloes were grazing on a small lateral valley; our hunters contrived to get near them and to kill four. As [238] evening was come, and the people had to cut up the buffaloes, we lay to for the night on the north bank. I took this opportunity to ascend the remarkable eminences. I found the sand-stone so soft that it crumbled in my hand; whereas the yellowish-red sand-stone, which, in some places, formed the tops or roofs of the strange white masses, were of a rather harder grain. Extremely stunted and often strangely contorted cedars (*juniperus*) grew among these rocks; but the pines (*Pinus flexilis*) were well grown and flourishing, though not above forty feet high. When standing among the remarkable masses of the sand-stone, we fancied ourselves in a garden laid out in the old French style, where urns, obelisks, statues, as

67 Represented in Plate 74 of the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

68 Figure 10 of Plate 68, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

82 well as hedges and trees clipped into various shapes, surround the astonished spectator. The balls and slabs, often of a colossal size, which rested on the above-mentioned pedestals, were likewise soft and friable, but not so much so as the white sand-stone, and there were in them many round holes. Stratification could be perceived in all these stones, for even round spherical blocks were easily divided into regular plates, nearly an inch thick. Among these fragments the tracks of the mountain sheep were everywhere discernible, and on the lower declivities, which were covered with grass, those of the buffaloes. In the prairie beyond the Stone Walls, *Cactus ferox* grew, and at their foot, the beautiful *Bartonia ornata* , with its large snow-white flowers.

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We looked with impatience for the following day, the 7th, in order to reach what is called the Gate of the Stone Walls. We soon came to a dark brown rock, like a tower, rising in the middle of the white wall, the front of which had fallen down, and had a great number of boulders about it. From this tower it is between 600 and 800 paces to the place which appeared to us yesterday to form a narrow gate; before reaching it, there is, on the north bank, a stream called, by Lewis and Clarke, Stonewall Creek, which is about fifty paces broad at the mouth, and its banks are bordered with high poplars.⁶⁹ A cold wind blew from the gate, beyond which there was another tower-like dark brown rock, not so large as the other, while the white sand-stone walls decreased and became less regular. The hills became gradually lower, the sand-stone partly disappeared, and was only seen occasionally. About eleven o'clock we saw two Indians — a man and a woman — who, on their approach, were recognized to be Blood Indians. They were returning from

⁶⁹ Now Eagle Creek, rising in Bear Paw Mountains and entering the Missouri from the northeast.— Ed.

⁸³ the Manitaries, where we recollected having seen them: the man was well made, and both were very neatly dressed. We took them on board, passed several islands, and had a fine view of Bear's-paw Mountain, nearly behind us, in the north-east.⁷⁰ The hills on the bank had, in general, nothing remarkable in their appearance; the strata of the sand-stone were partly exposed at their base, because the sand under them had either fallen or been washed away. The stratum of whitish-grey sand-stone still ran along the hills with an equally thick layer of clay and sand over it, covered with green turf; but what might here be called sand-stone was rather a half indurated clay and sand, mixed with blocks of sand-stone. A mile further up, we saw, to [239] the south, in the direction of the river, the foremost chain of the Rocky Mountains, looking like a distant blue range, which was soon hid behind the naked, sterile banks of the river, which had only here and there some old trees.⁷¹

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70 Bear Paw Mountains are located in Chouteau County, west of the Little Rockies. They are not a continuous chain, but a group of high, steep, broken hills partly covered with timber, forming part of the watershed between Milk and Missouri rivers. The western end approaches within eight or ten miles of the Missouri. In these mountains occurred the battle of September 30-October 2, 1877, when United States troops captured Chief Joseph and the largest part of his band of Nez Percés.— Ed.

71 This group is the Highwood Mountains, on the southern borders of Chouteau County, directly south of Fort Benton. These mountains rise to an altitude of 7,600 feet.— Ed.

On the morning of the 8th of August, we again saw before us the summits of the Rocky Mountains, and came to Spaniard Island, where several of our hunters returned from an excursion with wild geese and a large rattlesnake. They had seen from the eminences the eternal snow of the Oregon, and observed six Indians on horseback, who were going in the direction of Fort Mc Kenzie. They brought with them a quantity of choke cherries, the fruit of the *Prunus padus Virginiana*, which is considered to be very indigestible. This 84 fruit is said to have cured Captain Lewis, on his journey, of a dysentery and fever.⁷² Proceeding on our voyage, we followed the right bank, composed of steep, yellowish-red walls, the base of which was a bluish clay, and were delighted with the fine bright green colour of the waters of the Missouri, which contradicted the assertion that it is discoloured by the junction of Maria River, from the mouth of which we were now not far distant. Turning round a point of land, we saw before us a long table-formed range of hills, behind which is Fort Mc Kenzie, which we might have reached by land in half an hour. In the front of these hills, on the north bank, is the mouth of Maria River, called, by the Canadians, Marayon;⁷³ after we had passed it, we saw, about six o'clock, on the same bank, the ruins of the first fort, or trading post, which Mr. Kipp, clerk of the American Fur Company, had built, in the year 1831, in the territory of the Blackfeet. This fort was abandoned in 1832, and the present Fort Mc Kenzie built in its stead, and this, too, is soon to be abandoned. In this manner the Fur Company continues to advance, and firmly establishes itself among

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nations that are but little known, where the fur trade is still profitable. The forsaken ruins of the first fort were entirely demolished and partly burnt by the Indians after the departure of the Whites. On the heights of this part, we saw two Indians on horseback, who galloped off as soon as they perceived us, doubtless to carry the news of our arrival to the fort.⁷⁴ Several islands, opposite the ruins of

72 See Lewis's own description of his cure, by the use of this fruit, in *Original Journals*, ii, p. 142.— Ed.

73 Maria's River rises in the main chain of the Rocky Mountains, and flows nearly due east into the Missouri, forming its largest northern tributary beyond Milk River. Upon reaching the mouth, Lewis and Clark were uncertain, until they had explored each branch, which was the main stream of the Missouri. They named the northern tributary for Captain Lewis's cousin, Miss Maria Wood, later Mrs. Clarkson.— Ed.

74 For James Kipp see our volume xxii, p. 345, note 319. The site of this post was directly in the angle of the rivers on the west bank of the Missouri; it has since been swept away by the river. While the fort was building, Kipp requested the Indians to depart and return after seventy-five days, when to their surprise they found a completed structure. In the spring of 1832 most of the engagés declined to re-enter the service because of the hazardous situation of the post; moreover, the furs had to be transported to Fort Union. Kipp had, therefore, no alternative but to abandon the stockade, which the Indians soon burned. Three French-Canadians, having taken Blackfoot wives, remained with this tribe. See "Affairs at Fort Benton," in *Montana Historical Society Contributions*, iii, pp. 203–204.— Ed.

85 the fort, obliged us to pass through a narrow channel on the south bank, which was not more than forty paces broad, with a very rapid current.

At twilight we lay to under the high clay wall of the southern bank. We were much surprised that no notice had yet been taken of us by the fort, which was so near, though,

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in the two preceding years, the steamer had been welcomed by the Blackfeet further down the river; and as we were now so close to the fort, we might expect to see the white inhabitants of the post; besides this, the Manitaries had told us that the garrison of Fort Mc Kenzie had had a dispute with the Indians, and Dechamp affirmed that he had heard today some cannon-shot. All these considerations, taken together, excited in Mr. Mitchell — who was well aware of the little reliance that could be placed on the Indians — some apprehensions for the safety of the fort and our expedition. Small parties of Whites, at a distance from the Missouri, are generally murdered, or at [240] least plundered, by the Blackfeet, if they take them for fur hunters; we had, therefore, reason to proceed with much caution. Accordingly, Major Mitchell resolved to reconnoitre the fort in person, and, meantime, a strong night watch was ordered on board the vessel. Mr. Mitchell chose four of our hunters, who were thoroughly acquainted with the country, and well armed, to accompany him. The boat landed them on the north bank of the river, where it remained in safety. They set out on their expedition at nightfall, the 86 moon shining brightly. It was agreed that, in case of a misunderstanding with the Indians, we should drop down the river if Mr. Mitchell had not returned before midnight. The people on board the vessel remained on the alert, awaiting the result. The night was exceedingly fine, warm, and serene, but the moonlight did not last long. We plainly heard the drums of the Indians in the direction of the fort, and, on the opposite bank of the river, the loud howling of the wolves. At half-past ten o'clock Mr. Mitchell returned with two of his men. He had ascended the hills, but had lost his way, and came to the mouth of the Maria River, from which he now returned. The other two had again proceeded towards the fort. The feet of our wanderers had suffered severely by the thorns of the cactus plants. As we had no information of the state of the fort, we had nothing to do but patiently to wait for daylight.

Before daybreak, on the 9th, a heavy rain set in, which continued, at intervals, the whole day, and the mosquitoes were very troublesome. We proceeded early along the steep clay walls of the southern bank, which were above a hundred feet high, and saw, on our right hand, gentle eminences, from which the antelopes fled at our approach. We were just

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doubling a point of land, when we saw five white horsemen coming towards us. The party consisted of Mr. Patton, clerk of the Company, and hitherto director of Fort Mac Kenzie, and some of his people. They galloped to the bank, discharged their pieces, and were welcomed on board. The news they brought dispelled all our apprehensions; universal joy prevailed on account of our happy arrival; and, after we had breakfasted together, they rode back to the fort, to which we had thirteen miles to go by water. We saw the horsemen gallop over the high banks of the river, on which groups of Indians were everywhere seen. Whole 87 bands of their brown children came to the river's edge, and accompanied the vessel with shouts of joy. Frequently two Indians were riding on one horse; great numbers of those animals, of all colours, were grazing in the prairie. Our arrival gave animation to the whole scene, and our guns began to fire salutes from time to time, in which the heavy rain was very troublesome.

We passed the last winding of the river, and a most interesting scene presented itself. A prairie extends along the north bank, at a point to which, projecting towards the river, we saw Fort Mc Kenzie, on which the American flag was displayed.⁷⁵ A great number of Indian tents was erected in the plain, which was covered with the red population in various groups, all of whom hastened to the bank. Near to the fort, the men (about 800 Blackfeet) were drawn up [241] in a close body, like a well-ordered battalion. They formed a long dark brown line, with a black stripe at the top, which was occasioned by their black hair. The palisades and the roof of the fort, as well as the neighbouring trees, were occupied by Indian women and their children, singly, or in groups, and the whole prairie was covered with them. The smoke of the powder rose in the fort, and the thunder of the cannon re-echoed from the high banks. While our vessel was slowly approaching this interesting scene, the boat brought an Indian, the White Buffalo (soldier of

⁷⁵ Fort McKenzie, whose founding is described by Maximilian in chapter xix, *post*, was situated about six miles above the mouth of Maria's River, a little below a cluster of small islands, on the west side of the river, opposite bold bluffs. It was maintained until 1844. In that year Culbertson having been transferred to another post, Chardon and Harvey, in

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command at Fort McKenzie, took summary vengeance on the neighboring Indians for theft by discharging cannon at them as they came to trade at the post, and killing over thirty. Thereupon the traders were forced by native hostility to abandon this fort and retreat to the newly-constructed Fort Chardon, near Judith's River (see note 53, *ante*, p. 71). The Indians burned Fort McKenzie, which was thereafter spoken of as Fort Brulé, and its site as Brulé Bottom.— Ed.

88 the fort),⁷⁶ who was well known as a good-natured, tolerably trustworthy man. The fire of musketry among the mass of the Indian warriors was uninterrupted, and their war cry sounded over to us, while our vessel, in spite of the rain, kept up a brisk fire. In front of the Indians we saw three or four chiefs in red and blue uniforms, trimmed with lace, and wearing round hats with plumes of feathers. The most distinguished among them was Mexkehme-Sukahs, (the iron shirt), dressed in a scarlet uniform, with blue facings and lace, with a drawn sabre in his hand; riding without stirrups, he managed, with great dexterity, his light bay horse, which was made very restiff by the firing of the musketry. The most respected chief among the Blackfeet, at this time, was the Spotted Elk (Ketscpen-Nuka), who, after a successful battle with the Flatheads, had changed his name, and was now called Ninoch-Kiaiu (chief of the bears). The other chiefs besides these two were called the Old Heart, now called the Stiff Foot, the Stiff Leg, the Big Soldier, and the Red Buffalo.

⁷⁶ Those Indians are called soldiers at the trading posts who are employed as a kind of police to maintain order among their own people.— Maximilian.

Comment by Ed. Catlin painted a portrait of a Blackfoot chief and medicine man named White Buffalo. See his *North American Indians*, i, p. 34, Plate 15.

We approached the landing-place, and at length set foot on shore, amidst a cloud of smoke caused by the firing of the Indians and of the *engagés* of the fort, who were drawn up in a line on the bank. Here we were received by the whole population, with the Indian chiefs at their head, with whom we all shook hands. The Chief of the Bears was quite an

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original: his countenance, which was not very handsome, with a large crooked nose, was partly hid by his long hair. On his head he had a round felt hat, with a brass rim, and a silver medal on his breast. We were led through a long double line of the red men, the expression of whose countenances 89 and their various dresses greatly amused us. When we arrived at the fort there was no end of the shaking of hands; after which we longed for repose, and distributed our baggage in the rooms. We had happily accomplished the voyage from Fort Union in thirty-four days, had lost none of our people, and subsisted during the whole time by the produce of the chase.

CHAPTER XIX DESCRIPTION OF FORT MC KENZIE AND THE ENVIRONS, AND OF THE INDIAN POPULATION LIVING THERE

Fort Mc Kenzie — The Blackfeet; their Appearance, Head-dress, &c.

Fort Mc Kenzie , which, at the time of its first establishment in 1832, was called by Mr. Mitchell, its founder, Fort Piekann, is designed for carrying on the fur trade with the three branches of the Blackfoot Indians, and several other neighbouring nations, as the Gros Ventres des Prairies, the Sassis,⁷⁷ and the Kutasas, or Kutnehas.⁷⁸ As I have already said, the American Fur Company concluded, in the year 1831, a commercial convention with those tribes, and sent for that purpose the interpreter, Berger, a Canadian, who was pretty well acquainted with the language of the Black-feet

⁷⁷ The Sassis, or Sarcis (*Sarcees*), are a branch of the Chippewans, who live further to the north, and must not be confounded with the Ojibbeways (Chippeways). (See A. McKenzie, pages lxxi. and cxvi.) Tanner speaks of their language; and Captain Franklin, in his first journey (page 109), says that this tribe had 150 tents. Dr. Morse, in his Report (page 34), calls the Indians mentioned here, Sursees. According to Captain Bonneville, they are usually included under the name of Blackfeet; which, however, is by no means the case in the part of the country through which I travelled.— Maximilian. *Comment by Ed.* The Sarcee are a small but brave and mischievous tribe belonging to the Athabaskan family — the Tinneh stock, related either to the Chepewyan or Beaver Indians. Early in the

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nineteenth century they migrated southward, and joined the Blackfoot confederacy. They have always roamed in British territory, and are now upon a reserve in Alberta, a short distance south of Calgary. In 1901 they numbered 205, and were employed in farming and cattle-herding.

78 The Kutasas, or Kutnehas, live beyond the sources of Maria River, on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, and form a tribe, few in number, of which we shall have occasion to speak in the sequel. Dr. Morse (Loc. cit. page 34) calls them Coutouns. Several other tribes of Indian nations — for instance, the Ripids (*ibid.* page 34), have never been mentioned to me.— Maximilian.

91 who brought seventy Indians of those nations to a conference at Fort Union.

At his first meeting with these dangerous people they were going to kill him, and he was saved by a certain chief, after many disputes. The convention which Mr. Mc Kenzie concluded with the Indians, after those negotiations, will be found in the Appendix.⁷⁹ As soon as it was agreed to by both parties, Mr. Kipp was sent with a keel-boat laden with goods to Maria River, and Fort Piekann, now in ruins, was founded. The sight of the numerous assemblage of different [243] Indian nations collected here on that occasion is said to have been highly interesting. As the situation of the fort was subsequently found to be unfavourable, Major Mitchell, who succeeded Mr. Kipp, transferred the trading post to its present situation, where an extensive prairie was better suited to the meeting of numerous Indians. When the Company's people landed at this place in 1832, the present fort was erected in a few days. While the work was going on, they lived in the keel-boat, and were actually blockaded by at least 4000 or 5000 men; and, on the whole, by an Indian population of 10,000 or 12,000 persons, extremely dangerous, in whom no confidence could be placed, and whose perfidious, sanguinary, and predatory character was sufficiently known. In fact, some insignificant disputes nearly produced a breach of the peace, which would have inevitably led to the destruction of the crew of the boat, and was prevented only by the decision and resolute conduct of Mr. Mitchell. The Indians had

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already cut the rope which held the keel-boat the only hope of the Americans, to the bank, whose situation at this time was extremely critical, as the Blood Indians in

79 See our volume xxiv. For different accounts of this embassy and the subsequent treaty, see James Stuart, "Adventure on the Upper Missouri," in *Montana Historical Society Contributions*, i, pp. 80–85; Bradley, "Affairs at Fort Benton (Culbertson's Journal)," *ibid.*, iii, pp. 201–203; also *Larpenteur's Journal*, i, pp. 109–115.— Ed.

92 particular had always been the declared enemies of the Whites. As soon as the traders got into the fort, which was quickly completed, their situation was much changed. They were secure from the attacks of the Indians, and had sufficient provisions, powder, and ball, for a considerable time. The Indians were no longer admitted indiscriminately; suitable precautions were adopted; and the Piekanns, who were the principal tribe inhabiting the surrounding country, and some families of whom are found here at all seasons of the year, set up their tents in the vicinity.

The present fort is 120 paces from the north bank of the Missouri, which a little below makes a large bend. From this to the highest chain of the Rocky Mountains is about 100 English miles; but to the beginning of the mountains, not more than fifteen or twenty miles, and a good day's journey to the Falls of the Missouri.

The fort itself is built in the same manner as the other trading posts already described; it forms a quadrangle, the sides of which are forty-five or forty-seven paces in length, and is defended by two block-houses, with some pieces of cannon. It is much smaller than Fort Union, and worse and more slightly built. The dwellings are of one story, and low; the rooms small, generally without floorings, with a chimney, a door, a small window with parchment instead of glass, and a very flat roof covered with green sods, where the inhabitants post themselves, when, in case of being attacked, they have to fire over the high pickets. The flag-staff stands in the centre of the court-yard. The gate is strong, double, and well protected; and, when the trade with the Indians is going on, the inner gate is closed: the entrance to the Indian store, between the two gates, is then free, a strong

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guard being stationed at the store. We had brought with us the glass windows, and other necessary 93 materials, for the proposed new fort. Before our arrival, the inhabitants of the fort were twenty-seven white men, and several Indian women, married to them, to whom our arrival made an addition of fifty-three persons. All these people, excepting the [244] first table for six persons, lived entirely on meat, so that we may assume that two buffaloes daily were required for their consumption. When we consider the generally very good appetites of the Canadians, of whom it is proverbially said that two of them will nearly devour a whole side of a buffalo, it is evident how necessary it is to have good hunters, and also to purchase large quantities of meat from the Indians. They generally receive twenty balls and the necessary powder for all the flesh of a buffalo cow, or even less when these animals are numerous; but as many as forty charges for a gun are paid them when the buffaloes are at a distance.

A level prairie surrounds this fort; and, about 800 paces beyond it, the chain of hills, about 80 to 100 feet high, runs in the direction from south to north, and about 2000 paces above the fort reaches the Missouri, and then runs along its bank. The banks of the river, and the low islands on it, are here and there bordered with wood and bushes, and some islands are entirely covered with them. On ascending to the top of the chain of hills, you look over a level dry prairie, in which, at a small distance, are the pretty deep beds of two rivers, Maria River, and Teton River, called, by Lewis and Clarke, Tansy River.⁸⁰ The latter, which is a small river, flows through a beautifully verdant valley, the bottom of which is covered with tall, shady poplars; there is good pasture of high grasses, and other plants. It falls into the Maria not far above its mouth, after having flowed for some distance almost parallel to the Missouri,

⁸⁰ I must here observe that Lewis and Clarke's large special map is very correct for the country about Fort Mc Kenzie.— Maximilian.

⁹⁴ to which it approaches so nearly, at between three and four miles from the fort, that the piece of land which separates the two rivers, is not more than 500 or 600 paces broad.⁸¹

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81 Teton River — not named for the Sioux tribe of that designation, but from the French word signifying “breast,” so called from three neighboring mountain peaks — was designated by Lewis and Clark first Rose then Tansy River. It is the largest affluent of Maria's, rising in the main range of the Rockies in two branches, flowing due east until very near the Missouri; then turning abruptly northeast, and discharging into Maria's. The narrows where the Teton approaches so near the Missouri was known to the voyageurs as “Cracon du Nez.”— Ed.

Below the fort, in the first bend of the river, is an island, called Horse Island, where the horses belonging to the fort are sent to graze in the winter. They never have any other food than grass in summer; and in the winter, the bark of poplar trees, which they gnaw off. They never enter a stable. The south bank of the Missouri consists of high clay walls, in which there are doubtless strata of sand-stone, because numbers of beautiful impressions of shells are found immediately at the edge of the bank. These high walls must be very dangerous to the fort, in case of an attack by the Indians, because an effective fire may be made from them into the internal quadrangle of the fort. This dangerous position was one of the causes which led to the resolution of founding a new settlement further up the river.⁸²

82 This new fort was not built until after the abandonment of Fort McKenzie (see note 75, *ante*, p. 87), when Culbertson founded Fort Lewis, which was in turn soon deserted for Fort Benton.— Ed.

The Missouri itself does not abound in fish in the neighbourhood of Fort Mc Kenzie, yet soft shell turtles are sometimes caught, as well as cat-fish, of the two species already mentioned, one of which we obtained during our stay, and which, as proof of the voracity of these animals, had in its stomach a stone polished by the action of the water, five inches long and four and a half broad. A sturgeon, of a species which, we were told,

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is not found in the Mississippi, 95 was caught here, and universally considered as an extraordinary rarity.

[245] The prairie of which I have already spoken was now animated, in the vicinity of the fort, by the camp of the Piekanns, which was set up in four divisions at about 400 paces from the pickets. The grass was trodden down or fed off by the people and numerous horses, and on every side were horsemen, groups of pedestrians and dogs, besides the horses belonging to the fort, which were brought out in the morning, under the care of four well armed horsemen, and conducted back in the evening at sunset. As we shall have frequent occasion in the sequel to come in contact with the Indians of this part of the country, this may be the best place to speak of the Blackfeet, who are the original population of the prairies.

The Blackfeet form a numerous nation, which is divided into three tribes, speaking one and the same language. These tribes are—

1. The Siksekai or Seksekai, the Blackfeet properly so called.⁸³
2. The Kahna or Kaënna, the Blood Indians.⁸⁴
3. The Piekanns.

⁸³ The Siksekai signifies, in their language, Blackfoot, and all the other nations have translated the name into their languages.— Maximilian.

⁸⁴ The name of Blood Indians is said to have the following origin. Before the Blackfeet divided into separate bands, they were encamped in the neighbourhood of five or six tents of the Kutonas or the Sarcees, I believe of the former. The Siksekai and the Kahna desired to kill the Kutonas; and though the Piekanns declared against it, a part of those Indians attacked the few huts during the night, killed all the inmates, took the scalps, stained their faces and hands with the blood, and then returned. Disputes ensued in consequence

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of this cruel action; the Indians separated from each other, and the murderers received the name which they have ever since retained. They have always manifested a more sanguinary and predatory character than the others, of whom the Piekanns have always been remarked as the most moderate and humane of their nation.— Maximilian.

All together they can bring into the field 5000 or 6000 warriors, and, doubtless, amount to 18,000 or 20,000 souls, 96 which number is assumed by Dr. Morse, though he thinks it below the truth. Warden estimates the number of the Blackfeet at only 5000 souls, of whom the half, he says, are warriors; this is unquestionably far too low an estimate. We shall have the number of 18,000 or 20,000 souls, if we reckon only three women, children, and old men, for one warrior, and this is certainly a very low estimate. The Blackfeet move about in the prairies near the Rocky Mountains, and partly live among those mountains, but especially they dwell between the three forks of the Missouri, of which Jefferson River is the most northerly; the Madison River, the western or central; and the Gallatin the most southerly or easterly. They live, however, especially the Piekanns, as far down as Maria River, in the prairies of which they move about, and where all the three tribes sometimes meet to trade with the American Fur Company. They likewise trade with the Hudson's Bay Company, and with the Spaniards of Santa Fe, as appears from the Spanish blankets, crosses, &c., which they wear. There is, probably, no reason to doubt that they take most of these things in war, for the rifles, compasses, &c., which we found in their possession, were marked with the names of the owners. They are always dangerous [246] to white men who are hunting singly in the mountains, especially to the beaver hunters, and kill them whenever they fall into their hands; hence the armed troops of the traders keep up a continual war with them. It was said that in the year 1832 they shot fifty-eight Whites, and a couple of years before that time, above eighty. In the neighbourhood of the forts they keep the peace, and the Piekanns, in particular, behave well and amicably to the Whites, whereas the Blood Indians and the Siksekai can never be trusted. They are all great adepts in horse stealing, even in the vicinity of the trading posts. All these Indians are comprehended, by the Whites, under 97 the general name of Blackfeet, which they

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themselves do not, however, extend so far, but know each of the three tribes only by its own proper name. As they speak only one language, keep together, and differ but little in their external appearance, they are justly considered as one and the same nation, and I shall always speak of them as such by this general name.

We do not, at present, possess any accurate and detailed account of these people, for the American Fur Company, who trade with them, and therefore have had the best opportunity of becoming acquainted with them, seldom take any interest in scientific researches. How little has hitherto been known of these people is proved by the fact that Brackenridge declares them to be Sioux, though a comparison of some words of their language immediately proves the contrary.⁸⁵ In their exterior, the Blackfeet do not much differ from the other Indians of the Upper Missouri. They are robust, generally well made men, and some of the women and girls are very pretty. The men are partly broad shouldered and muscular, partly of middle stature, and thickset. One of the Blood Indians measured six feet eleven inches English measure. Several Piekanns were nearly six feet, French measure. The Big Soldier was five feet ten inches two lines, French measure. Their arms and legs are more slender than those of the Whites, but this is by no means a general rule. Their hands and feet are, for the most part, small, of a blackish-brown colour, with prominent veins, exactly like the Botocudos and other Brazilians, with whom, as I have already observed, evident traces of this affinity appear in all the North American Indians. Their features are in the main the same as those of the other Indians which have been before described. The

⁸⁵ Referring probably to the Blackfoot band of Sioux. See our volume xxii, p. 326, note 287.— Ed.

⁹⁸ nose is often slightly curved or bent downwards, frequently long and thin, almost like those of the Jews, and the nostrils not extended, which is more frequently, though not always seen in the Brazilians. Their eyes are mostly hazel, yet I saw one Piekann with a light bluish-grey circle round the iris. Their hair is jet black, and generally still, yet often not so shining a black as that of the Brazilians; their beard is not thin, but is carefully

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plucked out, for which purpose they have a twisted wire, or a piece of tin bent together like a pair of tweezers. Old people often have grey hair, but some young men are seen whose hair is dyed of a dark brown. A whole family of Piekanns, near Fort Mc Kenzie, had such hair mixed with a good deal of grey. I never saw any with bald heads. The colour of the skin of these Indians is mostly a fine bright reddish-brown, often really copper colour, and generally darker than in the Brazilians. [247] Even little children have the dark brown colour, but newly born infants are rather paler. Children, as in Brazil, have, in general, prominent bellies and thin limbs, and often the navel large and swollen.

The Blackfeet do not disfigure their bodies; none of the nations of the Missouri bore the nose and lips, except a tribe in the Rocky Mountains, who are known by the name of Pierced Nosed Indians, because they bore a hole through the gristle of the nose. It is only in the ear that the Blackfeet pierce one or two small holes, in which they wear various ornaments, such as strings of glass beads, alternating with white cylinders, which they get from the Dentalium, which they barter from the nations on the west side of the Rocky Mountains, especially the Kutasans.⁸⁶ Many Blackfeet do not wear anything in their ears, which are generally concealed by their long thick hair. I have never seen any tattooing

⁸⁶ For the Nez Percés see Franchère's *Narrative*, in our volume vi, p. 340, note 145; for the Kutenai, our volume vii, p. 211, note 73.— Ed.

⁹⁹ among them. On the other hand, many had, upon their arms, parallel transverse incisions, which were cicatrized, and most of them wanted one or two joints of a finger, of which I shall have occasion to speak by-and-by. They paint their faces red with vermilion; this colour, which they procure by barter from the traders, is rubbed in with fat, which gives them a shining appearance. Others colour only the edge of their eyelids, and some stripes in the face, with red; others use a certain yellow clay for the face, and red round the eyes; others, again, paint the face red, and the forehead, a stripe down the nose, and the chin, blue, with the shining earth from the mountains which I have before mentioned, and which, being analyzed by Professor Cordier,⁸⁷ at Paris, he found to be mixed with an earthy peroxide of iron, probably mixed with some clay. Others colour the whole face black, and

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only the eyelids and some stripes red. The women and children paint the face only of a uniform red. The vermilion costs the Indians very dear, for the Company supply it from their stores at ten dollars a pound. The Blackfeet do not paint the body — at least, I have never seen it, and it is generally covered. Their hair hangs down straight and stiff, often in disorder over the eyes and round the head. Young people, however, who pay more attention to neatness, part it regularly over the forehead, and comb it smooth. A small sea-shell is often fastened to a tuft of hair on each side, close to the temples; others were on one side, and often on both sides of the forehead, and a lock of hair with brass and iron wire twisted round it; lastly, a few adopted the ornament usual among the Manitaries and Mandans, which forms a long string on each side of the forehead, and will be particularly described when we are treating of

87 Pierre Louis Antoine Cordier, a French geologist of repute. In 1819 he was called to the professorship of that science in the museum of natural history at Paris. Under Louis Philippe, Professor Cordier was a councillor and peer of France.— Ed.

100 the latter. Such a one was worn by the son of the old Kutona, Makuie-Poka, and by a few other Blackfeet, who had had intercourse with the Manitaries. Some distinguished Blackfeet warriors had a tuft of the feathers of owls, or birds of prey, hanging at the back of the head; sometimes ermine skin, with little stripes of red cloth, adorned with bright buttons; or, on the top of the head, broad black feathers, cut short, like a brush, as represented in the portrait of the Assiniboin, Noapeh.⁸⁸ Some braid the hair in a long thick queue behind, and many, especially the [248] medicine men, or jugglers, wear it, like the Mandans and Manitaries, divided into several thick queues all round, and generally bind them all together with a leather strap, in a thick knot over the forehead. Many bind a narrow strip of skin, or a leather strap, round the head, and stick one or two feathers in it; several fasten large bears' claws in their hair; most of them, when in full dress, wear the large necklace of these claws, which is a costly and handsome ornament; or else one made of certain roots, which smell like *Fœnum Græcum*, which they obtain from the Kutas.⁸⁹ Very often they adorn themselves with a braided necklace, composed of a

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sweet-smelling grass, probably *anthoxanthum*, with others of glass beads, which they buy of the Company for three or four dollars a pound, and which the women in particular highly value. Some Piekanns hang round their necks a green stone,⁹⁰ often of various shapes, or the teeth of buffaloes, stags, elks, horses, &c., or large round flat pieces cut out of shells. On their fingers they wear rings, mostly of

88 See Plate 45, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

89 These roots, which are cut into short cylinders, and strung together, are bought at high prices from other nations; for example, the Crees and the Ojibbeways. They are likewise used as an ingredient in the bait for beavers.— Maximilian.

90 This green stone is a compact talc or steatite, which is found in the Rocky Mountains.— Maximilian.

101 brass, which they purchase, by dozens, of the Company — often six or eight on each finger, often only one or two on the whole hand. They generally let their finger nails grow long, always, at least, the thumb nail, which is often crooked like a claw.

The dress of the Blackfeet is made of tanned leather, and the handsomest leather shirts are made of the skin of the bighorn, which, when new, is of a yellowish-white colour, and looks very well. A narrow strip of the skin with the hair is generally left at the edge of such a skin. These shirts have half sleeves, and the seams are trimmed with tufts of human hair, or of horse-hair dyed of various colours, hanging down, and with porcupine quills sewn round their roots. These shirts generally have at the neck a flap hanging down both before and behind, which we saw usually lined with red cloth, ornamented with fringe, or with stripes of yellow and coloured porcupine quills, or of sky-blue glass beads. Some have all these fringes composed of slips of white ermine; this is a very costly ornament, these little animals having become scarce. Many of the distinguished chiefs and warriors wore such dresses, which are really handsome, ornamented with many strings hanging down, in the fashion of an Hungarian tobacco pouch. When these leather shirts begin to

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be dirty, they are often painted of a reddish-brown colour; but they are much handsomer when they are new. Some of these Indians wear on the breast and back round rosettes like the Assiniboins, but this is only a foreign fashion, and the genuine Blackfoot costume has no such ornament. Their leggins are made like those of the other Missouri Indians, and ornamented, in the same manner, with tufts of hair or stripes of porcupine quills; the shoes, of buffalo or elk leather, are also adorned with porcupine quills, each having a ground of a different colour for its ornaments; thus, if one is white, the other is yellow — a fashion which does not exist lower down the Missouri, where both shoes are of the same colour. The chief article of their dress, [249] the large buffalo robe, is, for the most part, painted on the tanned side, but less skilfully than among the other nations. In general, there are black parallel lines mixed with a few figures, often with arrow heads, or other bad arabesques; others, again, are painted with representations of their warlike exploits, in black, red, green, and yellow. The figures represent the taking of prisoners, dead or wounded enemies, captured arms and horses, blood, balls flying about in the air, and such subjects. Such robes are embroidered with transverse bands of porcupine quills of the most brilliant colours, divided into two equal parts by a round rosette of the same. The ground of the skin is often reddish-brown, and the figures on it black. All the Missouri Indians wear these robes, and it is well known that those of the Manitaries and the Crows are the most beautifully worked and painted. In the description of Major Long's first expedition, there is a representation of such a skin,⁹¹ but it is the only one of this kind which has come to my knowledge, and I have, therefore, had a drawing made of such a one.⁹² The Company gives the value of six to ten dollars for such a skin. During the summer, the fur is worn outside, and in winter inside. The right arm and shoulder are generally bare. It might be thought that this dress was too hot in summer, and too cold in winter, but custom reconciles us to everything, and they dress pretty nearly in the same manner in the opposite seasons.

⁹¹ This is represented in our volume xiv, p. 202.— Ed.

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92 See Plate 54, figure 1, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

The Blackfeet, like the other tribes, carry in their hands the wing of an eagle or a swan, the tail of an owl or bird of prey, as a fan, the handle of which is covered with leather, or coloured cloth. The Company now sends to its trading 103 posts the tails of wild turkeys, which are much in request. In general, every Blackfoot carries a whip, as well as his weapons, in his hand; a gun and his bow and arrows on his shoulder, the latter in a quiver or bag made of skin or leather, to which a bow case of the same is fastened. On his shoulder he likewise has his pouch, containing his powder-horn, and a large knife, in a sheath, is stuck behind in his leathern girdle. In the summer, and even frequently in the winter, these Indians wear their buffalo robe without any under-clothing. The dress of the women is the same as among the other Missouri Indians: it is a long leather shirt, coming down to their feet, bound round the waist with a girdle, and is often ornamented with many rows of elks' teeth, bright buttons, and glass beads. The dress wraps over the breast, and has short, wide sleeves, ornamented with a good deal of fringe, which often hang down nearly in the same manner as in the national Polish dress, but not below the elbows. The lower arm is bare. The hem of the dress is likewise trimmed with fringes and scalloped. The women ornament their best dresses, both on the hem and sleeves, with dyed porcupine quills and thin leather strips, with broad diversified stripes of sky-blue and white glass beads. The Indians do not like beads of other colours, for instance, red, next the skin; and their taste in the contrast of colours is very correct, for in their black hair they generally wear red, and on their brown skins, sky-blue, white, or yellow. The women are very skilful in making their clothes and tanning the leather; the men only make their arms and smoking apparatus. The women, [250] who, on the whole, have not an uncomfortable lot, are obliged, as among the other tribes, to perform the heavy work. They are likewise very skilful in the art of dyeing; and, to produce the beautiful yellow colour, they employ a lemon-coloured moss from the Rocky Mountains, which grows in the fir trees, my specimens of 104 which are unfortunately lost. A certain root furnishes a beautiful red dye, and they extract many other bright colours from the goods procured

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from the Whites. With them they dye the porcupine quills and the quills of the feathers, with which they embroider very neatly. The girls are dressed in the same manner as the women, and their dresses are generally ornamented with elks' teeth, for which the Indians pay a high price.

The leather tents of the Blackfeet, their internal arrangement, and the manner of loading their dogs and horses, agree, in every respect, with those of the Sioux and Assiniboins, and all the wandering tribes of hunters of the Upper Missouri. The tents, made of tanned buffalo skin, last only for one year; they are, at first, neat and white, afterwards brownish, and at the top, where the smoke issues, black, and, at last, transparent, like parchment, and very light inside. Painted tents, adorned with figures, are very seldom seen, and only a few chiefs possess them. When these tents are taken down, they leave a circle of sods, exactly as in the dwellings of the Esquimaux. They are often surrounded by fifteen or twenty dogs, which serve, not for food, but only for drawing and carrying their baggage. Some Blackfeet, who have visited the Sioux, have imitated them in eating dogs, but this is rare. Near the tent they keep their dog sledges, with which they form conical piles resembling the tents themselves, but differing from them in not being covered with leather. On these they hang their shields, travelling bags, saddles and bridles; and at some height, out of the reach of the hungry dogs, they hang the meat, which is cut into long strips, their skins, &c. The medicine bag or bundle, the conjuring apparatus, is often hung and fastened to a separate pole, or over the door of the tent. Their household goods consist of buffalo robes and blankets, many kinds of painted parchment bags, some of them in a semicircular

A Grosventre dagger

Horn drinking cup

Blackfoot parchment bags

Talc pipes

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107 form, with leather strings and fringes; 93 wooden dishes, large [251] spoons made of the horn of the mountain sheep, which are very wide and deep; 94 similar drinking vessels made of horn, kettles, and sometimes tin utensils, which they obtain from the merchants, clothes, &c. In the centre of the tent there is a small fire in a circle composed of stones, over which the kettle for cooking is suspended. Among their household goods we may reckon the harness of their horses. The horse has, generally, only a long rope, made of buffalo hair, fastened to the lower jaw, with which it is tied in the meadow. The saddle consists of two broad flat boards, inclining towards each other at an angle, which lie along the sides of the horse's back; it has before and behind an upright piece, which frequently has a leather fringe hanging to it. It is covered with a skin, and has another under it, and these skins serve the rider, at night, for a bed. The Blackfeet are fond of a handsome housing, made of a large panther's skin, which they generally obtain from the Rocky Mountains. As these animals have now become more scarce, a high price is often given for the skin; sometimes a good horse, and even several, and seldom less than sixty dollars in value. The panther's skin is so laid across the horse that the long tail hangs down on one side, and has scarlet cloth laid under it, which forms all round a broad border, as well to the fore legs as at the head and tail.⁹⁵

93 See p. 105 for illustration of Blackfoot parchment bags.— Ed.

94 See p. 105 for illustration of horn drinking cup.— Ed.

95 See the portrait of the Piegan on horseback, in Plate 19, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

One of the most necessary articles to the men is the tobaccopipe; those made by themselves are not so handsome as those of the Sioux, which they highly prize, and readily obtain by barter. The true Blackfoot pipes are made of the talc, of which I have already spoken, or of a blackish stone, which 108 is found in the Rocky Mountains. Their shape is shown in the annexed woodcuts;⁹⁶ [252] it is often in the form of a ball, or a

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pear, and rests upon a cubical foot. The tube is made of wood, broad, flat, or round, and sometimes carved in imitation of a serpent. The handsomest are the large medicine pipes, the *calumets* of the French.⁹⁷ They are adorned with the red heads of the woodpecker, bills, and a large fan made of feathers, and are used in all the solemn treaties and festivals of the North American tribes, more or less ornamented, but, on the whole, always in the same manner. When the Blackfeet smoke, they put a piece of dried earth, or a round mass made of the filaments and pods of certain water plants, on the ground, to rest the pipe on. Their tobacco consists of the small, roundish, dried leaves of the sakakomi plant (*Arbutus uva ursi*). When you visit an Indian in his tent, the pipe is immediately taken up, and passes round in the company, each person handing it to his left-hand neighbour. The master of the tent often blows the smoke towards the sun and the earth; every one takes some puffs and hands it on; the last man sends the pipe back again, but gives it to the person sitting opposite to him, in another row, and it circulates as before. The Blackfeet, like most of the tribes of the Upper Missouri, sow the seeds of the *Nicotiana quadrivalvis* , having first burnt the place where they intend it to grow: it is only on solemn occasions that they smoke this tobacco.

96 See p. 105 for illustration of talc pipes.— Ed.

97 See Plate 81, figure 13, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

The food and clothing of these people are chiefly derived from the herds of buffaloes, which they pursue, and for which they make, in the winter season, large parks, into which they are driven. The antelopes and the mountain sheep, especially the latter, furnish them with leather for their finer articles of dress; but the skins of the buffalo cow are indispensable 109 for their large robes, tents, and for barter with the Whites. They feed on almost every kind of animal except the grizzly bear; the black bear is not found in their prairies, and they have an aversion to amphibious animals. The Blood Indians hunt wolves for the sake of their skins, which they sell. All these Indians are very expert in the use of the bow, and this weapon is dangerous in their hands; with the gun, on the contrary,

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they are said to be indifferent marksmen, their pieces being by no means good. From the vegetable kingdom they obtain many roots; the pomme blanche, or white turnip, is very common in their prairies. The women and children dig them up with a particular kind of wooden instrument, and bring them in strings to the Whites for sale.

Another root is bitter; it is boiled in broth, and is then very nutritious. It is said that when you are accustomed to the taste, it is not disagreeable. Another turnip-like root, called, by the Canadians, *racine à tabac*, is buried in the earth with hot stones, and is said to become black, like tobacco, as soon as it is fit to eat; it has a sweetish taste, like parsnips. The other wild fruits of the prairies are gathered by the women and children. Little children are obliged very early, even as soon as they have cut their teeth, to chew meat, or more properly speaking, to suck it; while older children are seen at the mother's breast. The Blackfeet are very fond of their [253] children, and, at their birth, give them names after animals, and other things, remarkable events, and all kinds of occurrences.

Brandy is the greatest luxury of these Indians, as of all the other North Americans, for which they will willingly part with everything they possess, and have about them. They will even offer their wives and children for sale in order to obtain it. It is said that, when intoxicated, they are often less dangerous than other people. Many of the men have 110 often six or eight wives, whom they are very ready to give up to the Whites: even very young little girls are offered. On the other hand, they generally punish infidelity in their wives very severely, cutting off their noses in such cases; and we saw, about Fort Mc Kenzie, a great many of these poor creatures horribly disfigured. When ten or twelve tents were together, we were sure to see six or seven women mutilated in this manner.

The husband also cuts off the hair by way of punishment, and they then avoid showing their heads, which they seek to cover. During our stay, the Whites had punished their Indian wives in the same way. The woman whose nose is cut off, is immediately repudiated by her husband; nobody will take her as his wife; and such women generally work for wages, or for their subsistence, in other tents; attend on the children, tan hides,

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or perform other household work. There have been frequent instances of a husband immediately killing his wife, when she has had intercourse with others; often he avenges himself on the paramour, takes away his horse or other valuable property, to which he must submit quietly.

There is no particular marriage ceremony among the Blackfeet; the man pays for the wife, and takes her to him; the purchase-price is announced to the father of the girl by a friend or some other man. If he accepts it, the girl is given up, and the marriage is concluded. If the wife behaves ill, or if her husband is tired of her, he sends her home without any ceremony, which does not give occasion to any dispute. She takes her property and retires: the children remain the property of the husband. These Indians often have many children, who generally run and play about quite naked, and swim in the river like ducks. The boys go naked till they are thirteen or fourteen years old, but the girls have a leather dress at an early age. In their domestic life, the 111 Blackfeet, like all the North Americans, are quiet and peaceable; they are said, however, to be more passionate than other nations. Duels sometimes take place, and vengeance is executed in most cases. If an Indian is killed, his relations avenge themselves, if possible, on the murderer; but, if they have no opportunity to do this, they take revenge on the first member of his family that they meet with; often, however, their vengeance is bought off with some articles of value.

In their camp and tents, these Indians, even the dangerous Blood Indians, are hospitable. White men, who visited them in the cold month of October, were immediately lodged in the tent [254] of a chief, while the owner, with his whole family, slept in the open air: nobody dared to molest the guests. The horses were well taken care of, and there was no need to look after them, for, under these circumstances, they were perfectly safe, as well as all the effects of the strangers, which, in other cases, would certainly have been stolen. It is not difficult for the Indians to feed a few Whites; on the other hand, it is impossible for the latter to do the same for their Indian visitors, and yet they expect it. These Indian visits are so numerous, and of such long continuance, that it is absolutely impossible to procure the necessary victuals for them. This is, doubtless, a chief cause of the animosity

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of the Indians to the Whites; and, though the disproportion in the numbers on both sides is shown them ever so clearly, they never understand it. Mr. Mitchell once received a severe lesson on this subject among the Sioux on the Mississippi. He was invited to a tent, and, though he was very hungry, did not get a morsel to eat. On the following morning, the Sioux came to him and said that, "though he had made him suffer hunger, he had not done so from any ill-will; but that the same thing had lately happened to him in the house of Mr. Mitchell, and, therefore, 112 he meant only to give him a hint, not to be wanting in this respect for the future." The Blackfeet are inveterate beggars, that is, they are frequently troublesome by their constant importunities, but they are inferior in this respect to the Gros Ventres des Prairies. Horse stealing is an eminent art among them, and a dexterous horse stealer is a person of distinction. They have invented many games for their amusement. At one of them they sit in a circle, and several little heaps of beads, or other things, are piled up, for which they play. One takes some pebbles in his hand, moving it backwards and forwards in measured time, and singing; while another endeavours to guess the number of pebbles. In this manner considerable sums are lost and won.

The Blackfeet have various dances; for instance,— 1. The mosquito dance. 2. The dog dance. 3. The dance of the buffalo, with thin horns. 4. The dance of the prairie dogs. 5. The dance of those who carry the raven. 6. The soldiers' dance. 7. The old bulls' dance. 8. The dance of the imprudent. 9. The medicine dance. 10. The scalp dance. The first seven are all danced in the same manner, the only difference is in the singing. This is usually sometimes loud, sometimes soft, now high, now low, always consisting of short, frequently repeated tones, and extremely monotonous, often interrupted by loud exclamations of "re, ri," or "hey, hey, hey," repeated three times, nearly the same among all the Missouri tribes, and interrupted by the war cry. The medicine dance of the women does not occur every year. It is a medicine feast for the latter, at which, however, some men likewise appear. A large wooden hut is erected, the women dress themselves as handsomely as they can, and all wear a large feather cap. Some of the women take no part in the dance, and these,

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with the men, are spectators. Men beat the drum, and shake the schischikué, the last day of the feast; when the dance is finished, the buffalo [255]

Plan of women's medicine dance

Badge of Prairie-dog band

Badge of Raven band

Pipe-lighting stick

115 park is imitated; the men, the children, and the remaining women form two diverging lines, *b* and *c*,⁹⁸ which proceed from the medicine lodge, out of which the women creep, crawling on all-fours, and endeavour to imitate the manners of the buffalo cows. Several men represent buffalo bulls, and are at first driven back by the women; but then, as is the practice in this kind of hunting, a fire is kindled to windward, and the women, or buffalo cows, as soon as they smell the smoke, retreat into the medicine lodge, which concludes the festival. They sometimes perform this dance in the summer, when the fancy takes them.

⁹⁸ See plan of women's medicine dance, p. 113.— Ed.

The scalp dance, or, properly speaking, to dance the scalp, is performed when they have killed their enemies. The women then dress like the men, and likewise carry their arms. If women have taken part in the warlike expedition in which enemies have been slain, they paint their faces black. A woman sometimes carries the scalp, or several, according to the number they may have; sometimes it is carried by an old woman, who then remains aside and dances alone, and drums and schischikué, played by men, accompany the dance. There is likewise a dance of the brave, or warriors, who form a circle, within which several dance, imitating all the movements of a battle, and firing their guns, on which occasion their faces are painted so as to give them a fierce expression.

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The bands, unions, or associations, mentioned when we were speaking of the Assiniboins, are found among the Blackfeet, as well as all the other American tribes. They have a certain name, fixed rules and laws, as well as their peculiar songs and dances, and serve in part to preserve order in the camp, on the march, in the hunting parties, &c. Seven such bands, or unions, among the Blackfeet, were mentioned to me, and to which the first seven dances above-mentioned belong. 116 They are the following:— 1. The band of the mosquitoes. This union has no police business to do, but consists of young people, many of whom are only eight or ten years of age; there are also some young men among them, and sometimes even a couple of old men, in order to see to the observance of the laws and regulations. This union performs wild, youthful pranks; they run about the camp whenever they please; pinch, nip, and scratch men, women, and children, in order to give annoyance like the mosquitoes. They do not even spare old, distinguished men. If any man offends one of them, he has to do with all of them, for they hold closely together. The young people begin with this union, and then gradually rise higher, through the others. As the badge of their band, they wear an eagle's claw, fastened round the wrist with a leather strap. They have also a particular mode of painting themselves, like every other band, and their peculiar songs and dance. 2. The dogs. Its badge is not known to me: it consists of young married men, and [256] the number is not limited. 3. The prairie dogs. This is a police union, which receives married men: its badge is a long hooked stick, wound round with otter skin, with knots of white skin at intervals, and a couple of eagle's feathers hanging from each of them.⁹⁹ 4. Those who carry the raven. Its badge is a long staff, covered with red cloth, to which black ravens' feathers, in a long thick row, are fastened from one end to the other.¹⁰⁰ They contribute to the preservation of order, and the police. 5. The buffalo, with thin horns. When they dance, they wear horns on their caps. In camp, the tents of the unions are in the middle of the circle, which has a free space in the centre. If disorders take place, they must help the soldiers, who mark out the camp, and then take the first place.

⁹⁹ See p. 113 for badge of Prairie-dog band.— Ed.

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100 See p. 113 for badge of Raven band.— Ed.

117 6. The soldiers. They are the most distinguished warriors, who exercise the police, especially in the camp and on the march; in public deliberations they have the casting vote, whether, for instance, they shall hunt, change their abode, make war, or conclude peace, &c. They carry, as their badge, a wooden club, the breadth of a hand, with hoofs of the buffalo cow hanging to the handle. They are sometimes forty or fifty men in number. Their wives, when they dance the medicine dance, are painted in the same manner as the men. 7. The buffalo bulls. They form the first, that is, the most distinguished of all the unions, and are the highest in rank. They carry in their hand a medicine badge, hung with buffalo hoofs, which they rattle when they dance, to their peculiar song. They are too old to attend to the police, having passed through all the unions, and are considered as having retired from office. In a certain degree they have descended from the union of active and distinguished soldiers. In their medicine dance they wear on their head a cap, made of the long forelock and mane of the buffalo bull, which hangs down to a considerable length. New members are chosen into all these unions, who are obliged to pay entrance; medicine men, and the most distinguished men, have to pay more than other people. If a woman, whose husband is in one of the unions, has had any intercourse with another, the union meets in one of the tents, where they smoke, and, in the evening, when all around are buried in sleep, they penetrate into the woman's tent, drag her out, ill-treat her as they please, and cut off her nose. [257] These Indians are often very cruel. The man cannot make any opposition; he must repudiate such a woman. He is then told why she has been treated in this manner, and he may have his revenge on the seducer, from whom he generally takes some horses.

We saw the Blackfeet ride to battle half naked, but some, 118 too, in their finest dresses, with the beautifully ornamented shield obtained from the Crows, and their splendid crowns of feathers,¹⁰¹ and, on these occasions, they all have their medicines, or amulets, open and hung about them. The battle, of which we were witnesses, and of which I shall give an account in the next chapter, enabled us to form a pretty correct notion of their mode

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of fighting, which does not differ from that of the other North Americans. Small parties, almost naked, approach the enemy by stealth, and endeavour to gain the advantage of him by stratagem, ambuscade, or surprise; and the attack is generally made at daybreak. They formed long lines, and fired from a great distance; but they are indifferent marksmen. The women and children were very attentive to the wounded, over whom they cried and lamented, as we shall see in the next chapter. The enemy, with guns, arrows, spears, and knives, killed and wounded men, women, and children indiscriminately, and scalped even the women, who are often taken prisoners, and carried off as slaves, but afterwards not usually ill-treated. I shall have occasion to speak also, in the next chapter, of the fury with which they mutilate the dead, every one, as he passes, venting his rage by firing his gun, or throwing stones at them, or by blows. No trace is now to be found, at least among the Blackfeet, of the tortures inflicted on the prisoners, as formerly practised by the American Indians.

101 See Plate 81, figures 5, 6, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

When the warriors come near their camp, after a battle, they sing; and one rides or runs before, often in serpentine lines, backwards and forwards about the tents, holding up and shaking the scalp, and displaying it at a distance. If any one has taken a weapon, he displays it in the same manner, loudly proclaiming his name as having taken it. After a successful engagement, the men sing the song which they call *aninay*, that is, “they are painted black.” On 119 these occasions, they assemble in the open air about their tents, with their faces painted black, their leggins and robes spotted with black, and then sing, without the accompaniment of any instrument, nor are the scalps displayed. There are no words to this song, which consists only of the usual notes.

The weapons of the Blackfeet do not much differ from those of the other Indians on the Missouri; but they are not so handsome and well made as those of the Crows, Manitanies and Mandans. They do not themselves make bows of the horn of the elk, or of the mountain sheep, which are consequently not common among them. Their country does

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not produce any wood suitable for bows; and they endeavour to obtain, by barter, the bow wood, or yellow wood (*Maclura aurantiaca*), from the River Arkansas. For their quivers, they prefer the skin of the cougar (*Felis concolor* , Linn.), for which they give a horse. The tail hangs down from the quiver, is trimmed with red cloth on the inner side, embroidered with white beads, and ornamented [258] at the end or elsewhere, with strips of skin, like tassels. I saw few lances among the Blackfeet, but many war clubs, most of which they had taken from the Flatheads. Many have thick leather shields, which are usually painted green and red, and hung with feathers and other things, to which some superstitious belief is attached. When they are going to battle, they twist the leather case of their gun round their head, like a turban. Wolf skins are then useful to them, especially when they want to observe the enemy. They wear them across their shoulders, and, when they wish to approach the enemy unperceived, they throw them over their head, and lie down behind an elevation, or rising of the ground, in such a manner as to have the appearance of a white wolf.

The medicine men or physicians of the Blackfeet are very 120 unskilful. We always saw them take water in their mouths, which they spit out over the wounded. They never wash or cleanse the wounds, and the coagulated blood was still on them on the second day. The recovery of all the severely wounded, without any proper care, shows the vigorous constitutions of these men, of which, indeed, there are many other proofs. Drums and rattles (schischikué) were daily used in their attendance on the sick, in the closed tent. Children mortally wounded lay on the ground without covering, and without any kind of attention, exposed to the burning sun, and they all died in a short time. These Indians are said to have successfully healed some severe wounds; but, as far as my observation goes, those cures were chiefly to be ascribed to the good constitutions of the patients. Among almost all the tribes of the Missouri there were individuals who had been scalped, and cured, and who wore caps; and we were told that there were some such among the Blackfeet. These Indians have some efficacious remedies derived from the vegetable kingdom, one of which is a whitish root from the Rocky Mountains, which is called, by the

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Canadians, rhubarb, which is said to resemble our rhubarb in its effect and taste, and likewise to act as an emetic. Another root is esteemed to be a powerful remedy against the bite of serpents. In all cases they have recourse to the drum and the rattle, and have great confidence in the intolerable noise caused by those instruments. The Blackfeet make their rattles of leather, wood, or bladder, because they do not grow any calabashes. It is well known that this remarkable instrument is in use among most of the different tribes or nations of the American race, as well in the northern as the southern half of this vast continent. They have great confidence in the medicines of the Whites, and often apply for them; but many were in such a desperate state from diseases of long standing, that a cure was quite out of the question. If Indians are cured by their doctors (which sometimes happens), they make them considerable presents, or the medicine man makes a heavy charge. Last spring several Blackfeet died very suddenly from colic, accompanied with vomiting, and the disease appears very closely to have resembled the cholera.

When a Blackfoot dies, they do not bury him in the ground if they can avoid it, but sew him up in a buffalo robe, dressed in his best clothes, his face painted red, but without his [259] weapons, and lay him in some retired place, in ravines, rocks, forests, or on a high, steep bank, and often cover the body with wood or stones, that the wolves may not get at it. Frequently, when they cannot find a solitary spot, the corpse remains above ground in a kind of wooden shed, and they were often obliged to bury it, or to give it to the Whites as a desirable present, which cannot be refused. The relations cut off their long hair, smear it, as well as their faces and clothes, with whitish-grey clay, and, during the time of mourning, wear their worst clothing. Often, too, they cut off a joint of a finger. They believe the dead go into another country, where they will have lack of nothing; and that they have often been heard when they were summoned to smoke a pipe together. At the funeral of rich Indians, several horses are often killed upon the spot; and we were told of instances when twelve or fifteen horses were killed in this manner at the funeral of a celebrated chief. On the death of Sachkomapoh (the child), a rich and distinguished chief, who is said to have possessed between 4000 and 5000 horses, 150 were killed with arrows.¹⁰² The

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relations assemble at the residence of the deceased, and even the men lament and wail. The corpse is generally buried on the first day, and

102 Among the Araucanians, Patagonians, Puelches, and Charruas, the domestic animals belonging to the deceased are killed upon his grave (see D'Orbigny Voy. Introd., p. 112), and the women cut off joints of their fingers.— Maximilian.

122 in case of death during the night, it is removed on the following morning.

The Blackfeet, like all the other American Indians, are superstitious, and it is rare to see a man who has not some strange custom or habit which he adopts as a charm, and on which he imagines that the success of his plans and undertakings depends. Many rattle with bells before they smoke; others spit in different directions before they drink; others, again, mutter a certain phrase, or a kind of prayer, &c. &c. We saw one man who never lighted his pipe at the fire, but made use of a stick about two feet long, and twice as thick as the ramrod of a gun, which was ornamented with feathers and bells, and painted red and black.¹⁰³ It was hollow at the end to receive another thinner stick, which he always kindled when he wanted to light his pipe. On inquiring the cause of this strange custom, he answered that he was afraid of iron, and must, therefore, light his pipe with this stick. Most of these people have such singular customs, but, unfortunately, they do not like to communicate to others their notions on such subjects, and it is, consequently, very difficult to get at the bottom of them.

103 See p. 113 for illustration of pipe-lighting stick.— Ed.

[260] Mr. Berger, the interpreter, who was otherwise well acquainted with the Blackfoot Indians, could not give me any information respecting their religious ideas, further than that they worship the sun (Natohs or Nantohs); and it is probable that, like the Mandans, they look upon it either as the lord of life, or his dwelling-place. We did not observe, in their camps, either offerings for the heavenly powers, hung upon poles, as among the Mandans and Manitaris, or any other indications of the exercise of some kind of worship.¹⁰⁴

104 In Dr. Morse's Report (page 354), there are many incorrect statements respecting the religion of the Indians to the east of the Rocky Mountains.— Maximilian.

CHAPTER XX STAY AT FORT MC KENZIE, FROM AUGUST 9TH TO SEPTEMBER 14TH

Indian Invitations — Baptism of the new comers — Trade with the Indians — Distinction conferred on Ninoch-Kiaiu — Affront to the Chiefs — Visit to Kutonapi — Death of Martin, the *Engagé* — Dispute occasioned by it — Ride to Snow River — The Blood Indians murder the Relation of Ninoch-Kiaiu — Arrival of the Corpse at the Fort — Quarrel of the Blackfoot and Blood Indians — Battle with the Assiniboins — Expedition to the Kutas — Trade with the Main Body of the Blackfeet — Their principal Chief, Tatsiki-Stomik — War Party of the Siksekai — A Party of Blood Indians, with their Chief, Stomik-Sosak — Defeat of our Intention to proceed further — The Building of a new Fort — Preparations for the Voyage down the Missouri to Fort Union.

Fort Mc Kenzie , at the time of our arrival, was inhabited by people of several nations, and pains were taken to occupy the motley multitude in various ways. Handicraftsmen, of various kinds, were set to work, and our hunters, among whom were two Spaniards from the neighbourhood of Santa Fe, were sent out whenever circumstances permitted. Yet all these people were not sufficiently employed, and measures were, therefore, taken to reduce the number. Having made our arrangements on the first day of our arrival, and viewed the Indian camp, with its many dogs, and old dirty brown leather tents, we were invited, on the following day, together with Mr. Mitchell, to a feast, given by the Blackfoot chief, Mehkskéhmé-Sukahs (the iron shirt). We proceeded to a large circle in the middle of the camp, enclosed with a kind of fence of boughs of trees, which contained part of the tents, and was designed to confine the horses during the night, for the Indians are so addicted to horse stealing that they do not trust each other. The hut of the chief was spacious; we had never before seen so handsome a one; it was full 124 fifteen paces in diameter, and was very clean and tastefully decorated. We took our seats, without

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ceremony, on buffalo skins, spread out on the left hand of the chief, round the fire, in the centre of the tent, which was enclosed in a circle of stones, and a dead silence prevailed. Our host was a tall, robust man, who at this time had no other clothes than his breechcloth; neither women [262] nor children were visible. A tin dish was set before us, which contained dry grated meat, mixed with sweet berries, which we ate with our fingers, and found very palatable. After we had finished, the chief ate what was left in the dish, and took out of a bag a chief's scarlet uniform, with blue facings and yellow lace, which he had received from the English, six red and black plumes of feathers, a dagger with its sheath, a coloured pocket-handkerchief, and two beaver skins, all which he laid before Mr. Mitchell as a present, who was obliged to accept these things whether he liked or not, thereby laying himself under the obligation of making presents in return, and especially a new uniform. When the chief began to fill his pipe, made of green talc, we rose and retired (quite in the Indian fashion) in silence, and without making any salutations. We crept through the small door, which was besieged by numerous dogs, and stepped over the foremost, who grinned at us maliciously. Mr. Mitchell was immediately invited to three or four similar feasts, an honour which can only suit an Indian stomach. In the afternoon the engagés of the fort gave us what they call baptism; namely, a welcome on our happy arrival in this remote wilderness by firing several salutes in the court-yard of the fort, for which it is usual to give them something to drink, or else a present. Our entertainment for the evening was the noise of the drum of the Indian camp, which is employed not only to drive the evil spirit out of the sick, but in their dances and other amusements, and is, therefore, heard almost every day and 125 every hour. We were likewise much entertained by the antics of three young bears (*Ursus ferox*), which ran about in the court-yard. Another very pretty animal had been brought up in the fort: this was a young prairie fox (*Canis velox*, Say), which Mr. Mitchell made me a present of, and which, by its tameness and vivacity, helped to amuse us during the following winter. Our new lodging swarmed with mice, which ran over our feet while we were writing, and kept the traps set for them continually in motion. We trained my pretty little fox to this sport, which was new to him, and he soon became a capital mouser.

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On the 10th of August preparations were made for the solemn reception of the Indians, which always precedes the opening of the trade, and which is considered by the Indians as a matter of great importance. The flag being hoisted, two small cannons, placed in the middle of the courtyard, fired signals for the commencement of the trade. It was full half an hour before a noise arose in the Indian camp: we heard singing, firing of guns, and saw the mass of the Indians advancing on all sides. When Ninoch-Kiaiu (the bear chief) approached the gate, it was opened, and the two cannons were again fired. He entered, followed by three or four chiefs, who approached Mr. Mitchell with their heads inclined; and, after shaking hands with him, were made to sit down in the Indian apartment. Soon afterwards another body appeared, and Mr. Mitchell went out of the gate to meet them. They advanced in small parties, headed by their chiefs, who always bring a present consisting either of some beavers' skins or of a horse. The first horses that we received in this manner were two greys and a light bay, which were variously [263] painted with red, chiefly on the forehead, the shoulders, and the haunches, and marked on the legs with transverse stripes like a zebra, and on each side of the backbone with figures in the shape of arrow heads. 126 The chiefs and about thirty of the principal warriors were admitted, and, after being seated on buffalo hides in the dining apartment, they refreshed themselves by drinking and smoking. In this manner three or four different bands advanced with rapid strides, repeatedly discharging their guns, and singing their rude songs. We observed some remarkable, martial-looking physiognomies among these men, painted in the strangest manner, marching with a very warlike air. The chiefs wore, for the most part, the uniform received from the Company, made in the fashion of a great coat, with round hats and tufts of feathers, on which they prided themselves greatly, but which disfigured them most lamentably. Their faces, painted of a bright red, surrounded with their thick, lank hair, and surmounted by a round hat with a tuft of feathers, such as our German post-boys used to wear, had such a ridiculous appearance, that we could not refrain from laughing. Some of their uniforms were of two colours — one half red, and the other half green, not unlike the dress of some of our prisoners in Bridewell. Mehkskéhmé-Sukahs was dressed in the true Indian fashion, and interested us more than any of the others. His

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face was black, with the eyelids, mouth, and some stripes on the forehead and cheeks, vermilion. After three or four bands of the Blackfeet had been received, they were followed by one of the dangerous Blood Indians, under their chief and medicine man, Natohs (the sun),¹⁰⁵ and these, too, were admitted; after which a detachment of from sixty to eighty of the Gros Ventres des Prairies arrived, who, having likewise brought a horse and some beaver skins as a present, were treated like the others. The chiefs were always welcomed by firing the cannon, and then delivered up their colours, most of which they had received from English merchants,

¹⁰⁵ According to Catlin's Indian vocabulary, "Natose" means any form of medicine or mystery.— Ed.

¹²⁷ and which were carried before them on long ensign staffs, quite in military style. Mr. Mitchell had attempted, in the preceding year, to dispense with these salutations, but the Indians immediately took offence and were even going to part without transacting any business; for they are extremely punctilious in points of honour.

While the company of Indians were employed in smoking, Mr. Mitchell took Ninoch-Kiaiu¹⁰⁶ (who had always been very faithful and devoted to the Whites and the Fur Company), into his own room, and presented him with a new uniform, half red and half green, with red and green facings, and trimmed with silver lace; a red felt hat, ornamented with many tufts of feathers; in short, a complete dress, and a new double-barrelled percussion gun. Mr. Mitchell wished particularly to distinguish this man, because he had never been to the north to trade with the Hudson's Bay Company. When he had equipped himself in his new uniform, which was worth 150 dollars, and entered the assembly of the chiefs in the court-yard of the fort, it immediately became evident that the distinction conferred upon him made no favourable impression on them; some chiefs who had made presents to Mr. Mitchell, and had not yet received anything in return — for instance, [264] Mehkskéhmé-Sukahs, could not conceal their feelings; the latter hid his head behind the person who sat next to him, while others hung down their heads, and seemed lost in thought. When Mr. Mitchell perceived this, he caused it to be intimated to the chiefs, that

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“they saw how the American Fur Company distinguished its faithful friends; that they, on the contrary, had generally taken their beaver skins to the English; that he, therefore, could not give them much now, but would make every chief a present. That it would be their interest to deal with him in

106 See his portrait in the central figure in Plate 79, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

128 future, like Ninoch-Kiaiu, and then it would be in his power to make them more considerable presents.” The Bear Chief was then made to mount his grey horse, that he might show himself out of the fort in his new dress. In a rather constrained manner he made a speech to the warriors assembled before the fort, then rode into the camp, returned, and alighted. It must be observed, that this man was not popular, and that his situation at this time was very dangerous; and we afterwards saw him sitting, with his head drooping, like a proscribed person, and afterwards retiring to Mr. Mitchell's room, where he remained alone. Soon there arose violent debates among the chiefs; and as Berger, the proper interpreter for the Blackfoot language, was absent, this circumstance, perhaps, increased the misunderstanding. Several Indians rose, among whom was Haisikat (the stiff foot, formerly the old head), who, with violent gesticulations, made a long speech. He was brother-in-law to the Bear Chief, and plainly advised him to go home, and keep himself sober, because otherwise something serious might happen. The Blood Indians were offended; they spoke loudly of shooting Ninoch-Kiaiu, between whom and his friends long conferences took place. While this was passing, we saw all the other Indians sit down in half circles before the gate of the fort, as represented in the accompanying woodcut: *a a* , the warriors sitting in seven semi-circular lines; *b* , the main body of the Indians; *c* , the front of the fort, with a block-house, *d*. 107 The warriors sat on the ground, and, while liquor and tobacco were distributed among them, they sang without ceasing, and sometimes fired their guns. At six in the evening, when we were relieved from these troublesome guests, and hoped to have some repose after the fatigues of the day, a violent dispute arose among the *engagés* , which

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107 See opposite page for diagram of Indians seated before Fort McKenzie.— Ed.

Indians seated before Fort McKenzie

Head of *Cervus macrotis*

131 might have had serious consequences. [265] Blows had been exchanged, and the example which the Whites gave the Indians was not very creditable to them. It was late before this dispute was ended, and, during the night, there was no rest, as the trade with the Indians continued till a late hour in their camp, which was, indeed, detached, but at no great distance.

The offence taken by the Indians, at the distinction conferred on Ninoch-Kiaiu, gave rise to a report, that the Blood Indians would attack the fort, and murder all the Whites; and, though this report was not literally correct, it was a proof of a hostile temper, which manifested itself in various ways; for example, they thought of withdrawing, and endeavoured to steal our horses. They had already got one in their power, but it was recovered, and six armed men were sent to keep guard in the meadows. The ill-temper of the Blood Indians made Ninoch-Kiaiu expect no good from them, and he had brought all his horses, during the night, into the fort. Some well-disposed Indians, who came to give us assurances of their devotedness, received refreshments, as they happened to come just at breakfast-time. Mr. Bodmer had undertaken to paint Mehkskéhém-Sukahs in full dress, with his face painted black and red, a leather shirt ornamented with slips of otter skin and ermine, a large bunch of the feathers of birds of prey, woodpeckers' bills, ermine and pieces of red cloth in his hand—a remarkably colossal figure.¹⁰⁸ Another Indian, usually called the Big Soldier, came to have his portrait painted, on being paid for it. His real name was Haschasto (the orator), his dress very richly ornamented, and his stature nearly six feet. It was not easy to make a bargain with him, as he estimated his handsome person very high, and was much offended at our refusal to paint him at such an extravagant price.

108 See Plate 78, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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Mr. Mitchell having been informed of the speedy arrival of the Blackfoot chief, Kutonapi (the old Kutona), we undertook, on the 11th, in the afternoon, an excursion to go to meet him, he having been hitherto kept away by the beaver hunting. We crossed the river near the part where a great number of young Indians were bathing. They ran across the keel-boat which was lying here, and leaped from it into the water. Their mode of swimming was not like that of the Europeans, but perfectly resembled that of the Brazilians. These slender, well-made young men were extremely active; their colour was a very dark shining reddish-brown, more red than that of most of the Brazilians that I have seen, whose colour is often more yellowish or grey brown. It was not far from the landing-place to a small lateral valley full of poplar copses, where a couple of leather tents were set up. Kutonapi received us, sitting at the further end of his tent, while the other Indians fired their guns on our arrival. In this small indifferent hunting tent, we had to sit down on buffalo skins, while all the inmates, consisting of four or five men, several women, and many children, crowded about the door to see us. The Spanish hunter, Isidore Sandoval,¹⁰⁹ acted as interpreter. There were fifteen or twenty horses grazing about the tent, but there are Blackfeet who possess a much greater number. After we had shaken hands with the men, a vessel, with very fresh water from the Missouri, was presented, to cool ourselves, on which Mr. Mitchell distributed^[266] some small presents, tobacco, &c., which Kutonapi accepted with thanks, and

¹⁰⁹ Isidore Sandoval was long employed on the upper Missouri by the American Fur Company. In 1832 he was one of the men sent with Kipp to begin the Blackfoot trade, and upon the latter's return to Fort Union was left in charge thereof. He was a valued interpreter and clerk, charged with many important missions. Finally he quarreled with Alexander Harvey, who shot and killed him in the store at Fort Union. See Culbertson's

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narrative in Montana Historical Society *Contributions*, iii, p. 231; Larpenteur's account in his *Journal*, i, pp. 168–170.— Ed.

133 immediately began a song in praise of the sun (Natohs), or the lord of life. A wooden dish was set before each of us, containing boiled beaver's tail, with prairie turnips (*pomme blanche*). The beaver's tail was cut into small slices, and was boiled very tender. It did not taste amiss, and is reckoned a good dish even in the United States. After the Indians had eaten what was left, bundles of beaver skins were produced, and the chief presented Mr. Mitchell with nine skins, and the son gave me a tenth, and continually squeezed my hand to thank me “for having come so far to visit them.” The interpreter translated the compliments on both sides, and I can with truth affirm, that the cordiality and the unaffected, respectful politeness with which we were here received, could not be surpassed among civilized nations. The beaver skins were very carefully cleaned and dried, so that they resembled parchment. My double-barrelled gun pleased them much, and the son wished to fire it off, which he did, with the right-hand barrel, which was loaded with ball. The old women smoked with us, but remained before the door of the tent. The merry dark brown children seemed to be cleaner than usual, which might, indeed, be said of the whole of Kutonapi's family. We cordially took leave of these friendly people, and the chief said he should shortly pay us a visit.

On our return to the fort, the trade had been resumed, and was going on very briskly; it gave occasion to many droll scenes; pleasure and discontent were expressed in many different ways. Many Indians were quite affectionate, and embraced the Whites; others were noisy and angry. There was a woman feeding her four or five small children with meat, the youngest of whom, though it had no teeth, had got a little piece crammed into its mouth. There we saw boys holding a mouse, which they shot from each other's hands with arrows, &c. &c.

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On the 12th of August, about noon, Kutonapi arrived in the fort with his band, firing their guns, and was received with the usual discharge of the cannon. The cheerfulness that then prevailed among us was immediately interrupted by discord and mourning. Some Blood Indians had stolen three horses belonging to the fort, and search was made in vain after the thieves, when, in the afternoon, a much more serious event occurred. Mr. Bodmer had just begun to paint the portrait of Hotokaneheh (the head of the buffalo skin), with his large, handsomely ornamented calumet, when we heard a shot in an adjoining room, and immediately saw the people running together. A Blood Indian, who had often been in the fort, and had, till that time, always conducted himself well, had shot, with a pistol, one of our young men named Martin. All the people were assembled round the perpetrator, and nobody knew the cause of this event. The Indian seemed, indeed, to be rather confounded, but affirmed that his pistol had gone off by accident. Many of the young men were for having him shot, because, as they said, he had doubtless committed the murder designedly; but Mr. Mitchell decided with more moderation, considering the occurrence as an unfortunate accident. When the first moments of exasperation were [267] past, he forbade the murderer the fort, but at the same time strictly enjoined the *engagés* to refrain from all acts of violence towards this Indian. Ninoch-Kiaiu, who was present, did not take the matter so easily. Though he had been offended in the forenoon, because brandy was refused him, he warmly took part with the Whites, and was going to shoot the murderer; but being prevented in this, he beat him with the butt-end of his gun, and drove him, as well as several Gros Ventres des Prairies, who happened to be present, with blows, out of the fort. Kutonapi, who was likewise present, stepped forward, and made a violent speech, in which he described, 135 in lively colours, the offences of the Blood Indians against the Whites, and exhorted us to take vengeance for them. Mr. Mitchell thanked him, but persevered in the more temperate course, which, in his situation, was the most judicious. Berger, the interpreter, returned, whom Mr. Mitchell had sent to summon a numerous body of Blackfeet of 250 tents, which he had left on the Muscleshell River, and who might join us in about a week. Most of the Indians about the fort had withdrawn, so that, on the 14th of August, there were only twenty-three tents; but on the same day others

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came, and with them one Bird, a half Indian, and a treacherous, very dangerous man, who had great influence among the Blackfeet. He had been formerly in the service of the American Fur Company, had then gone over to the Hudson's Bay Company, and cheated both. He was a tall, strong man, with a brownish complexion, thick black hair, spoke the language of the Blackfeet perfectly, and lived constantly among them. At present he was not in the service of either Company, but lived by catching beaver, and hunting, for his own account.¹¹⁰ At this time, however, he came from Fort Union, and brought letters for Mr. Mc Kenzie. Niatohse, the chief of the Gros Ventres des Prairies, who has been already mentioned, also arrived, and, being a man who was much esteemed, was very well received. Mr. Patton, clerk of the Company, who had hitherto had the direction at Fort Mc Kenzie, a man well known in the Rocky Mountains, and thoroughly acquainted with the business

¹¹⁰ Later glimpses of this renegade Bird are afforded by Townsend in our volume xxi, pp. 353, 354, who reports that he was a great chief among the Blackfeet, leader of their war parties, and in 1836 took a treacherous revenge upon Antoine Godin, one of Wyeth's engagés at Fort Hall. Father De Smet met Bird at the Rocky Mountain House of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1845; he speaks of his treacherous and suspicious character, which was proved when he deserted the missionary priest in the wilderness. See H. M. Chittenden and A. T. Richardson, *Life, Letters, and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet* (New York, 1905), pp. 526–528.— Ed.

136 of the fur trade, left us on this day with eleven *engagés*, in a strong *pirogue*, to return to Fort Union, and thence to Fort St. Louis. The vacancy left in the fort by their departure was soon filled up by the number of Indians who arrived; among whom we were visited by Mexkemanastan, whom we had lately seen on Bighorn River, whose portrait was taken by Mr. Bodmer.¹¹¹ This business attracted many Indians, who were often troublesome. When the portrait of such a man struck the Indians as being very like, they said, “Bodmer could write very correctly,” as they have no proper word for drawing. A certain Blood Indian, with his wife, was present the whole time, and was a constant trouble to us. He

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repeatedly invited us to his tent, which we were at last obliged to accept. On our way to his tent, we saw in the Indian camp a great many women with their noses cut off; a frightful mutilation, the punishment for infidelity, which, as I have already said, is frequently inflicted among these people. In the spacious and light tent we found the owner lying on a kind of couch [268] of basketwork, with a back to it, and covered with a buffalo skin. He was a man of bad character, who, only the year before, had fired his gun, loaded with small shot, in the face of a white man. In the centre of the tent there was a small fire, which emitted great heat. Dried berries were set before us and this neat tent was not disagreeable, as these people had no children, and great cleanliness prevailed in their dwelling. Isidore Sandoval acted as interpreter. We had every day conversations of this kind, in which we always found something new to observe.

111 See Plate 20, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

Mr. Mitchell thought now of building a new fort, for which he endeavoured to choose the most suitable situation. On the 16th of August we rode out for this purpose, ascended the chain of hills behind the fort, where the little prairie 137 dogs retreated into their burrows, and then perceived two armed Indians, who, as soon as they observed us, turned their horses, and galloped up to us. They had not noticed our double-barrelled guns, and doubtless came up to frighten us, and to try their fortune with us; for, as soon as they came near, and saw our arms, they turned round and trotted away.¹¹² On our calling after them, they stopped at some distance; one of them gave his gun to the other, returned to us, and gave us to understand by signs, “that an Indian had run away with his sister, the wife of a third person, and they had ridden out to look for him, in order that they might shoot him.” Apparently following the traces, they quickly disappeared from our view. A little further on we met with about twenty of our own people, who were sent to work at the foundation of the new fort. They were well armed, and had carts with their bedding, and other necessaries. They had orders to remain out the whole week, and not return till Saturday. Other men were sent out to burn charcoal for the smith, for which poplar wood is very serviceable. We rode before these people, and had, on our right hand, a fine prospect

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into the valley of the Teton River, which, as a stripe of verdure, made an agreeable break in the yellow, scorched prairie. In the valley we saw three or four Indian tents under high poplar trees. Looking to the left hand from this high ridge, we saw, in the foreground, a great bend of the Missouri, on which there were several beautiful copses of poplar, and bright verdant spots; and further upwards,

112 In the preceding summer Mr. Mitchell had had a similar adventure, by which he was made acquainted with the nature of such meetings with the Indians. He was riding out, unarmed, with one attendant, when he met two Indians, who immediately demanded tobacco. He gave them what he had, but could not satisfy them; they demanded his knife, threw the tobacco which he had given them in his face, and with a menacing air drew their bows. They did not suffer him to go till he promised to give them more on board his vessel the next day. They came on board accordingly, but Mr. Mitchell took no notice of them. Since that time he never goes out unarmed.— Maximilian.

138 on the south bank, the mouth of the stream, called, by Lewis and Clarke, Snow River,¹¹³ which was the most extreme point of my journey on the Upper Missouri, though at that time I still hoped to reach the three principal sources of that river, the Jefferson, the Madison, and the Gallatin.¹¹⁴ Before us, a little to the left, in a south-western direction, we saw, at some distance, the first chain of the Rocky Mountains, which does not reach the snowy region,¹¹⁵ and behind us the beautiful [269] mountain called the Bear's Paw. From this lofty point we rode to the left, over steep eminences, to the Missouri, and then along the banks of the river, through thickets of willows and shady tufts of poplars, maples, and elms, mixed with buffalo-berry, roses, dogwood, and other shrubs. The ground was covered with luxuriant grass, of which some hay had been made by the people of the fort, and it was still lying in cocks. The path led along the north bank, under shady trees, and we overlooked the spot, on the opposite bank, where Mr. Mitchell thought of building his new fort, in a verdant prairie, near an extensive poplar forest. We there saw several Gros Ventres walking about, their horses grazing, their tents being pitched in a neighbouring wood.

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113 Snow River, as named by Lewis and Clark, is a southern affluent of the Missouri not far above its junction with Maria's. The present name of this stream is Shonkin Creek, rising in Highwood Mountains, and flowing nearly north, disemboing just below the site of Fort Benton, for many years the head of navigation on the Missouri, and the most important post of the upper country.— Ed.

114 The three forks of the Missouri which unite at the present town of Gallatin, Montana, in the county of that name. These names were given by Lewis and Clark (1855) in honor of the president, and two members of his cabinet.— Ed.

115 This range was probably the Highwood Mountains, for which see note 71, *ante*, p. 83.— Ed.

We had scarcely set out on our return to the fort, and reached the shady spot on the bank, when Dauphin, one of our people, came galloping on an Indian horse, quite out of breath, and told Mr. Mitchell that Ninoch-Kiaiu desired 139 to inform him that his nephew had been murdered by the Blood Indians — that he should immediately attack them, and, therefore, advised us to return as speedily as possible. He added, that he had instantly caused the people, who had been sent to work at the new fort, to return. We rode rapidly back to the eminence, and there found our people, who, with several Indians, were returning to the fort. Mr. Mitchell very seriously reprimanded them for their conduct, since he had not revoked his orders; on which Latresse¹¹⁶ answered, in a very loud voice, that “they had not come to be shot by the Indians;” in short, they behaved in a cowardly and rebellious manner; but nothing was to be done, and we all went together to the fort. We learned, now, that the nephew of the Bear Chief, a very quiet, well-disposed Indian, had ridden out in the morning to look for a horse which had been stolen from him, and had been murdered not far off, on the hills near the Teton River, by the Blood Indians, who had attacked him with their guns, knives, and clubs. Ninoch-Kiaiu was furious. Some Blood Indians had been immediately pursued, but without success, and then it was proposed to kill the man who lived near the fort, to whose tent we were lately invited; this idea,

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however, was abandoned, because he was quite innocent of the murder; they had spared him, and smoked their pipes with him. Another of those Indians had been forced, by firing at him, to cross the river; the Bear Chief now came to Mr. Mitchell to consult with him what was to be done. A sensible old Indian advised that this matter should not be treated as a concern of the whole tribe, but as a private affair, and, consequently, they should wait patiently for an opportunity when they might take vengeance on some member of the murderer's family. The chief, who felt that his honour was deeply

116 Jean Latresse had acted as Mitchell's envoy to Fort Union, upon the sinking of his keelboat the preceding year.— Ed.

140 wounded, was silent, and lost in thought. As a sign of mourning, he had put on his worst clothes, but not cut off his hair, saying that "his head was too great and strong to do this." He had loaded with ball the double-barrelled gun which he had lately received, and suddenly hastened away without saying a word. He afterwards sent word to Mr. Mitchell, that he must go to revenge his kinsman, whose dead body he would not see; but, that it might fall into good [270] hands, he would make a present of it to Mr. Mitchell, whom he requested to bury it.¹¹⁷ As the murder of the Indian was a consequence of the offence which Ninoch-Kiaiu had offered to the Blood Indians, on the occasion of Martin's death, the present could not well be refused, and we were obliged to be very cautious how we left the fort, as the Blood Indians were hostilely disposed towards us.

117 This is a frequent custom among the Indians, which always occasions the Whites some expense. They must bury these bodies decently at their own cost, for which blankets, cloth, red paint, &c., are necessary, and the Indians, by this means, avoid the obligation of providing all these things themselves. If the Whites were to refuse such a present, they would be considered as acting very meanly.— Maximilian.

On the 17th August, early in the morning, the howling and lamenting of the Indians in the camp was heard; and, soon afterwards, the corpse of the murdered man was brought into the fort. It was wrapped up very tightly in buffalo skins, and tied to a sledge drawn by

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one horse. An old man, with a multitude of women and children, his relations, followed the body with loud lamentations. An aged woman in the train had just cut off one joint of her little finger as a sign of mourning, and held the bleeding stump wrapped in a handful of wormwood leaves. When our people had taken the body from the sledge between the two gates of the fort, and carried it into the Indian apartment, a young man, the brother of the Bear Chief, made a speech to the weeping relatives, saying—"Why do you lament and cry?—see, I do not cry: he is gone into the other country, and we cannot awaken him; but, at least, two Blood Indians must accompany him and wait upon him there." An infant, and a boy, the brother of the deceased, died on the same night; and the Indians said that the murdered brother had called the others away. Thus we had three dead bodies in the fort. As that of the Indian had long been exposed to the air and the sun, it was necessary to make haste to get it out of the way; and Berger, the interpreter, had the disagreeable office of painting, putting on its best clothes, and ornamenting it in the Indian fashion. The two Indians were laid in the same grave, wrapped in a red blanket and buffalo skin, over which was laid a piece of coloured stuff, given by Mr. Mitchell. The bottom and sides of the grave were lined with boards; the body, too, was covered with wood; his bridle, whip, and some other trifles, were thrown in, and the grave filled up with earth.

Towards noon, on the same day, a number of Indians, with their loaded dog sledges, and all their baggage, were seen descending the heights on the other side of the Missouri. It was the band of the Blackfeet, announced by Berger. Some of these people, handsomely dressed, soon arrived as messengers, one of whom carried in his hand the ensign of the Crows. Ninoch-Kiaiu came with them, who now continually talked of going to a little camp of the Blood Indians, on the other side of the river, to take vengeance, yet still remained with us. His brother, who likewise made a great noise, walked about the fort with a loaded pistol, and, at last, begged Mr. Mitchell to have him conveyed over the river, because it was thought that two Blood [271] Indians had been seen, whom he wanted to shoot; to which Mr. Mitchell very calmly replied, that "if he intended to kill any body, he would not assist him." With an expression of violent passion, the Indian, on this, mounted his horse

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and galloped away, "in order," as the chief said, "to quiet 142 his heart for the present, by the death of a Kähna, as they might, at some future time, shoot the real murderer." The chief's aged uncle, Natoie-Poóchsen (the word of life), was one of the principal mourners. He had cut off his hair, and besmeared it, as well as his feet and legs, with whitish clay. Mr. Bodmer made a good portrait of him in this dress. He went about howling and crying, while the Bear Chief thought only of procuring brandy. He had in his hand a little mustard-glass filled with this precious liquor; and one of his friends, who also possessed some brandy, sipped a small quantity, and, embracing the chief, discharged it into his mouth, which is considered, among the Blackfeet, as the highest proof of friendship.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ In the year 1832, when Mr. Mitchell had a dispute with Tatsiki-Stomik, who was on the point of withdrawing with his whole band, he could not find any means of retaining him, till an Indian proposed the above measure. Mr. Mitchell accordingly took a mouthful of brandy, went into the Indian camp, embraced the angry chief, and discharged the liquor into his mouth, by which the friendship of the old man was restored, who became very kind, and entertained no further thought of going away.— Maximilian.

The *engagés* of the Company were now employed in packing up the skins obtained by barter from the Indians, for which purpose there is a particular machine. It consists of a frame of laths, which mark the size of the packages, and in which the skins are laid. In putting up small, light furs, a couple of planks are passed through the frame-work, on each end of which a man stands to press the skins together, and then to cord them. The buffalo hides, which are much thicker, are pressed together by means of a thick beam; in this operation six or eight men are required. Others of our people were engaged in sawing plank, burning charcoal, and the like; they had, however, much leisure time, which they spent in various amusements. They fired at a mark with their rifles, at which Papin and Morrin were very expert. In the evening we generally had an interesting ¹⁴³ sight, when the great number of horses belonging to the fort returned from the hills. Eight armed men rode behind and at the sides, and as many Indians, for the sake of safety, had joined with their horses. The whole body was very numerous, and presented a striking appearance

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when, in a cloud of dust, they galloped down the hills with a thundering noise, and entered the fort.

In order to obtain a handsome, large mountain sheep, Mr. Mitchell gave me the services of Papin, with whom my own hunter, Droidoppel, joined to make an excursion. Papin went very unwillingly, though, for the sake of security, a Blackfoot was sent with them. He affirmed that he would not undertake this dangerous enterprise for 100 dollars, if he had not bound himself to the Company. They made arrangements to stay out a couple of nights, and took a pack-horse with them. Other hunters were sent out with the Indians, and we soon received information that [272] a good many buffaloes had been killed. At other times we were often short of meat. Bird, who had set up his tent among the tall poplars near the fort, where Ninoch-Kiaiu also lived, visited us frequently, and gave out that he was obliged to undertake a journey to the north. We urged him and the other Blackfeet to persuade Ninoch-Kiaiu not to take vengeance on innocent Blood Indians, as they were much more numerous and powerful than the Blackfeet, and the Whites would likewise have felt the bad consequences of such hostility.

Meantime Mr. Bodmer had taken excellent likenesses of several Indians, among whom were old Pioch-Kiaiu (the distant bear), whose face was painted with blue earth, and was remarkable for a long chin, unlike that of the Indians; likewise a very pretty young Blackfoot woman, and an old Kutana or Kutneha, whose name was Homach-Ksachkum (the great earth), and his son, Makuie-Poka (the child of 144 the wolf), whose mother was a Blackfoot, and was dressed entirely in the fashion of that tribe, but had adopted several ornaments from their enemies, the Manitaries. The old Kutana was a good-tempered, friendly man,¹¹⁹ with an extremely characteristic physiognomy, which is most faithfully represented in the portrait. He gave me some account of his people and some words of their language, which are very difficult to pronounce. The picture, which was a most striking resemblance, and the other drawings, much amused the Indians; they at once recognised them all; and the fame of the able writer was so spread among them, that our lodging was constantly besieged by a numerous assemblage of Indians, who smoked

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tobacco, and incommoded us by the heat they occasioned. These men would often not sit still a moment while their portraits were taking; there were others, on the contrary, who would sit motionless the whole day, if they were supplied with tobacco, for which care was always taken. These visits often afforded us opportunities to get acquainted with their customs and notions. The White Buffalo, who often visited us, one day brought a very beautifully ornamented bow, taken from the Flatheads, which, however, he could by no means be prevailed upon to sell. On my making a higher offer, he answered, "I am very fond of this bow." I was, therefore, obliged to give up my desire to possess it, for the Indians would have greatly increased their demands if I had persisted after this declaration. This man had a nice sense of honour, was to be depended upon, and devoted to the Whites, and, at the same time, a distinguished warrior. He had lately shot his sister, because she kept up an intercourse with a man against whom he had constantly advised her. A chief of the Blackfeet, with whom he had a quarrel, shot him through the thigh; he,

119 See Plate 79, the figure at the right hand of the page, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

145 however, did not lose his presence of mind, and killed his enemy notwithstanding his wound. Another old man, who sometimes visited us, pretended to be a great doctor and magician. He said that Death had got into a certain tent to an old woman: he saw him come in at the aperture for the smoke, and touch the woman, on which our doctor immediately applied his medicine to the place touched, and remained with the patient the whole night. Death came again, but all his attempts failed, because the remedy was always applied at the right time.

[273] Bird introduced to us a chief named Mikotsotskina (the red horn), a handsome Blackfoot and distinguished warrior, the leader in many warlike expeditions, who had performed several great exploits. He was well made, with an intelligent, animated, and good-tempered expression of countenance, and very handsomely and neatly dressed. He brought two white horses with him, and a fine panther's skin, lined with red cloth. This man

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had formerly borne the name of Mastoenna (the chief of the ravens), and was said to have killed more white men than any one of his nation.

About this time, when we began to be in want of meat in the fort, having, for some time past, had only a couple of beavers, many unfavourable reports were spread of the hostile disposition of Ninoch-Kiaiu and his adherents towards the Whites, which had, doubtless, been excited by the pernicious influence of the treacherous Bird, who was prejudiced against the Company. An Indian told us that his countrymen would demand double the usual price for the beavers, and, if that were refused, they would kill all the Americans. We did not suffer ourselves to be alarmed by such reports, which indicated the unsteady character of the Blackfeet; but the time was come when we were to be put to a more serious trial.

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On the 28th of August, at break of day, we were awakened by musket-shot, and Doucette entered our room, crying, "Levez-vous, il faut nous battre," on which we arose in haste, dressed ourselves, and loaded our fowling-pieces with ball. When we entered the courtyard of the fort, all our people were in motion, and some were firing from the roofs. On ascending it, we saw the whole prairie covered with Indians on foot and on horseback, who were firing at the fort; and on the hills were several detached bodies. About eighteen or twenty Blackfoot tents, pitched near the fort, the inmates of which had been singing and drinking the whole night, and fallen into a deep sleep towards morning, had been surprised by 600 Assiniboins and Crees. When the first information of the vicinity of the enemies was received from a Blackfoot, who had escaped, the *engagés* immediately repaired to their posts on the roofs of the buildings, and the fort was seen to be surrounded on every side by the enemy, who had approached very near. They had cut up the tents of the Blackfeet with knives, discharged their guns and arrows at them, and killed or wounded many of the inmates, roused from their sleep by this unexpected attack. Four women and several children lay dead near the fort, and many others were wounded. The men, about thirty in number, had partly fired their guns at the enemy, and then fled to the gates of the fort,

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where they were admitted. They immediately hastened to the roofs, and began a well-supported fire on the Assiniboins.

In the fort itself all was confusion. If the men had been now and then mustered and inspected, it would have been found that the *engagés* had sold their ammunition to the Indians; they were, therefore, quite unprepared to defend themselves, and it was necessary, during the combat, to distribute powder as well among the Whites as the Indians. Mr. Mitchell and Berger, the [274] interpreter, were employed 147 in admitting the Blackfoot women and children, who were assembled at the door of the fort, when a hostile Indian, with his bow bent, appeared before the gate, and exclaimed, "White man, make room, I will shoot those enemies!" This exclamation showed that the attack was not directed against the Whites, but only against the Blackfeet. Mr. Mitchell immediately gave orders to his people to cease firing; notwithstanding this, single shots continued to be fired, and our Blackfeet were not to be restrained, nay, ten or twelve of our people, among whom were Doucette and Loretto, went into the prairie, and fired in the ranks of the Blackfeet, who were assembling, and every moment increasing in numbers. Loretto had shot, at the distance of eighty-six paces from the pickets, the nephew of the Assiniboin chief, Minohanne¹²⁰ (the left-handed), and this was the only one of the killed whom the enemy were unable to carry away, for we saw them lay many others on their horses, and take them off. In the fort itself only one man was wounded, having had his foot pierced by an arrow, and likewise a horse and a dog. If the enemy had occupied the heights on the other side of the river, they might, from that position, have killed all our people in the fort.

¹²⁰ Minohanne was the principal chief and the leader of the whole party of Assiniboins engaged in this expedition, in which there were likewise 100 Crees. After this battle he changed his name, and called himself Tatogan (the antelope or cabri).— Maximilian.

Comment by Ed. See further account of this chief in Montana Historical Society *Contributions*, iii, p. 209, note. Pierre De Smet, *Western Missions and Missionaries* (New

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York, 1859), pp. 168–205, also gives a long biography of this dangerous and potent tribesman.

When the Assiniboins saw that their fire was returned, they retreated about 300 paces, and an irregular firing continued, during which several people from the neighbourhood joined the ranks of the Blackfeet. While all this was passing, the court-yard of the fort exhibited very singular scenes. A 148 number of wounded men, women, and children, were laid or placed against the walls; others, in their deplorable condition, were pulled about by their relations, amid tears and lamentations. The White Buffalo, whom I have often mentioned, and who had received a wound at the back of his head, was carried about, in this manner, amid singing, howling, and crying: they rattled the schischikué in his ears, that the evil spirit might not overcome him, and gave him brandy to drink. He himself, though stupified and intoxicated, sung without intermission, and would not give himself up to the evil spirit. Otsequa-Stomik, an old man of our acquaintance, was wounded in the knee by a ball, which a woman cut out with a penknife, during which operation he did not betray the least symptom of pain. Natah-Otann, a handsome young man, with whom we became acquainted on our visit to Kutonapi, was suffering dreadfully from severe wounds. Several Indians, especially young women, were likewise wounded. We endeavoured to assist the wounded, and Mr. Mitchell distributed balsam, and linen for bandages, but very little could be done; for, instead of suffering the wounded, who were exhausted by the loss of blood, to take some rest, their relations continually pulled them about, sounded large bells, rattled their medicine or amulets, among which were the bears' paws, which the White Buffalo wore on his breast. A spectator alone of this extraordinary scene can form any idea of the [275] confusion and the noise, which was increased by the loud report of the musketry, the moving backwards and forwards of the people carrying powder and ball, and the tumult occasioned by above twenty horses shut up in the fort.

When the enemy were still very near the fort, Mr. Mitchell had given orders to fire the cannons of the right-hand front block-house among them; but this had not been done, because the Blackfeet were partly mixed with the Assiniboins; 149 no use, therefore,

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had been made of them, of which the Indians complained bitterly. The enemy gradually retreated, and concentrated themselves in several detachments on the brow of the hill,¹²¹ and this gave us an opportunity to open the gate, with due precaution, and view the destroyed tents and the bodies of the slain. The Indian who was killed near the fort especially interested me, because I wished to obtain his skull.¹²² The scalp had already been taken off, and several Blackfeet were engaged in venting their rage on the dead body. The men fired their guns at it; the women and children beat it with clubs, and pelted it with stones the fury of the latter was particularly directed against the privy parts. Before I could obtain my wish, not a trace of the head was to be seen. Not far from the river there was a melancholy scene; old Haisikat (the stiff foot) was lamenting over his grown-up daughter, who had concealed herself in the bushes near the fort, and had been shot in mistake by Dechamp, who thought she was an enemy.

121 See Plate 75, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv, for a view of the contest.— Ed.

122 See description of the battle as given by Culbertson in M. R. *Audubon, Audubon and his Journals* (New York, 1897), ii, pp. 133–136; also in *Montana Historical Society Contributions*, iii, pp. 207–209. The prince here omits reference to his own participation, and to the fact that he was possibly the slayer of the Assiniboin.— Ed

At the very beginning of the engagement, the Blackfeet had despatched messengers on horseback to the great camp of their nation, which was eight or ten miles off, to summon their warriors to their aid, and their arrival was expected every moment. Meantime, Ninoch-Kiaiu came and called on Mr. Mitchell for assistance, for they had been attacked by another party of the enemy. Hotokaneheh likewise came to the fort, and made a long and violent speech, in which he reproached the Whites with being inactive while the enemy were still in the vicinity; they ought not to confine themselves to the “defence of the fort, if they seriously desired the alliance of the Blackfeet, but endeavour to attack the common enemy in the prairie,” &c. All these reproaches hurt Mr. Mitchell, and he resolved

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to show the Indians that the Whites were not deficient in courage. With this view he made the best hunters and riflemen mount their horses, and, in spite of our endeavours to dissuade him from this impolitic measure, he proceeded to the heights, where 150 or 200 Blackfeet kept up an irregular fire on the enemy. We who remained in the fort had the pleasure of viewing a most interesting scene. From the place where the range of hills turns to the Missouri, more and more Blackfeet continued to arrive. They came galloping in groups, from three to twenty together, their horses covered with foam, and they themselves in their finest apparel, with all kinds of ornaments and arms, bows and quivers on their backs, guns in their hands, furnished with their medicines, with feathers on their heads; some had splendid crowns of black and white eagles' feathers, and a large hood of feathers hanging down behind, sitting on fine panther skins lined with red; the upper part of their bodies partly naked, with a [276] long strip of wolf's skin thrown across the shoulder, and carrying shields adorned with feathers and pieces of coloured cloth. A truly original sight! Many immediately galloped over the hill, whipped their tired horses, in order to take part in the engagement, shouting, singing, and uttering their war-whoop; but a great part of them stopped at the fort, received powder and balls, and, with their guns and bows, shot at the disfigured remains of the Assiniboin who was slain, and which were now so pierced and burnt as scarcely to retain any semblance of the human form. As the Indians near the fort believed themselves to be now quite safe, they carried the wounded into the leather tents, which were injured and pierced through and through by the 151 enemy's balls, round which many dead horses and dogs were lying, and the crying and lamenting were incessant.

About one o'clock Mr. Mitchell and his people returned, much fatigued by the expedition, and the great heat, the thermometer being at 84°. Mr. Mitchell's horse had been shot through the withers; he himself fell off and hurt his arm; another horse was shot through the neck, and captured by the enemy; Bourbonnais, its rider, had escaped.¹²³ All our people, however, had returned safe. The enemy had been driven back to the Maria River, where, from the want of bravery in the Blackfeet, they were able to maintain their ground

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behind the trees; nay, they had sometimes advanced and repulsed their enemies. They were plainly heard encouraging each other, on which they came forward in parties of twenty or thirty, and renewed the attack. It was generally observed that the Assiniboins fought better than the Blackfeet, many of whom did not leave the fort during the whole day. Mr. Mitchell, with his people, had always been in advance of the Blackfeet, and nearer to the enemy. He had often shamed the Blackfeet, whose numbers had increased to 500 or 600, calling out—"Why did they lag behind? They had reproached the Whites with cowardice, but now it was seen who were the most cowardly. Now was the time to show their courage," &c. The hunter, Dechamp, had especially distinguished himself by his bravery and well-directed fire at the enemy, of whom he had killed or wounded several. They called out to him that they knew him very well, for he is a Half Cree Indian, and had many relations among the enemy. He had been several times in the heat of the action, and a Blackfoot gave him his horse, on which he saved himself.¹²⁴ During this engagement
Kutonapi

¹²³ For a further adventure of Augustin Bourbonnais, "a free trapper," consult Coues, *Larpeur's Journal*, i, pp. 117–123— Ed.

¹²⁴ This Dechamp was an excellent marksman, and very brave in action. He had been in the service of the Northwest Company, and, in the battle with Governor Semple, had killed an Englishman, a circumstance of which he always spoke with great pleasure, having a genuine Indian spirit. An account of the disgraceful defeat of Governor Semple by the Half-breeds and Indians, among whom Maji-Gabowi was present, may be found in Schoolcraft's *Expedition to Itasca Lake*, p. 102, and in Ross Cox's *Account of his Journey to the Columbia*, p. 269.— Maximilian.

¹⁵² came to Mr. Mitchell, and asked him for a paper, which he had received on the conclusion of the treaty with the Fur Company; and, being told that it was in the fort, he said, "Oh, if I had it here, it would secure me against every ball!" The Indians had fired quite at random, otherwise the loss [277] must have been much greater on both sides. We learnt, in the sequel, that the Assiniboins had three killed, and twenty severely wounded.

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Many Indians took Mr. Mitchell by the hand, welcomed him as their friend and ally, and offered him several horses, which he did not accept.

After dinner, Doucette, Dechamp, and Berger again rode in quest of the enemy, who still occupied the valley of the Maria River, and many Blackfeet came back, boasting of their heroic exploits. Old Ninoch-Kiaiu came full of joy, and told us that “no ball had touched him; doubtless, because Mr. Bodmer had taken his portrait a few days before.” In the afternoon a number of Blackfeet arrived, and the dust raised by their horses was visible at a great distance in the prairie. The fort was filled with them; and they were refreshed with water and tobacco. We visited the wounded in their tents, had the blood washed from their wounds, and their hair, which was clotted with it, cut off; and gave them medicines and plaster, and, instead of brandy, which they asked for, sugar and water to refresh them. A child had died of its wounds; they had daubed its face with vermilion. After the exertions of this day, both Indians and Whites were covered with perspiration and dust, and quite exhausted. Our people observed the enemy in their position on the Maria; but, during the night, they retreated in three 153 strong divisions, in the direction of the Bear's Paw, and the Blackfeet did not molest them.

In the morning of the 29th of August a part of the Blackfeet came to us, fatigued and hungry, and reported that they had pursued the enemy, and fired at them on both flanks, and had found one killed; but they had not returned the fire, without doubt, for want of ammunition. During the night we had lodged the principal chiefs in the fort; among them were Tatsika-Stomik (the bull from the centre), Penukah-Zenin (the elk's tongue), Kutonapi, and Ihkas-Kinne (the bent horn); the latter was a chief of the Siksekai, or proper Blackfeet. Most of the Indians of the great horde went away, promising to return soon, with their tents and baggage, and begin the trade. The tents, with the wounded, were all removed, except a few, to better positions higher up the river. Several Blackfeet having heard that they were accused of cowardice, came to justify themselves. They alleged that their horses were too much fatigued, which might in some measure be true; but then they might have dismounted, and fought on foot, as very few of the enemy were on horseback.

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Bird, to whom Mr. Mitchell had refused to sell one of his best horses, left the fort in great anger; and an Indian told us that he had promised the several Indian chiefs to give them tobacco, if they would no longer dispose of their beaver skins here, but take them to the north, to the English Company. This man had said just the contrary to Mr. Mitchell; his insincerity therefore was evident; and it would be highly important to the Company to deprive this dangerous, influential Half-breed of the power of injuring them.

The expedition to the Kutasas, projected by Mr. Mc Kenzie, set out from Fort Mc Kenzie on the 30th of August. The object of it was to trade with that people, and especially to obtain skins of the white mountain goat (*Capra Americana*). 154 It consisted of Doucette, Isidore Sandoval, [278] with his Indian wife, four *engagés* , and two Kutana Indians, one of whom was Homach-Ksachkum, all mounted, and with nine pack-horses, which carried the goods, the kitchen utensils, and the beds. They had to proceed two days' journey along the banks of the Teton River, and then to strike directly to the north, to the mountains; and, if the Kutasas were found in their usual places of abode, they expected to be able to reach them in twelve days.125 They did not think that they could be back before the next spring. This enterprise was very dangerous; and we, in fact, learnt, in the sequel, that Doucette had been shot by a Blood Indian, and that the expedition had proved a complete failure. They had scarcely vanished from our sight behind the heights, when a great number of Blackfeet arrived, and among them many who were quite strangers to us, and who gazed on us with astonishment, as they had been but little accustomed to the sight of white men. They had put on their handsomest dresses, and were much dissatisfied when they learnt that the trade could not begin that day, because Mr. Mitchell was indisposed. The fort was crowded with them; we saw them smoking in every corner; and they were so idle, or so proud, that they gave their pipes to the first white man they saw to light them, though they were close to the kitchen fire. The gate was besieged by Indians, who were by no means all permitted to enter, and we ourselves all refrained from going out, because the great assemblage of these people inside could not be trusted. The number of chiefs at this time

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in the fort was small, in comparison with the preceding year, when fifty-four of them were there at one time. Among the Blackfeet who visited us there was an old man, called

125 The usual habitat of the Kutenai Indians was along the river which takes its name from them—running chiefly in British Columbia, with a loop into north-western Montana.— Ed.

155 Homachseh-Kakatohs (the great star), who had a remarkable hooked nose. He wore the round felt hat with a tuft of feathers, which Mr. Bodmer made him take off, and then drew his portrait, which was an excellent likeness. When the drawing was finished, and he had received some tobacco, he rose, went into the court-yard, and delivered, with good address, a long speech, the tenor of which was—“The chief below (Mr. Mc Kenzie) had sent his children hither, and recommended them to the Blackfeet; they ought, therefore, to treat them well, to bring them good meat, that they might not lament and complain, but be merry, and always have their bellies full.”

Soon after the arrival of the Great Star, Tatsiki-Stomik and Ihkas-Kinne came to the fort; they all asked for brandy, which seemed to be the main subject of their thoughts. Ihkas-Kinne was a tall, well-looking man, with a very marked countenance. He wore an otter's skin over his shoulders, with the tail hanging down before, and which was ornamented all over with pieces of shell. This man had rendered some services to the fort, and was to be depended on. On this occasion he stepped forward, with a noble, manly air, and delivered a long speech. “The French,” he said, “must have hearts ill-disposed towards the Indians; for, on the evening after the battle, they had not given the Blackfeet (he would not say a word of himself) anything to drink; even the chiefs had received nothing. They had come to the fort hungry and thirsty, and so they had left it, though they were fatigued by their exertions in fighting for the Whites. He was just this moment [279] come from an expedition against the Crows, in which they had lost two of their people, and had no articles to trade with. They had traversed, without shoes, great tracts of prairie; their feet were sore, and tired, yet he had taken part in the action, and neither he nor others had received any present from the Whites.” Mr. 156 Mitchell answered that “he would make the chiefs some presents to-morrow; though he thought that he had done enough, as he

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had distributed among them, on the preceding day, a great quantity of powder and ball, and received those that were in need into the fort. Though it was true that the Whites possessed many medicines which they could employ to the ruin of the Indians, he had no such thoughts. He would, however, show them such a one to-day, to give them an idea of the power of the Whites. When a cannon was fired, they should pay attention. To-morrow he would have the colours hoisted, and a gun fired as a signal for the solemn reception of the chiefs." One of the Blackfeet chiefs had before observed, that "he was much surprised that the Whites always appeared in their common every day clothes, whereas they (the chiefs) put on their handsomest dresses. They had never seen the fine clothes of the Whites."

The chiefs having left us about six in the afternoon, the gate of the fort was shut, and, as soon as it was dark, Mr. Mitchell caused a gun to be fired, and then some skyrockets to be successively thrown up, which, as it happened, succeeded extremely well, rising to a great height, and bursting into stars. Most of the Indians, however, did not betray much astonishment at this exhibition, having already seen the same at the English posts. The Indians before the fort had already been dancing and singing to the sound of their drum; they now retired, rejoicing, to their tents. It was a still, moonlight night, but the noise of the Indians continued, and a watch was kept in the fort.

On the following morning we were surprised by the highly interesting appearance of the great Indian camp, consisting of about 400 tents, which stood close together, because the enemy was supposed to be still in the neighbourhood.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ See the view of this great camp of the Piegan, in Plate 76, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

¹⁵⁷ News had been received that the Assiniboins were scattered, and perhaps concealed, in many small parties, in the adjacent country.

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On the 31st of August the sky was very gloomy, but the clouds dispersed, and at nine o'clock Mr. Mitchell had a gun fired as the signal for the opening of the trade; on which about twenty-four of the chiefs and most distinguished warriors of the Piekanns, and with them the Blackfoot, Ihkas-Kinne, advanced, in slow procession, to the fort. Mr. Mitchell passed through a great crowd of women and children to meet the men, shook hands with them, and conducted them into the fort. They had put on their best dresses, and were received with a salute from the cannon of the fort; but the rain falling in torrents was extremely unfavourable to this interesting ceremony. At this moment, a numerous body of Blood Indians, with all their baggage, appeared on the heights on the other side of the river, who intended likewise to encamp near the fort; on this, Ninoch-Kiaiu [280] immediately appeared, and declared "that he already felt an inclination to fire at those people; and that there would certainly be blood shed, if they were not kept at a distance; especially if the minds of the parties were excited by the trade." In consequence of this declaration, Mr. Mitchell sent Berger, the interpreter, over the river, to represent to the Blood Indians the state of affairs, and to signify to them that it would be better to defer their trade till that with the Piekanns was over; with this declaration they were satisfied, and withdrew.

The chiefs who were now in the fort were the leaders of the Piekanns, Tatsiki-Stomik, Penukah-Zenin, Sachkomapoh (the little boy), Kitsipooch-Kiaiu (the spotted bear), Kiaiu-Stoman (the bear knife), Ninoch-Kiaiu (the bear chief), who, however, did not enter with the others, and was meanly dressed on account of his mourning: as also Haisikat, Mikutseh-Stomik 158 (the red buffalo), Achsapacké (the handsome woman), Ihkas-Kinne (the bent cowhorn), and one or two others, whose names I have forgotten.¹²⁷ Among them there were fine, tall, robust men, and all wore extremely handsome and costly dresses, many of them ornamented with strips of ermine. Tatsiki-Stomik, in particular, wore a shirt of very white bighorn leather, embroidered on the sleeves with blue flowers, ornamented on the right arm with long slips of white ermine, rolled up, with red feathers, and on the left with tufts of long black hair. Across his shoulder he wore a palatine of

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otter skins, at each end of which there was a tassel of slips of ermine. The faces of the chiefs were painted with vermilion and the blue earth of the Rocky Mountains; they were unfortunately wet through, especially their beautiful shoes, by the rain falling so inopportunately. The old Middle-Bull had a venerable look; he was not tall; the expression of his countenance was good natured and thoughtful. He promised to sit for his portrait, which he did in the sequel, unhappily not in his handsome dress, but in his everyday clothes. The portrait is extremely like, and perfectly gives the honest expression of the old man's countenance.¹²⁸

127 Onistahna (the chief of the white buffalo cow) was considered the principal chief of all the Blackfeet.— Maximilian.

128 See Plate 78, the left-hand figure, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

When the chiefs had taken their places in Mr. Mitchell's room, old Middle-Bull spoke nearly to the following effect:—"He hoped that the Whites would renounce their bad opinion of them, and not believe that they took their skins and furs to the English: for it was evidently their (the Piekanns') own interest to be on good terms with the fort situated in their neighbourhood, the English settlements being at much too great a distance; that, if some of their people talked ¹⁵⁹ of carrying their beaver skins to the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, it was merely to try to obtain goods on lower terms." After this speech the chiefs, having received presents, gradually withdrew, and the trade began. It was not long before a dispute arose at the gate, in which an Indian drew his knife against the doorkeeper; but he was turned out by the chief, Penukah-Zenin, who was still there, and in this manner tranquillity was restored. Meantime, some troops of [281] Blood Indians had come near the fort, and the Piekanns fired at them with ball, which they answered, so that the balls whistled over the fort. Mr. Mitchell placed a strong, well-armed guard at the gate, and we could see, on the heights on the other side of the river, the heads of the Blood Indians, who had come down to observe what might happen.

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We might now be considered completely as prisoners; for, at the gate, there was an incredible crowd of Indians, who all attempted to enter by force, pushed, crowded, fought, and struggled with each other, for we could not venture to admit more than a certain number at one time into the Indian magazines between the two gates. Several well-disposed Indians supported the guard in this difficult and disagreeable employment; yet, now and then, a man, with desperate violence, forced his way through the gate, knocked down the guard, and it was a good while before he could be turned out.

The trade continued on the 1st of September, and we saw in the fort the wife of the chief of the Blood Indians, who had lately passed by the fort, and who much regretted the misunderstanding that had arisen between the Piekanns and her tribe. They had entered into a negotiation with the Piekanns, to atone by presents for their blood-guiltiness, which might lead to an amicable arrangement.

Among our most interesting visitors were a couple of Sassi 160 Indians; they were slightly-built men of the middle size, with nothing striking in their appearance, and came to announce the speedy arrival of a considerable body of their nation, who wished to dispose of their beaver skins. While the trade was going on very briskly, on account of the number of the men and women, a report was suddenly spread that the Assiniboins were approaching, on which all the Indians hastily withdrew; it proved, however, that the alarm had been caused by a new band of the Blackfeet (Siksekai), who had appeared on the heights. When any single Indians arrived, we saw them fire their guns at the burnt remains of the enemy lately killed, though they could scarcely be recognised. Then they generally soon came to us, and looked at Mr. Bodmer while drawing, which he continued very diligently, and without any opposition being made to it, because he had remarked that none of the men whose portraits he had drawn, had been lately killed or wounded. The musical box, in which they fancied that there was a little spirit,¹²⁹ and many other European toys, generally made a lively impression on these people, and afforded them much amusement.

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129 Captain Lyon (Private Journal, page 140), says, that the Esquimaux took such a musical box to be the young one of a little barrel organ, and which they, in like manner, thought to be animated by a spirit.— Maximilian.

Comment by Ed. George Francis Lyon (1795–1832), who accompanied Parry in his voyage of discovery in the “Hecla.” His private journal was published at London in 1825.

During the night of the 2nd of September, some Indians had broken a hole through the clay wall of the Indian magazine, and stolen several articles, among which were some dresses of the chiefs; and it was evident that the thief must have kept himself concealed in the fort during the [282] night. Towards seven in the morning we heard some musket shot fired in the fort, and the band of our friend Kutonapi, about sixty or seventy in number, advanced to the fort, headed by 161 three chiefs, who were admitted. All the principal chiefs of the Piekanns arrived afterwards, whom Mr. Mitchell clothed in red uniforms, calico shirts, and every other article of dress — hung about their necks round looking-glasses, or silver medals with the bust of the president, &c. The most amusing was when he put on them the new red felt hats, with red plumes of feathers. Their prodigious, long, thick hair was too large for the hat, and the whole was, therefore, made into a great bunch, and stuffed into the hat before it could be put on their heads. They suffered themselves to be dressed like children, and received other presents, such as powder, ball, tobacco, knives, &c. The dress of every chief might be estimated at ninety dollars. Meantime, the newly-arrived band of the Siksekai had pitched their tents, and the fort was again surrounded by a multitude of dangerous men. Sometimes they threatened to fire at our people when they appeared on the pickets, and several things were stolen in the fort, because many men were still admitted on account of the trade. The chiefs were constantly begging, as well as the meanest Indians, and this may be justly stated as a most troublesome habit of the Blackfeet. In this respect the other tribes have much more delicacy. The Crows, in their visits and negotiations, presented the Blackfeet with valuable

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articles, costly feather caps, shields, horses, &c., but received nothing at all when they came to the latter, by which all the other Indian nations are incensed against the Blackfeet.

As the Indians became very troublesome towards evening, Mr. Mitchell had all the arms loaded with ball. Three detachments, each consisting of nine men and an officer, were commanded to keep guard, and he gave orders to fire from the pickets the instant an Indian attempted to climb over. All the chiefs were made acquainted with this order, that they might communicate it to their people. A new report being spread, that a thousand Assiniboins were approaching, the guards were doubled, and the officers divided, from which we strangers were not excepted. During this state of imprisonment our horses suffered from want of food, as they could not be driven into the meadows, and there was but little hay in the fort. The Indians had used or burnt the hay that was in the prairies higher up on the Missouri, and we were, therefore, much embarrassed about the horses.

On the 3rd of September, in the morning, some shots were fired, and soon afterwards a new body of the Siksekai, consisting of between thirty and forty men, arrived, of whom two of the principal warriors were admitted. They were tall and handsome, in costly new dresses. The name of the leader was Makuiè-Kinn (the wolf's collar). The other carried in his hand the sign of the prairie dogs — a long crooked staff wound all round with otter's skin, and adorned with bunches of feathers.¹³⁰ He told us that this medicine had the effect of rallying the warriors who were dispersed in the prairie. They told us that the greater portion of their [283] people were in the north, but that two strong parties of warriors were coming; and, in fact, one of them, consisting of 150 men, soon appeared on the heights, where it halted, and afterwards came down to the fort. The chiefs were admitted, but soon dismissed, because they had no articles to trade with. The proper Blackfeet (Siksekai) and the Blood Indians catch but few beavers, being chiefly engaged in war parties, and especially selling meat to the Hudson's Bay Company. The Piekanns, on the other hand, catch the most beavers. Beaver traps (which are lent them) were distributed among them to-day, and many Indians went away to hunt beavers.

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130 See p. 113 for illustration of badge of Praire-dog band.— Ed.

Early in the morning of the 4th of September, the band of the Blood Indians, who had lately been sent away, were 163 seen approaching the fort, because the trade with the Piekanns was concluded. Their old chief, Stomik-Sosak (the ox hide), and a medicine man, Pehtonista (who calls himself the east), entered the fort. The first, a very good old man,¹³¹ had saved the life of Mr. Mitchell the year before, when an Indian was going to run him through with his spear: he is a great friend to the Whites, and resolved, with his small band, to remain faithful to the fort. He greatly regretted the late unfortunate occurrence, when his son had shot, by accident, as he affirmed, young Martin; and spoke much of his attachment to the French, as he called them. He called Mr. Mitchell his son, and added that, “to his great sorrow, he had been obliged to see the fort every day, without daring to come near it, on account of the unhappy difference with Ninoch-Kiaiu.” One of the Siksekai took off all his clothes, and laid them down as a present before Mr. Mitchell, on which Stomik-Sosak lent him his robe to cover him. On such an occasion these people do not hesitate to sit down quite naked. This was again a very unpleasant day to us, for the press of the savage Siksekai was very violent. There was no end of their most importunate begging, and dangerous men forced their way into the fort. Most of them were very characteristic figures; their faces were painted red and black, with medicine skins trimmed with feathers or bells, with yellow ornaments, or buttons, glass beads, &c., in their hair. Some of them were excessively curious, clambered about every place, and wanted to examine everything. An extremely dangerous man forced his way in with the chiefs, whom we could by no means get rid of, though we repeatedly got the chiefs to desire him to go out again. His face was painted yellow and red; the expression of his features was that of a true hostile barbarian.

131 A very striking resemblance is found in the left-hand figure of Plate 79, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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164 Two years before, at the conclusion of the treaty of peace, he had boasted to Berger, at the very first interview, that he had already shot five Whites; and it was not without the greatest difficulty that we could now get rid of this savage.

During the night Mr. Mitchell sent all the good horses belonging to the fort, about twenty in number, to Fort Union, by land, because we were not able to feed them any longer. Dechamp and his brother, with Papin and Vachard, were charged with this business, and arrived safe at Fort Union. The speedy removal of the horses was the more necessary, as the Indians intended to steal them, and so advantage was taken of the fine moonlight night to send them away.

[284] It was my intention to pass the winter in the Rocky Mountains, and I had the execution of this project much at heart; but circumstances had arisen which rendered it very difficult, nay, impossible. A great number of the most dangerous Indians surrounded us on all sides, and had in particular occupied the country towards the Falls of the Missouri, which was precisely the direction we should have to take. They had obliged Mr. Mitchell to send away all the serviceable horses; so that, with the best will in the world, he could not have supplied us with these animals, which were indispensably necessary. Without an interpreter we could not undertake a journey which was very difficult for a few persons, and, Doucette having been sent away, Mr. Mitchell had not one left; at the same time, a long stay, which would be absolutely necessary for our researches in natural history, was quite out of the question, as we should be obliged, in some sort, to make our way by stealth. We had before asked old Tatsiki-Stomik whether we should encounter much danger in such an undertaking? and his answer was, that “the Piekanns might, perhaps, rob us, but would not probably treat us as enemies; but that the Kahna and the Siksekai were fools, and we must be on our guard against them;” and, in truth, we might judge of the intentions of the latter, since they had fired with ball at the Piekanns, though of their own nation, near the fort. For all these reasons, I therefore found myself compelled to give up my plan of going further up the Missouri, and therefore asked Mr. Mitchell for a vessel to return down the rivers; but, as he had not one to spare,

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he promised to have a new one built for me. As we might any day be attacked by the Assiniboins, and such an attack might have proved more serious than the preceding, and, at all events, much valuable time would be lost by our being again imprisoned in the fort, as, in this case, we should be, not to mention that, autumn being already far advanced, a longer delay promised us a very unpleasant voyage, I endeavoured to have the work hastened as much as possible, in which Mr. Mitchell willingly co-operated. We had, besides, got pretty well acquainted with the Blackfeet Indians, and collected a great number of interesting portraits of them, and could not hope to observe anything new during the winter, or to add to our collection. As the Assiniboins were our enemies, to whom our scalps would doubtless have been a very welcome acquisition, I intended, in case of need, to make use of the night also, and had therefore no time to lose.

Planks were cut for my new Mackinaw boat, and the carpenter or shipwright immediately set to work in the courtyard of the fort. The weather was rather cool, and the Gros Ventres des Prairies, who visited us early in the morning, came with their teeth chattering with cold, the nights being already frosty. A sign of autumn was, that the locusts sought their food on the shrubs, there being nothing more in the prairies, and the crows began to take their flight in large flocks to the south.

On the 7th of September, at noon, a band of about sixty Gros Ventres des Prairies, of whom twenty-nine were 166 mounted, approached the fort. They marched abreast, and then alighted. Mr. Mitchell went to meet them, and received from them a large horse, blind of one eye, as a present; [285] after which the Indians were received in the usual manner. Two chiefs, Mexkemaustan and Eh-Siss (the sun), were the leading men; the latter was a good old man, with a very expressive countenance. The fort was filled with these Indians, who importuned us for medicines, many of them having old wounds which had been neglected. Remedies were given to some for inflammation in the eye, on which they embraced and kissed us. They had but few things to dispose of. The women and children begged, and were so troublesome, that it was necessary to shut the gates.

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Mr. Bodmer had now taken several views in the environs, and among the rest had begun that of the Rocky Mountains and the Bear's Paw from the heights behind the fort.¹³² We went there every day, but were obliged always to have somebody to keep a sharp look-out while Bodmer was drawing, because we were never safe from a visit of the Indians. Sometimes we were alarmed by false reports, and returned home without doing anything. We, however, accomplished our object, and Mr. Bodmer's above-mentioned drawings give a correct idea of that country.

132 See Plate 77, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

On the 29th [9th] of September, Mr. Mitchell sent Harvey, with thirty more, to begin the erection of the new fort. They took with them the only pirogue that was left, and also the horses, for which there was no hay in the fort. After this diminution of our numbers, we had only twenty-eight persons remaining in the fort. So many Indians had been seen on this day, at a distance, who did not come to the fort, that it was necessary to have a stronger guard during the night; and when it was dark, we were alarmed by a shot, but we soon found that it was some of our people returning from the new fort, who fired as a signal to be brought across the ice. They brought word that the Gros Ventres had, on the preceding day, killed thirty buffaloes, and we might, therefore, expect some fresh provision, of which we had been for some time deprived. Our breakfast as well as our dinner had, for a long time, consisted of old dried meat, in the morning with coffee, and some bread baked with fat, and at noon with maize boiled in broth. The maize was now all consumed, and we had only the dry meat, as tough as leather, to eat; we had, therefore, the more reason to be rejoiced, when, on the 10th of September, the Gros Ventres brought eighteen horse-loads of fresh meat, all of which we purchased of them with knives, powder, ball, and other things. On the 11th of September, twenty-one men, belonging to the fort, took the boat, which had been built for me by the carpenter, Saucier, to the Missouri: the necessary arrangements for our voyage were made; large cages were made for my two live bears; and kitchen utensils and beds were procured. The cases, containing

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my collections, filled a great part of the boat, which, unfortunately, proved too small. I had received from the Company Henry Morrin as steersman, and, besides him, three young, inexperienced Canadians, Beauchamp, Urbin, and Thiebaut, who were ill qualified for such a voyage, and did not even possess serviceable fire-arms. Thus, there were only seven persons in the boat, but the time was most valuable, and I fixed my departure for the 14th of September.

CHAPTER XXI RETURN FROM FORT MC KENZIE TO FORT UNION, FROM THE 14TH TO THE 29TH OF SEPTEMBER

All our Baggage wet through — Delay occasioned thereby in the Stone Walls — Great Number of Buffaloes in the Mauvaises Terres — Rutting of the Elk — Great Number of Beasts of the Chase — A Stag with Twenty Antlers killed — Loss of the Bear's Skeleton — Excursion on the Muscleshell River — Numerous Assemblage of Wolves — Number of Beaver Dens — Violent Storm — Rainy Weather — Arrival at Fort Union.

The morning of the 14th of September was fine and bright, and promised us a pleasant voyage. By noon all our effects were put on board the new boat, and it became more and more evident that we had not sufficient room in this vessel. The great cages, with the live bears, were placed upon the cargo in the centre, and prevented us from passing from one end of the boat to the other; besides this, there was not room for us to sleep on board; this was a most unfavourable circumstance, because it obliged us always to lie to for the night. At one o'clock in the afternoon, we took leave of our kind host, Mr. Mitchell, and of his only companion, Mr. Cuthbertson; all the inhabitants of the fort accompanied us to the river, where a cannon was placed to salute us. We had lived so long together in this wilderness, that we naturally took a lively interest in the fate of those who remained behind to pass the winter in a place where they would be exposed to so many dangers and privations, and wished them courage and perseverance to encounter them. Our boat glided rapidly along, and we soon took a last look at the fort and its inhabitants, to whom we waved our hands to bid them a last farewell. In half-an-hour we reached the place where we had passed

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the night before 169 we arrived at the fort in the keel-boat, and the steersman now chose the northern channel, which led, about half-past two o'clock, by the ruins of the old fort. Opposite the mouth of Maria River we saw a herd of eight antelopes, and several others at other places; likewise Virginian deer, and many birds, especially jays and sparrowhawks. [287] On Maria River, in particular, there were various kinds of birds in the high trees. Here Mr. Mitchell had shot a blue-headed jay which was hopping on the ground.¹³³

¹³³ This bird, which is nearly allied to the jay, or the roller, has not yet been mentioned by either Townsend or Audubon. In the form of the bill, its figure, and mode of living, it much resembles the nutcracker; only the nostrils are not covered with bristles, like those of the jay and crow, but lie quite free on the fore part of the skin of the nose. The *angulus mentalis* comes out further than in *niscifraga*. As this bird seems to form a new genus, I call it, from the above-mentioned peculiarity, *Gymnorhinus cyano cephalus*.— Maximilian.

Towards four o'clock a thunder-storm came on, and the sky became entirely covered with thick clouds. As we had reason to be on our guard against the Indians, we regretted that my two bears were unusually dissatisfied with their confinement, and manifested their feelings by moaning and growling, which might very easily have attracted some hostile visitors. We lay to, before twilight, at a prairie on the right, where we had an extensive view, kindled a fire, and dressed our meat, part of which was put on board, and we continued our voyage. When night was fully set in, we were on the steep high bank on the south side of the Missouri, and, as it was too dark to proceed, we fastened the boat to some trunks of trees, and passed a very uncomfortable night, lying on our deck, while a heavy cold rain prevented us from sleeping.

On the next morning, the 15th of September, we were in a lamentable plight. We were all of us, more or less, wet and benumbed, as the boat had no deck, and we found, to our great dismay, that this new vessel was very leaky, so that 170 the greater part of our luggage was wet through. The rain had ceased, and a bleak wind chilled our wet limbs; as soon, therefore, as we had baled out the greater part of the water, we hastened to proceed

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on our voyage. When we approached the Gate of the Stone Walls, the sun was just rising behind that interesting opening. Some numerous herds of antelopes and bighorns looked down from the singular sand-stone walls on the early disturbers of their repose. We would gladly have gone in pursuit of these animals, in order to obtain some game; but it was high time to ascertain the damage done by the water. When the sun had risen a little higher, we landed on the south bank, and made a large fire, for which we took the wood of an old Indian hunting-hut, in a wood of tall poplars. Our drenched buffalo robes and blankets were brought on shore to dry, and I discovered, to my great regret, that the pretty striped squirrel (*Tamias quadrivittatus* , Say), which I had hoped to bring alive to Europe, was drowned in its cage. Morrin, who rambled in the neighbouring wood with his rifle, while breakfast was getting ready, killed a fine skunk with a shot, which did not differ from those in Pennsylvania.

After stopping about an hour, during which time we had warmed and refreshed ourselves with coffee and meat, we proceeded, and at half-past nine reached the commencement of the Stone Walls, properly so called, the last black tower-like rock of which, on the north bank, first met the eye. At any other time I should have been again highly interested by the remarkable features of this spot; but now I was extremely impatient to know the extent of our loss. Numbers of wild sheep were everywhere seen; but the still more numerous colonies of swallows had retired at the coming of autumn, and, instead of these, we saw flocks of magpies on the mountains. We gave chase in vain to a couple of very large elks. At half-past eleven we passed the mouth of 171 Stonewall Creek, and lay to about 200 paces above, at the steep declivity of the prairie on the [288] north bank. As the sun now shone with considerable power, we hastened completely to unload the boat, to open and unpack all the chests and trunks, one by one. How grieved were we to find all our clothes, books, collections, some mathematical instruments, in a word, all our effects, entirely wet and soaked. The chests were, for the most part, open in all the joints, and quite useless; but what afflicted me the most, was my fine botanical collection of the Upper Missouri, made with labour and expense of time, which I could not now put into dry paper, and which

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therefore, was, for the most part, lost, as well as the Indian leather dresses, which became mouldy. We had now no resource but to remain where we were till most of our things were dried; a most disagreeable necessity. A large spot of the prairie was covered with our scattered effects, and a wind arising caused some disorder among our goods, and we were obliged to take care that nothing might be lost. My extensive herbarium had to be laid, on account of the wind, under the shelter of the eminences of a small lateral ravine, which took me the whole day, and yet all the plants became black and mouldy.

At this place, Morrin killed, for the use of our kitchen, a deer (*Cervus macrotis*), which had already assumed its grey under coat. This kind of deer is distinguished and well known by its long ears, which are especially remarkable in the female.¹³⁴ When the flesh was cooked, we all wrapped ourselves in our blankets, and lay down to sleep on the high bank of the river, while two persons constantly kept guard, and were relieved every two hours. I had to keep watch with Thiebaut from nine to eleven o'clock, which was not an unpleasant time, as the night was warm and still, and

134 See p. 129 for illustration of head of *Cervus macrotis*.— Ed.

172 rather moonlight. A deer crossed the river pretty near us, as it began to dawn, but nobody fired, in order not to make any unnecessary [289] noise. We remained at this place till nearly evening on the 16th of September. Happily for us the sun was again very warm, and, combined with the wind, saved a part of our effects.

After our cooking was finished, and all the chests put on board again, we continued our voyage, passed the Citadel Rock, to which we bid adieu for ever, not without regret; saw wolves, wild sheep, and a multitude of bats, the latter of which flew rapidly over the bright mirror of the river, and halted for the night at a sandy flat below a high bank, where I had the first watch. While the remainder of the company lay on the ground, wrapped in their blankets, and sunk in deep sleep, I amused myself with contemplating the grotesque ghost-like formation of the white sand-stone of the Stone Walls, amidst the howling of the wolves, and the melancholy note of the owl (*Strix Virginianus*).

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The next morning (17th September) we passed rapidly through the Gate of the Stone Walls, where the wonders described in a preceding chapter passed us as in a dream. They would, perhaps, have left but an indistinct and gradually fading impression, had not the skilful hand of the draughtsman rescued them from oblivion. Only trappers (beaver hunters) and the *engagés* of the Fur Company sometimes look with indifference on these interesting scenes of nature, the value of which few of them can appreciate; the greater number esteem a few dollars above all the wonders of the Rocky Mountains. Towards eight o'clock we prepared our breakfast in a prairie on the northern bank, and warmed our benumbed limbs, while herds of buffaloes were grazing on the hills. On the beach we saw the track of a large bear, and of many stags, elks, and buffaloes. Eagles, ravens, crows, and magpies flew about the river. At ten 173 o'clock we reached the place where, on our journey up the river, we had met the Gros Ventres des Prairies; now we did not see a living creature—a most striking contrast! Towards noon we were at the flat, extensive prairie at the mouth of Judith River, which we passed at twelve o'clock. Large herds of buffaloes were feeding here,¹³⁵ which we did not disturb, because we conjectured that there were Indians in the neighbourhood, and therefore proceeded very cautiously. Large buffalo bulls swam backwards and forwards across the river, very near us; we did not, however, fire at them. The flesh of these animals is, besides, not good at this season. A little further down we again saw, on the north bank, a herd of several hundred bulls, cows, and calves. The bellowing of the bulls was incessant, and we lay to at a sandy island, covered with poplar and willow thickets, in order to surprise them, in which, however, we did not entirely

¹³⁵ The American buffalo or bison has been supposed to be, if not identical, very nearly akin, to the bison (*wisent* or *zuhr*), which still exists in Russia; but, from all that I know of the latter, the two animals appear to me to form two entirely different species. The American buffalo is characterized by its hair and colour. Its head is very large, and is carried low, its neck short, the withers very high, the fore part of the body colossal and broad, the back part, in proportion, small and weak, the tail rather short, very smooth, with

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short hairs, and a tuft at the end. During the summer months, the head, neck, shoulders, fore part of the body, and thighs, till behind the shoulder blade, are covered with longer hair, which there ceases, and is bounded by a strictly defined line from the hinder part of the body, the hair of which is short and smooth, looking, altogether, like a shorn poodle. The forehead and upper part of the head have smooth hair from twelve to eighteen inches long, and that on the fore legs is equally long, hanging down to the middle of the shins. In the winter the hair of the hinder part of the body is rather longer, with a thicker wool under it.

The prints, representing the wisent or zuhr of the Poles, which is still to be found in the forest of Bialowieza, represent that animal as very different from the American buffalo. The figure given by Bojanus (Tab. XXI.) represents the head of a bull six years old, without any long hair; and so does Tab. XX., where the hair of the forehead of the American buffalo is twelve inches long, and the beard hangs down to a great length. In these and other prints there is no long hair on the fore legs; while the tail, in Bojanus's prints, has much longer hair than that of the American animal. None of them have the long hair on the fore part of the body, nor the strictly defined limit of this longer hair.— Maximilian.

174 succeed. Morrin, indeed, crept softly amongst the herd, but was obliged to fire as he lay on the ground, and missed his aim three times. As we could not get a cow, we were forced to be content with a bull, which Morrin shot, a little further down, out of a small herd of twenty-four. We might easily have killed more of these animals, for, after the shot was fired, they were so frightened, that they ran about in confusion, without observing their enemy. We took the flesh of the bull that was killed, and at half-past five lay to above Dauphin's Rapid, to dress our meat. At this place Morrin shot a couple of [290] female bighorns, which gave us a change of diet. We afterwards passed the rapid without accident in the twilight, and lay to below it, on the south bank, making no noise, and without a fire. While I was keeping watch I saw, at ten o'clock, a splendid meteor, or aurora borealis, partly obscured by clouds. A long stripe of bright white, extending from east to west, was very dearly defined, and separated from the horizon. The phenomenon

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continued for about an hour, when the sky became covered with clouds, and rain fell. Meantime the wolves had been quarrelling on the opposite bank, as I inferred from their loud howling.

The following day (the 18th) led us through the remarkable valley of the Mauvaises Terres. Unfortunately we had, on this day, a bleak cold wind on our backs, which frightened away the numerous bighorns, elks, and many herds of buffaloes that were grazing on both sides of the river, in the little prairies covered with artemisia, at the foot of the steep, bare eminences. The wind enabled them to scent our approach at a considerable distance, as soon as our boat got into a bend of the river, and we often landed in vain to add to our stock of provisions. On this occasion we had many amusing scenes. A herd of twelve elks passed the river before us; the last was a large stag with colossal horns, this being the rutting 175 season of these animals. The herds of buffaloes were sometimes thrown into the greatest confusion and consternation when we came too near them: they galloped along the bank, and when they were tired of this, they turned into a lateral ravine, where we saw these heavy animals ascend the high steep mountains. It often appeared inconceivable how these colossal masses could make their way up the steep naked walls. Sometimes, however, they were obliged to turn back, and we intercepted the only way to the river. They were then frequently compelled to gallop along the narrow beach near to our boat, which, being carried rapidly down the stream, gave us frequent opportunities of overtaking them, and we might easily have killed several of them, but, as they were almost all bulls, we let them escape unmolested.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Among these animals there are some that are very large and fat, with longer horns than the others; these are such as have been castrated by the Indians when calves. They are said to become extremely fat and heavy.— Maximilian.

About ten o'clock we lay to, on the north bank, at a wild prairie, benumbed by the cold wind, and warmed ourselves. Among the Canadian pines the note of the little tree frog was still very loud in this cold weather. At two in the afternoon we reached the mouth of

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Winchers Creek, near which a large herd of buffaloes was grazing; in fact, we had seen, on this day, many thousands of these animals in the Mauvaises Terres, where, as we went up the river, all was still and dead. This was a sign that there were no Indians in these parts; they had, doubtless, been hunting in the prairies, and driven these animals away. We saw everywhere buffaloes in herds, or in small parties, which gave much variety to our voyage. As we were rapidly carried down by the current, in a turn of the river, we suddenly saw a herd of at least 150 buffaloes, quite near to us, standing on a sand bank in the river. The bulls, bellowing, drove the cows along; many were in motion, [291] and some standing and 176 drinking. It was a most interesting scene. My people laid aside their oars, and let the boat glide noiselessly along within a short rifle-shot of the herd, which took no notice of us, doubtless taking our boat for a mass of drifting timber. Scarcely sixty paces further down, there was, on a sand bank, a troop of six elks, with a large stag, which covered one of the animals three times in our presence. We saw him lay his horns on his back when he uttered his singular whistling cry.¹³⁷ A stag, which stood on the steep bank, 100 paces lower down, at length got scent of us, and galloped away, which made the elks and buffaloes aware that an enemy was near, on which they all took flight with the utmost precipitation. Mr. Bodmer has given a very faithful representation of this scene.¹³⁸ The great number of wild animals, buffaloes, elks, bighorns, and antelopes, which we saw on this day, afforded us much entertainment. We checked, on this occasion, our sporting propensities, that we might be able better to observe those interesting animals, in which we perfectly succeeded.

¹³⁷ The cry of the male elk, in the rutting season, is very singular, and seems to be in no due proportion to the large, heavy animals. It is a shrill whistle, which, for the most part, runs regularly up the scale, and then suddenly falls to a low, guttural note. The notes perfectly resemble a run upwards on the flageolet.— Maximilian.

¹³⁸ See Plate 80, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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We had reached Lewis and Clarke's Tea Island, to which we had given the name of Elk Island, and where, on our voyage up, we had found plenty of game. I landed Morrin and Dreidoppel on the upper end, to go in quest of game: the rest of us proceeded down towards the lower end, where we stopped to cook. Buffaloes and elks had crossed the river before us, and we heard the noise they made in the water at a considerable distance. The island was covered with lofty trees, and, in many places, with tall plants, especially artemisia, but had many grassy and open spots, and we 177 found on it five buffaloes, and several troops of elks and Virginian deer. A white wolf looked at us from the opposite bank, and the great cranes flew slowly and heavily before us. Our fire soon blazed in the forest, and Morrin brought in some game, which afforded us a good supper. While it was getting ready, we rambled about the island, and heard in all directions the bellowing of the buffalo bulls, and the whistling of the elks. I found the rutting places of the latter in the high grass, but soon returned to the fire, as the cry of the owl warned us of the approach of night. On consideration we judged this place to be ill suited for our night's quarters, as we might easily have been surprised by the Indians; we, therefore, went on board again, as soon as the meat was dressed, and continued our voyage, in the bright moonlight, till near nine o'clock. The evening was warm and pleasant. We often heard the noise made by the buffaloes crossing the river. The forests on the bank to the right and left resounded with the whistling of the elks, alternating with the howling of the wolves; and the shrill cry of the owl completed the nocturnal chorus of the wilderness. Our blankets and buffalo robes, which were still wet, froze during the night, as we had lain down on the strand by the river-side, where we had a cold, uncomfortable [292] couch. The manner in which we passed these nights was not calculated to afford any very refreshing sleep; for, to be ready, in case of alarm, we could never venture to undress, but lay down in a buffalo skin and a blanket, and the same to cover us, with our loaded guns under the blanket to keep them dry. We were pretty safe from a surprise, two persons always keeping watch, relieved every two hours.

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On the 19th of September we set out early: a fog rose from the river, and we sat wrapped up in our cloaks, quite benumbed with cold, while the whistling cry of the elks was heard all around us. Five females of this species, followed 178 by a proud stag, swam through the river before us; we fired too soon, on which the stag turned round; the animals came near us, and thereby afforded an opportunity to fire with effect; one of the animals was wounded, but proceeded on its way, and we did not get possession of it. At the moment, when the other animals sought to reach the bank, another noble stag appeared, which stopped at the distance of fifty paces, and uttered a loud cry. I quickly threw off my cloak, and took my rifle; but at that moment my pilot, Morrin, fired his long piece, and the stag fell. We immediately lay to, ascended the steep bank, and were astonished at finding a most magnificent stag of twenty antlers stretched on the ground. I immediately took the measure of the gigantic animal, and found the horns, from the head to the point of the uppermost antler, in a straight line, four feet one inch; the weight of both horns, sawn off at the head, was twenty-six pounds. The colour of the stag in this autumnal season was very beautiful: the whole body of a pale yellowish brown; the head, neck, the under side of the belly and extremities, a dark blackish-brown, which looked very handsome, especially at a distance. We soon had an excellent fire in the thick forest, which revived our chilled limbs. Breakfast was quickly got ready, and the enjoyment of it was much enhanced by our success. The stag was cut up, and the beautiful skin prepared entire for the zoological collection,¹³⁹ which gave us full employment till dinner-time. Meantime our beds and other baggage, which had been wetted by the rain, were dried, the sun shining pretty bright.

¹³⁹ Unfortunately, this fine skin, which, with much trouble, I got up to Fort Clarke, was lost when the Assiniboin steamer was burnt in the summer of 1834.— Maximilian.

When our work was finished, the boat was again loaded, and we put off from the bank. After the shot we had fired, the cry or whistle of the elks had ceased; but we saw several ¹⁷⁹ of those animals, and also buffaloes, flying in different directions. A little lower down we saw the fine deer killed by Droidoppel, hanging on the drift-wood, but the stream

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carried us too rapidly for us to think of taking it. We often saw the black water-hen (*Fulica Americana*) and the magpie; and wounded some buffaloes, but did not stop to take them, because they did not immediately fall. Soon after four in the afternoon, the stags began again to whistle, and, amidst this strange concert, we came, after five o'clock, to the place where we had fastened to a tree in the forest [293] the skeleton of the bear shot by Doucette. I landed full of hopes, and we proceeded into the thick, shady forest; but, alas! not a trace of the skeleton was to be found, except a few fragments of bone. The surrounding bushes and the high grass had been trodden down by the wolves and bears, the rope had been torn, the skeleton pulled down, and it had wholly vanished. The marks of the bears' claws were evident on the bark of the tree, and all our searching in the solitude of this forest was fruitless; we found nothing, and my hopes were entirely disappointed. We had the same ill fortune with some bears' heads which we had left a little further down; and I now regretted that I had not kept those interesting specimens. When evening came, bats flew about over the river, and eagles and falcons appeared on the bank. As soon as twilight commenced, we proceeded softly and cautiously down the river. Our boat glided noiselessly along, while profound silence, which was seldom interrupted, reigned in the extensive wilderness that surrounded us, and in the dark forests on the banks. Man naturally seeks and takes pleasure in the sight of his fellows; but we were very glad that there were no human beings here besides ourselves. We continued our voyage for a long time by moonlight; but the dark shadows of the banks were dangerous, for the water dashed and foamed against the visible 180 and invisible snags, which it required the greatest care to avoid. It was fortunate for us that Morrin was a very good pilot, who was well acquainted with the Missouri. We passed the night on the flat sandy beach, where we might have been betrayed by the disagreeable roaring of our bears. Those who kept watch had the pleasure of seeing a fine aurora borealis, which continued for half an hour in all its splendour.

On the following morning (the 20th of September), we were again benumbed with cold. Very early we saw a large bear, which was pursued without success. A large herd of

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buffaloes being found in a favourable situation, Morrin and Dreidoppel landed to approach them behind the willow thickets, and they succeeded in killing two fat cows, which furnished us with an ample supply of excellent meat. The immense horns of an elk, fixed at the head of the boat, the sixteen antlers of which were all hung with joints of meat, had a singular appearance. These provisions sometimes procured us a visit from the forward magpies, which, without the least shyness, perched on the stem of the boat, and uttered their note, which is quite different from that of the European magpie. This magpie is a droll bird, much more so than those of Europe, and often diverted us by its impertinence. We saw some numerous flocks of small birds setting out on their autumnal migration, and I observed, among others, a flock of the beautiful bluefinch (*Fring. amoena*), which flew across the river. At noon we lay to at an old poplar grove to prepare our dinner. Buffaloes and elks were very numerous at this place, and we might have shot several of them had we not thought it prudent to avoid all unnecessary noise. After we had enriched our collections, at some places on the bank, with very beautiful impressions of shells, all of which were, unfortunately, lost in the sequel, I lay to for the night about a mile above the [294] mouth of 181 Muscleshell River: Here, too, there were numbers of impressions of shells and baculites, of which we collected a great many. Having reached Muscleshell River early the next morning (the 21st of September), I stopped, in order to look for the remarkably large horns of an elk, which Mr. Mitchell had seen here the year before, and found to measure above five feet. Accompanied by Dreidoppel, I went two miles up the river, which was narrow and shallow; its banks were thickly grown with poplars, and the bones of buffaloes and elks were everywhere scattered about. We followed a path trodden by the buffaloes along the bank of the river. A small prairie, covered with artemisia and sarcobatus, joined the chain of hills beyond the forest. This was the place where the great stag's horns had lain, but we did not find them. A little further on, a high steep wall formed the right bank of the river, and here we found a great number of those animal remains of the ancient world, to which the name of baculites has been given, and which are met with in most parts near the Upper Missouri. We returned to our boat, loaded with these valuable specimens, and immediately continued our voyage. Provisions were soon obtained from

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a numerous herd of buffaloes standing on the bank: a shot from our boat killed a calf. We immediately lay to, and, following the bloody trace, found the animal dead in the grove of poplars. It was of a dark brown colour, the nose and muzzle rather lighter; its horns were just sprouting. Our firing, and the smell of the meat while breakfast was preparing, immediately attracted the wolves. We soon heard them howling in the vicinity, and, in a short time, saw them assembling on a sand bank on the other side of the river. Twelve of them, of different colours and sizes, had galloped up on hearing the shot, stopped a moment and looked at us, then turned back for a short distance, lay down or seated themselves, and entertained us with a concert of 182 their sweet voices. Some of them were quite white, others rather grey on the back, many very old and corpulent, others small, young, and slender.

We left this place about nine o'clock, and, with the help of my skilful pilot, passed, without accident, some parts of the river which were full of snags. The foliage of the poplar woods was now quite yellow, especially that of the young trees. A few swallows were still to be seen; the red-tailed woodpecker and the magpie were frequent in these parts. We saw some very large male elks, many Virginian deer, and buffaloes; some of the latter were rolling on their backs in the parched prairie, making the dust fly in clouds. Numbers of wolves were seen the whole day, doubtless attracted by the scent of the pieces of meat that were hung up about the boat. Herds of buffaloes were likewise met with, which we often overtook as they were swimming in the river, but did not fire at them; there were also large troops of elks, among which were some stags of extraordinary size. This great abundance of wild animals was a very satisfactory proof to us that the Indians were at a distance from this part of the river. The weather had been, on the whole, very favourable; on this day it had been very warm, but the evening was rather cool. The people laid aside their oars, and suffered the boat to drift down the stream. A solemn silence [295] prevailed in the vast solitary wilderness, where Nature, in all her savage grandeur, reigned supreme. Not a breath of air was stirring; buffaloes were quietly grazing on the sides of the hills, and even my bears lay still, after a fresh bed of poplar branches had been made for them:

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nobody spoke a word; it seemed as if we were involuntarily led by the impressions made by the scene, at the solemn evening hour, to give way to serious contemplation, for which there was ample matter. It was our constant caution to let our boat glide silently along in the evening, because it was 183 necessary, at that time, to be more on our guard against the Indians, who are said, generally, to return to their tents in the evening. We passed to-day, after dark, the White Castles, which have been mentioned before, and much regretted not having once more seen these extraordinary formations, below which we lay to. We enjoyed a remarkably fine, quiet moonlight night.

Our voyage, early the following morning (22nd of September), was very pleasant and interesting. A herd of buffaloes raised a great cloud of dust in their flight, and it seemed that they must be pursued by the Indians. Kingfishers, which we had not seen in our progress up the river, were now pretty numerous on all these banks; and when we lay to at eight o'clock to get our breakfast ready, the note of the little tree frog, with which I did not become acquainted, was heard among the wormwood bushes. We often passed what are called Indian forts, and our people generally looked very anxiously to see if they were occupied, which, luckily for us, was nowhere the case. My Canadians were so timid that they did not venture to speak loud, and, if we stopped for a moment, they testified, by their restless gestures, their apprehensions and their impatience. At half-past eleven o'clock, between Muscleshell and Milk Rivers, we passed the Half-way Pyramid,¹⁴⁰ which lay to the south of us. During the whole day we saw many buffaloes and elks, and a skunk on the bank, which escaped us, and a small flock of the hooping crane, one of the finest birds of North America, which was on its flight to warmer regions. The moon shone with extraordinary splendour when we lay to for the night, while the howling of the wolves and the whistle of the elks were heard all around. At half-past nine there was a fine aurora borealis, at first obscured by clouds, then blazing up, and coruscating, in lofty columns.

The

¹⁴⁰ See Plate 68, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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184 night was not disagreeably cool, and the following morning (the 23rd) was fine and pleasant; but so violent a wind soon arose, that we were compelled to lie to at the prairie near a poplar wood. We took this opportunity of drying our damp baggage in the wind, setting a watch in the prairie, that we might not be surprised by the Indians. During this time a great bear came out of the willow bushes, and swam directly towards us, across the river; we had already posted ourselves behind some trees to receive him with a volley at his coming on shore, when, perhaps, he perceived the smell of our boat, lying near the bank, and, to our no small chagrin, quietly turned back. He had scarcely reached the thicket on the other side, when a large male elk appeared at the same place, and continued, for a long time, to graze undisturbed. [296] In the prairie near us no other animals were seen, except large grasshoppers, two inches long, which had black wings edged with white; at first we took them for butterflies, but those more delicate flower hunters had already disappeared before the breath of autumn. It was not till five o'clock that the wind abated so as to allow us to proceed. We were entertained by the loud whistle of the elks, many of which were lying in the river to cool themselves. Morrin wounded a young deer at a great distance, and we immediately saw a wolf go after it, which, doubtless, soon put an end to the poor animal. Our bivouac for the night was lighted by an aurora borealis, which occurred almost every evening, the weather at the same time being warm and pleasant.

We reached the mouth of Big-Dry River by eight o'clock the next morning, just after we had shot from our boat a male elk, of twelve branches, whose horns we took away, but were obliged, to our great regret, to leave the carcass for the wolves. We saw herds of antelopes, and numerous flocks of prairie hens, which were sitting on the snags in the 185 river. Autumn had already tinged the foliage with various colours. We did not indeed see here the scarlet stag's-horn sumach (*Rhus typhinum*), but a couple of other species of that genus were, in some degree, substitutes for that colour. At half past two in the afternoon, we passed near the mouth of Milk River, where we remarked great numbers of bears, elks, deer, and wolves on the bank, and some wild geese and sandpipers on

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the strand. At the place where we killed the three bears, on our voyage up the river, we now found numerous elks; magpies, blackbirds, and the great prairie larks abounded. We saw to-day several beaver dens, and counted twenty-seven in all from Fort Mc Kenzie to Fort Union. Early on the following morning, the 25th of September, we passed the Rivière Bourbeuse.¹⁴¹ Morrin had just before shot a very fat elk, which afforded us a good breakfast, so that we did not leave this place till eleven o'clock. Towards three o'clock such a violent storm arose, that we hastened to secure our heavily-laden boat on the bank, behind a snag: this was 400 or 500 paces from the spot where the keel-boat was wrecked the year before. The bank was very steep, and on the summit there was a wood of poplars with an undergrowth of symphoria. The storm increased in violence to such a degree that it seemed as if it would throw down the trees on our heads; and it brought clouds of dust from the opposite sand banks into our forest, so that the air was darkened. Sparrowhawks, ravens, crows, and blackbirds, took refuge in the recesses of the forest; a herd of antelopes had also sought protection at the skirts of the wood, and we observed the buck pursue and drive back any of the females that attempted to leave the herd. We built

¹⁴¹ Maximilian does not speak of this stream in ascending the river. It might be any of the coulées running into the Missouri below the mouth of Milk River, to which the term Rivière Bourbeuse (miry) might well be applied. Lewis and Clark called these Big and Little Dry Creek, and Little Dry River, in contradistinction to Big Dry River, above the mouth of the Milk.— Ed.

¹⁸⁶ ourselves a fort in the Indian fashion, of trunks of trees and branches, where we took up our lodging for the night, when we could scarcely hear the cry of the elks or the growling of a bear for the roaring of the storm. Towards morning, on the 26th, the storm abated, and allowed us to proceed on our voyage, so that by day-break we reached Mr. Mitchell's Petit Fort, of which the prairie hens had taken possession.¹⁴² Swans and ducks (*Arms boschas et sponsa*) [297] animated the river, and flocks of the little finch were flying about on the bank. In the evening we had a heavy rain, and our bivouac was very

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uncomfortable; after mounting guard for a couple of hours, we had to lie down under our buffalo skins and blankets, which were wet through, and rose in the morning thoroughly chilled and benumbed.

142 For this fort and the wrecking of the keelboat which led to its erection, see *ante*, pp. 39, 40.— Ed.

About eleven in the morning of the 27th of September, we reached the Prairie à la Come de Cerf.¹⁴³ The sky was overcast, the weather very cool, and about noon it began to rain so heavily, that we lay to at a lofty wood to seek for shelter, but were soon wet through while we were erecting a slight wooden covering against the torrents of rain, which we covered with our skins and blankets. Of half a dozen deer which we met with in the neighbourhood we killed one, the flesh of which refreshed and strengthened us. The unfavourable weather continued till midnight, and the storm till the morning of the 28th of September, when our thoroughly soaked effects were brought on board about nine o'clock, and we continued our voyage. The wind blew bleak and unpleasant the whole day: we saw many kingfishers on the bank, and on the shoals in the river, the avoset (*Recurvirostra Americana*), which, with its strange, turned-up bill, sought

143 This prairie, on the south bank of the Missouri, is drained by the stream now known as Elk Prairie Creek, the first considerable affluent above Two Thousand Mile or Red Water Creek.— Ed.

187 its food in the mud, or the shallow water. We soon came to the rude, apparently desolate chain of hills that extends to Fort Union, proceeded till one o'clock in the morning, and then, cold and benumbed, lay to at a sand bank, when those especially whose turn it was to keep watch had no very enviable lot. Cranes awoke at the same time as we did, early in the morning of the 29th, and rose with loud cries in the misty air. We were stiff with cold, till the sun, as he rose higher in the heavens, warmed us a little. About nine o'clock we lay to at the sandy coast before the forest, on the south bank, kindled a fire, and prepared breakfast — a blessing which only those can appreciate, who, like us, have

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been long exposed to bad weather, cold, wet, storms, and privations of every kind. It was high time for us to reach Fort Union, for our most necessary provisions were exhausted, and, in another day, we should have been deprived of the comfort of coffee, which we should have felt more than all the rest. A large deer but lately had his lair very near us, and, perhaps, we had disturbed him; we, however, had no time at present to go in pursuit of him, for it was necessary to arrange our dress, which was completely disordered, and make ourselves a little decent, before we could show ourselves in society. The business of the toilet took us no little time; so that it was twelve o'clock before we could set out for Fort Union, where we arrived safe at one o'clock, after an absence of about three months.

CHAPTER XXII SECOND RESIDENCE AT FORT UNION, FROM SEPTEMBER 29TH TO OCTOBER 30TH

Present Situation of Fort Union — Absence of Mr. Mc Kenzie — News of the Battle at Fort Mc Kenzie — Buffalo Running — Fort William, a new Settlement of Messrs. Soublotte and Campbell — Appearance of the Country in Autumn — Famine among the Indians — The celebrated Cree Magician, Mahsette-Kuinab (*le Sonnant*) — Arrival of several Assiniboins, and of Ajanjan (General Jackson), &c.— Famished Indian Dogs — Pteh-Skah (the White Buffalo Cow) — An Assiniboin Chief, Uatschin-Tonschenih, with his War Party — Skeleton of a Mastodon — Winter View of the Prairie — Hunger of the Horses — Preparations for our Departure.

The appearance of the country about Fort Union had much changed since our visit in the month of July. At that time there was a numerous body of Indians here; now we saw only one tent, inhabited by a half Blackfoot. The whole prairie was naked, dry, and withered; the plants were in seed, which were then covered with flowers; the woods had put on their yellow tint; the river was shallow, narrow, and full of sand banks; the mornings and evenings were chilly, the nights cold. Changes had also taken place in the fort itself. Mr. Mc Kenzie, with more than twenty men, had gone down the river to the Little Missouri; he was expected back in about two months; and there were now only about fifty persons

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in the fort. Mr. Hamilton, who received us in a very friendly manner, had the direction of the place during the absence of Mr. Mc Kenzie, and had under him three clerks, Messrs. Chardon, Brazeau, and Moncrevier.144

144 François A. Chardon had lived among the Osage for many years and later entered the American Fur Company's employ. In 1837 he was at Fort Clark when the steamer arrived with small-pox aboard. He himself, after warning the Indians against exposure, contracted the disease and was left for dead, but later recovered. In 1843 he was chosen to succeed Culbertson at Fort McKenzie, and there perpetrated the massacre which led to the abandonment of that post and the building of Fort Chardon at Judith River (see notes 51 and 75, *ante*, pp.70, 87). When Culbertson returned to the Blackfoot territory (1845), Chardon was sent to a lower post. Palliser found him at Fort Berthold in 1848, where he died in that year.

J. E. Brazeau belonged to the prominent Creole family of that name in St. Louis, who removed thither from Kaskaskia before 1782. He entered the fur-trade about 1830 and was for many years upon both the Yellowstone, where there were trading-houses called by his name, and the upper Missouri. He finally entered the Hudson's Bay Company, and in the summer of 1859 was met by the Earl of Southesk at Edmonton, where he gave that nobleman much information concerning American conditions in the fur-trade. See Southesk, *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains* (Edinburgh, 1875). Brazeau should not be confused with the negro of the same name, frequently mentioned by Larpenteur.

According to the account of his rival clerk, Larpenteur (see Journal, i, p. 76), Jean Baptiste Montcrévier was discharged from the company's employ in 1835. He was, however, with Culbertson at Fort Union in 1843, at the time of Audubon's visit. See *Audubon and his Journals*, index.— Ed.

189 The people were employed on various buildings and improvements. In particular, very strong new pickets were placed round the fort, with a basis of brickwork. A very handsome solid powder magazine, of hewn stone, which was capable of containing 50,000 lbs. of

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powder, was completed.¹⁴⁵ Mr. [300] Hamilton allowed my chests to be opened in the very light spacious loft of the governor's house, in order completely to dry my things, which were still damp. A well-lighted and pleasant apartment likewise enabled us to continue our employments during our four weeks' stay.

¹⁴⁵ On the 4th of February, 1832, there was a great fire at Fort Union, which would have completely destroyed it, if it had communicated to the powder magazine, in which there were 2,000 lbs. of powder. The buildings on the west side (five rooms). were burnt; 800 planks, and 1,000 dried buffalo tongues, served as fuel to the fire. An east wind fortunately kept the flames from the powder magazine. The palisades were immediately cut away, and the meat stores saved. Soon after the fire 270 trees were felled, and the new palisades were put up on the 9th of February.— Maximilian.

News of the battle at Fort Mc Kenzie had been brought, on the 13th of September, by the Assiniboins on their return. Dechamp had brought the horses that were sent from Fort Mc Kenzie, without accident, to Fort Union. He had 190 been followed by some of the Gros Ventres, whom he, however, contrived to keep at a distance. When he crossed the river to Fort Union, the Assiniboins who were there called to him “to take care of himself, else he would be shot, for he had disabled many of their people;” to which he answered, “that he was not afraid; that they should take care of themselves; for, as they had attacked the fort, every brave man had to defend himself.” He then landed boldly, and met with nothing unpleasant. His relations and his wife (a Cree) were assembled here, who said to him, “that he had nothing to fear from them, but that he must be on his guard against the other Indians.” He replied, “that he did not fear open violence, but that he must expect secret treachery.” We had scarcely been a couple of days at Fort Union, when some Ojibua Indians arrived, who announced that more of their tribe would follow.¹⁴⁶ They were rather mean-looking people, but strongly built, with their hair hanging down to the shoulders, and not very different from the Crees. They were, for the most part, covered with blankets.

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146 The Chippewa (Ojibwa) are the largest and most important branch of the Algonquian family. They were first met by early French explorers in the neighborhood of Sault Ste. Marie; hence their French appellation of Saulteurs, which gradually extended to the entire tribe. Their habitat was the region of Lake Superior and the headwaters of the Mississippi, although bands like the one here mentioned frequently ranged much farther westward. They participated in Pontiac's Conspiracy (1763), but gradually became reconciled to British and afterwards to American rule. A large number of this tribe yet live on reservations in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, with many bands in Ontario and the Canadian Northwest. For the best published history of this tribe, consult W. W. Warren and Edward J. McNeill, "History of the Ojibway," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, v.—Ed.

The nation of the Ojibwas, generally called, by the English, Chippeways, and by the French, Sauteurs,¹⁴⁷ inhabits the whole extensive tract of country between Lake Superior,

¹⁴⁷ Most American authors write this French name incorrectly; for instance, Santoux or Sautous, as King likewise does. See his *Journey with Captain Back to the Frozen Ocean*, Vol. I. p. 32, and Vol. II. p. 44.— Maximilian.

¹⁹¹ the Red River, the Assiniboin River, and, further north, about Lake Winnipeg, the Lake of the Woods, &c. They are a very numerous, vigorous, and warlike nation, but divided into several small, scattered companies. An estimate of their number was given by Pike,¹⁴⁸ but others have since been attempted; and, in the new history of the Indian tribes of North America, by Mc Kenney and Hall,¹⁴⁹ they are reckoned at 15,000 souls.

¹⁴⁸ Maximilian here cites a statement of General Zebulon M. Pike, quoted in H. R. Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels in the Year 1820* (Albany, 1821).— Ed.

¹⁴⁹ This work, entitled *History of the Indian Tribes of North America* (Philadelphia, 1836–44) is chiefly composed of a series of biographies of famous Indian chiefs, illustrated by many plates from portraits (since destroyed by fire) in the possession of the war

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department at Washington. It derived its vogue from the fact that Colonel Thomas L. McKenney, one of the joint authors, had been officially connected with the Indian department for many years, serving as superintendent of United States trade with the Indians (1816–24), and in charge of the bureau of Indian affairs (organized 1824).— Ed.

They speak the Algonquin language, which is likewise that of the Nipissings, Ottawas, Knistenaux, or Crees, and other tribes. The French formerly gave different names to all those little bands of one and the same nation, and thereby caused great confusion in the history of those people. Trifling diversities in the language are met with in each of these Indian tribes, living apart from each other. The Algonquin language is said, however, to be very complete and rich, and is spread over the whole country about the northern lakes. Many terms, current in the United States, are derived from this language, *e. g.* squaw, moccasin, wigwam, &c. 150

150 On this subject see Schoolcraft's *Narrative of an Expedition to Itaska Lake, &c.*, 1834, pp. 93, 94, 144, 146, 169, 217; and Tanner's *Life among the Indians*, where there are many particulars respecting this nation, their language, and written characters. In Governor Cass's Expedition, p. 211, Schoolcraft likewise speaks of the hieroglyphic characters of the Ojibuas in the forest, &c. Other circumstantial accounts are given by McKenney (*Tour to the Lakes*, p. 318), who describes the birch canoes, and gives a poem on the subject. Schoolcraft thinks that the Christian religion would be easily propagated among the Ojibuas, because they do not worship the sun and moon, nor have any other imaginary gods; but they have their medicines, as well as the other Missouri Indians, and Monedo (Munito) is considered by them as the Great Spirit (Schoolcraft, *Loc. cit.* p. 68). Warden (*Vol. III. p. 450*) says, "The Chippeways are designated, in different parts of the country, by different names, as Crees, Ottawas, &c.," which, properly speaking, is incorrect, for they all speak the Algonquin language. According to this author (*Vol. III. p. 541*), those Indians are more pusillanimous in their disposition than the Sioux, Crees, and other tribes; but the very reverse is the case, if we may believe the Canadians, whose statements, on this point, I found everywhere to agree. Good accounts of the several tribes

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of the Ojibuas, and their abode, are given in Major Long's Travels to the source of St. Peter's River, Vol. II. pp. 151, 152.— Maximilian.

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[301] As the hunters of the fort generally went out twice in a week to replenish our stock of meat, I resolved to accompany them, and join in the chase of the buffalo on horseback. On the 11th of October, after breakfasting earlier than usual, the horses were sent, in a large boat, across the Missouri. The weather was pleasant; at halfpast seven the thermometer was at 40°, and in the afternoon at 65 ½°. We landed in a lofty forest of poplar, ash, negundo, and elm, with a thick undergrowth of symphoria, roses covered with beautiful red blossom, and buffalo berries, which had then ripe red fruit. Here we collected the horses and mules, of which we had eighteen, loaded them, and warmed ourselves a little while at a fire. Our party consisted of Mr. Bodmer, Chardon, and myself, and the half-Indian hunters, Dechamp, Marcellais, and Joseph Basile,¹⁵¹ a negro slave belonging to Mr. McKenzie, with three or four more who led the horses that were to carry the meat. We soon proceeded on our expedition; and, as we rode along, were amused by the cheerful and enterprising Chardon, who had lived long among the Osages, and was able to give the most authentic information respecting that people, and the Indians in general. Listening to his

¹⁵¹ This same engage hunted for Audubon in 1843. See *Audubon and his Journals*, ii, pp. 93, 98–101.— Ed.

193 animated descriptions, his communications relative to the Indian languages, alternating with Indian songs and the war-whoop, we passed through the forest, then across a meadow, where a few isolated bushes grew, and where we raised a covey of prairie hens; and then over a chain of hills, where we followed a beaten path. Skeletons of buffaloes, nearly entire, and numbers of skulls, which might have furnished many an osteological cabinet, lay scattered around. The hills seemed to consist of a whitish sandstone, with a layer of clay over it; and, here and there, they exhibited some singular forms, but not to be compared with those already mentioned, when speaking of the Stone Walls.

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From the summit of the chain of hills we had a fine view of the valley of the Missouri. On the further side runs a whitish chain of hills, with their singular angles and ravines, before them the yellow prairie, with its orange-coloured woods of poplar and ash on the banks, where Fort Union appears: on this side of the wood were dark stripes of bushes, and large forest trees, the reddish or brown bark of which contrasted with the yellow foliage of the poplars; at our feet were the whitish-grey sand-stone hills, and the greyish-brown eminences covered with dry grass, and dark green cedars, under which was the grassy plain, with its silvery green shrubs. [302] When we had ridden some miles, we found the prairie was more and more level, that is, it became a gently undulating plain, traversed by low hills, which, at the distance of a couple of miles, generally bounded the horizon, and when we had reached them, we had a similar uniform prospect. The whole is grey and dry, without diversity, covered with dry low plants, which yet afford food to numerous herds of the large heavy buffaloes. Here and there small hollows, in which there is rather more moisture, cross the prairie, and here some water-plants and grasses grow: in the spring and winter 194 there is running or stagnant water in them, which is generally salt. At this time the ground was, in many places, entirely covered with Glauber salt, which is collected for use, and of which there is a considerable stock at Fort Union. Lewis and Clarke frequently observed this white deposit on the banks of the Missouri. In the moister parts of the prairie, where there was more vegetation, we saw a small flock of birds of the species *numenius*, or *charadrius*. Among the plants there were whole tracts covered with dwarf rose bushes, about a foot high; some species of solidago and aster, with bunches of whitish flowers, and snake-root (*Galardia bicolor*). The wolf, the prairie fox, and the striped squirrel, are found in these prairies.

We proceeded in quick trot and gallop across the prairie, where the larks flew up before us, and ravens and crows appeared in great numbers. A few buffaloes that we saw at a distance did not induce us to stop, for we had twenty miles to ride before we could think of the chase. Towards noon we came to a little creek, called La Riviere aux Tortues, meandering through a meadow, a hill on the north side of which protected us from the

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wind. Here we halted a little, the baggage was taken off the horses, and they were left to graze, while a fire of buffalo dung was kindled, and a duck roasted, which had been shot by a Half-breed, who had hastened on before us. The creek was partly dry, with high grass growing in it; but there were still some shallow pools, where a beautiful tortoise, resembling *Emys picta*, lived. After resting for some time, we proceeded over gentle hills till about five in the afternoon, when we came to a pretty considerable hill, beyond which herds of buffaloes are usually met with. Before we reached the summit, we crossed a small ravine, where we found a spring of cool clear water, which refreshed us greatly. The ravine itself is filled with a narrow strip of ash, elm, and maple, between 195 tufts of roses, bird-cherry, and other species, entwined by the clematis.

When we reached the top of the hill, we examined with the telescope the extensive plain, and perceived some small groups of buffaloes, four, five, or six together, the most numerous of which we resolved to attack. The pack-horses followed slowly, and the hunters proceeded, in quick trot, to a hollow between two hills, where we saw the animals at no great distance on our left hand. With our pieces ready to fire, we made a regular cavalry charge on the heavy animals, which, however, galloped away at a pretty brisk rate. The horsemen divided, and pursued the bulls, which were partly shot by the practised marksmen, and partly wounded by the others; these were pursued, and did not fall till many shot had been fired at them. I had followed a wounded [303] bull into the ravine, and three of us repeatedly fired at him. He often put himself in a threatening attitude, and even pursued us for ten or twenty paces, but, in such cases, it is easy to avoid him, and the frightened animal immediately took to flight again as soon as we halted. At length, after twenty shot, perhaps, had been fired at him, his strength failed, and he sunk down.

The Half-breed and the Indians are so skilful in this kind of hunting on horseback, that they seldom have to fire several times at a buffalo. They do not put the gun to their shoulder, but extend both arms, and fire in this unusual manner as soon as they are within ten or fifteen paces of the animal. They are incredibly quick in loading; for they put no wadding to the charge, but let the ball (of which they generally have several in their mouth) run down

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to the powder, where it sticks, and is immediately discharged. With this rapid mode of firing these hunters of the prairie soon make a terrible slaughter in a herd of buffaloes. In the present case, the whole of the little herd of buffaloes was killed; 196 nine bulls lay on the field, and our hunters had dispersed in such a manner that we had not a little trouble to collect our whole party. I had separated from the rest, rode for some miles over low eminences, and, at length, when it was getting dusk, met with Marcellais, who had killed a buffalo.¹⁵² Here, too, I found Mr. Bodmer, who took a sketch of the animal that was killed. We rode back to the ravine, and endeavoured to kindle a fire of buffalo dung in this place of general rendezvous; the wind was bleak, and we could not make our fire burn bright. There was no wood at all; but we threw fat and marrow-bones into the fire, by way of fuel. Some meat was roasted as well as the circumstances permitted; and when we were going to lie down to rest, it appeared that my portable bed, of buffalo skins and blankets, had been forgotten. This was no very pleasant discovery, for the wind was raw, the fire bad, and the rain falling; however, the hunters, who were quite used to such bivouacs, gave me a part of their blankets, and we slept very comfortably.

152 See Plate 64, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

On the 12th of October we breakfasted on roast meat and buffalo marrow; the horses were collected and saddled, and the flesh of the buffaloes fastened to the pack-saddles. Eighteen years before I had had my mules collected in the same manner in the Campos of Brazil, when I wanted to continue my journey; but in that beautiful and warm country, where nature is so grand and so rich, the bivouacs in the forest are more cheerful and pleasant, and form a striking contrast to the melancholy life in the prairies, where you have to suffer so many privations. We rode rapidly forward, and halted at noon, in the bed of a dried-up stream, in order to rest, and take some refreshment. About four miles from Fort Union, our half-breed Indians found the fresh traces of an Indian war party, who had, probably, observed us in the 197 prairie, and might have cut off our retreat in the only path among the hills and ravines to the banks; we therefore put spurs to our horses, and rode the whole way at full gallop, so that we were much out of breath when we arrived at the

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bank opposite the fort. We hastened to cross the river, and the pack-horses, with [304] the meat, arrived soon after. A bleak, disagreeable wind had prevailed the whole day, the temperature, at noon, being only 61°. We, therefore, enjoyed the evening in conversation with Mr. Hamilton, by the fireside, over a glass of punch, which beverage was our daily refreshment during our four weeks' stay at Fort Union. I obtained from Mr. Hamilton much information relative to the country in which we now were; and he read to us an interesting MS. which he had composed, respecting the life of Glass, the beaver hunter, written down from his own words a short time before he was shot, with two of his companions, by the Arikkaras. A man of the name of Gardner, who afterwards happened to meet with these Indians, killed two of them with his own hand, and I received the scalp of one of them, as a present, during my stay in the fort. Mr. Hamilton intended to have this life printed.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ The adventures of Hugh Glass appear to have been part of the current tradition among Western hunters. Several accounts were published, but not apparently this of Hamilton. Consult *The Portiolo*, xix (or xxxiii), p. 214; P. S. Cooke, *Scenes and Adventures in the United States Army*, (Philadelphia, 1857), pp. 135–148; R. B. Sage, *Rocky Mountain Life* (Boston, 1860), pp. 159, 160. The latter claimed that Glass was still living in Taos—an evident error. For what is known of his life see our volume xxii, p. 294, note 255, abridged from Chittenden, *Fur-Trade*, ii, pp. 668–706.

Johnson Gardner was a noted free-trapper of the mountains, for whom Gardiner River, of Yellowstone Park, was named. See his fur-trade accounts in Chittenden, *op. cit.*, iii, pp. 941–944.— Ed.

As early at the 16th of October a truly wintry wind blew in the prairie; the temperature was only 46° at noon. On the following day the ground was thickly covered with snow; and, at eight o'clock in the morning, the mercury had fallen to 39°. We paid several visits to Fort William, a new 198 settlement, founded by Messrs. Soubllette¹⁵⁴ and Campbell, opposite the mouth of the Yellow Stone, which was not yet entirely surrounded with palisades. Mr. Campbell, who resided there, gave us a very friendly reception, and afterwards visited

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us at Fort Union.¹⁵⁵ I often walked along the banks of the Missouri to Fort William, in agreeable conversation with Mr. Hamilton, and received, from Mr. Campbell, much information respecting his residence and travels in the Rocky Mountains. The remainder of our time we employed in excursions in the prairies.

The appearance of the country differed, in many respects, from what we had found it on our preceding visit. The

¹⁵⁴ For William Sublette see our volume xix, p. 221, note 55 (Gregg). The fort named for him was on the site of the military post of Fort Buford, about two miles below the mouth of Yellowstone River, on the north bank of the Missouri. The site was chosen and building begun by Campbell's party (August 29, 1833), who had come thither from the Green River rendezvous via the Bighorn and Yellowstone. The post was only maintained until the following June, when its owners sold out to the American Fur Company. See full details in *Larpentur's Journal*, pp. 51–67. For a time this place was a dependency of Fort Union; but in 1842 was re-established by a new firm as Fort Mortimer. Audubon visited it frequently during his journey of 1843. Two years later the American Fur Company again bought out the opposition. Remains of old Fort William existed until the building of the military post of Fort Buford (1866).— Ed.

¹⁵⁵ Robert Campbell was born (1804) in County Tyrone, Ireland. Emigrating to America, he lived for a brief time in Philadelphia, but turning westward reached St. Louis some time in the year 1824. The following year, by a physician's advice, he visited the great plains in search of health, and having recuperated, embarked in the fur-trade with General Ashley, upon whose retirement (about 1830) Campbell became a prominent partner of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. His partnership with Sublette lasted through several years. It was in the year of Maximilian's visit (1833) that the new firm entered into competition with the American Fur Company upon the upper Missouri. About 1835 Campbell withdrew from personal supervision of the interior trading parties, and settled in St. Louis, where he became a prominent merchant and banker. He was largely instrumental in promoting

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the volunteer movement in Missouri at the outbreak of the Mexican War, personally superintending the equipment and preparation of regiments. Campbell was well and favorably known throughout the West, where his draughts were accepted as readily as those of the United States government. The latter employed him as commissioner in Indian negotiations—in 1851 with Father De Smet, and again in 1869. His generosity and hospitality were widely noted. He died at his St. Louis home in 1879.— Ed.

199 forests were tinged with yellow, or other varied hues; large flights of blackbirds, and numbers of ravens, crows, and magpies, were flying along the skirts of the woods; thrushes were departing in small companies, and some species of finches still animated the thorny bushes; the yellow goldfinch had already put on its winter dress. In the bleak prairie we found the prairie hens singly, or in small flocks, whose crops were full of the red berries of the low rose bushes. The cactus was still green, but the fruit was withered. These plants bear the winter of this climate, which is often severe, extremely well; but their joints generally become wrinkled, and are often frozen, but the roots always produce new shoots. Flocks of ducks and wild geese were in the river, and on the lakes, for instance, one near the mouth of the Yellow Stone, there were always great numbers of water fowl. Our hunters often resorted thither, and returned heavily laden with wild geese, ducks, and musk-rats. The cranes and pelicans passed in large flocks, and Antoine, the negro, killed many of them. The little squirrels were no longer seen in the prairies, having retired for their winter sleep; but we perceived, at the mouth of their burrows, that they had taken in a quantity of prairie grass. The wolves now came very near to the fort, and prowled round it, even in the daytime, so that, while I was there, one of [305] them was shot from the gate of the fort. Troops of thirty or forty antelopes now came nearer to the Missouri, but it seems an exaggeration to say, as Mr. Warden¹⁵⁶ does, that the herds of these animals consist of several hundreds. The little prairie fox was so hungry, and, therefore, so tame, that it often visited the environs of the fort, and we found these pretty little animals among the circles of turf which were left on the removal of the Indian tents. Here they remained in the daytime, and at nightfall came to look for the remains

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156 For Warden see our volume xxii, p. 149, note 63.— Ed.

200 of provisions in the neighbourhood of the buildings. Our dogs frequently pursued them, but their extreme swiftness enabled them to escape, and retreat to their burrows, where they were easily caught by setting snares. The amphibious animals had, for the most part, crept underground. The workmen employed in setting the palisades of the new fort, dug up several snakes of the beautiful variety, *Coluber proximus* (Say), which I have already mentioned.

As there were now but very few Indians in the vicinity, the wild animals were not disturbed. However, those restless hunters of the prairie gradually arrived, and put an end to our monotonous way of life. When the first tents were set up, I took the opportunity of making myself acquainted with the mode in which they dressed their skins, and discovered what I had not previously known. They scraped the skins very quickly and perfectly with their tooth instruments, threw away the first shavings, but preserved those beneath, which they boiled in water and ate. We learned that, during our absence, the Assiniboins had made peace with the Manitaries. Their principal chief, Uahktahno (the killer), had concluded a convention with the Gros Ventres themselves; but such treaties are seldom of long duration. Several Cree Indians arrived at Fort Union, among whom was the celebrated medicine man, or conjuror, Mahsette-Kuinab (*le sonnante*), whose portrait Mr. Bodmer took with great difficulty, because he could not get him to sit still.¹⁵⁷ He was suffering severely from an affection of the eyes; complained of his poverty, and wanted to borrow a horse, promising to pay for it at a future time. This man is highly respected among his countrymen, because his incantations are said to be very efficacious; and even the *engagés* of the Company firmly believe in such mummeries. They relate wonderful anecdotes of this Indian. “Often,” say they,

157 See Plate 22, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

201 “he has caused a small tent to be covered with skins and blankets, and closely shut, he himself having his arms and hands bound, and being fastened to a stake, his whole

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body closely muffled up. Some time afterwards, sounds of drums, and the schischikué, were heard; the whole tent began to tremble and shake; the voices of bears, buffaloes, and other animals, were heard; and the Indians believed that the evil spirit had come down. When the tent was afterwards opened, the conjuror was found fastened and bound as before, and he related what he had learnt from the spirit whom he had interrogated." The Canadians and Indians affirm, that his predictions invariably come to pass; and it would have been in vain to attempt to convince these superstitious people of the contrary. On one occasion it was said, that Le Sonnant was at Fort Clarke, where all persons present witnessed his performances. He told [306] them, beforehand, that a horseman would arrive upon a grey horse, and be killed; and not long afterwards some Chayenne Indians arrived, of whom one, riding a grey horse, was taken and killed. This circumstance is still quoted as a proof that Le Sonnant has intercourse with supernatural powers. His medicine or charm, which the enchanter upon such occasions wears upon his head, is the skin stripped off the head of a bear. So much is certain, that many of these Indian jugglers are very dextrous in sleight-of-hand, and, by their adroitness and artful tricks, know how to deceive the ignorant multitude.

On the 20th of October several distinguished men of the Assiniboins arrived at the fort, among whom were Ajanjan (the son of the tall Frenchman), generally called General Jackson; Manto-Uitkatt (the mad bear); Huh-Jiob (the wounded foot); all three tall, handsome men. Ajanjan, as we were told, was not to be trusted. He showed us, on his body, the scars of several wounds, such as of an arrow in his breast, and a musket-ball in his arm. The handsomest of the three warriors was the Mad Bear. The upper part of his face was painted red, his chin and lower part of the face black, and his breast strongly marked with black tattooed stripes, while on the upper arm and wrist he wore bright metal armlets; his dress was, on the whole, extremely handsome. All these people were Stone Indians (Gens de Roche). Several Assiniboins, whom we had not seen before, arrived successively, so that, on the 21st, General Jackson, with twenty-three of his warriors, was able to make his entry in due form into the fort. They advanced in a line, and were

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conducted to the Indian apartment, where they smoked their pipes. Among them was a man wearing his winter dress, having on his head a badger's skin, by way of cap, and gloves, which are very rare among the Indians. His name was Pasesick-Kaskutau (nothing but gunpowder), and Mr. Bodmer took an admirable full-length portrait of him. Many women arrived with their loaded dogs, and I never saw such miserable, starved animals. Their backs were quite bent, and they could hardly walk, yet they were cruelly beaten. One of them was lame, and could not go on, and at every blow the poor animal howled most lamentably; another, quite starved, fell down dead near the tent. The Indians themselves frequently suffer hunger, and their dogs, of course, suffer still more; so that the poultry in the fort was in constant danger. Many of these dogs were very handsomely marked; a pale yellow, with greyish-blue, or blackish stripes; there were some of all colours.

The Indians at this time fared very well with us; for the opposition of Fort William, in our neighbourhood, induced our people to pay them higher prices for their goods, in order to draw them away. Endeavours were made by each party to outdo the other in entertaining them, in which the more powerful and firmly established American Fur Company 203 could hold out the longest. The Indians who came to us had, generally, been already treated at Fort William; they were, therefore, extremely merry, and their singing and beating the drum were incessant. A tall chief, Pteh-Skah (the white cow), visited us, and a very good portrait was taken of him. His [307] face was characterized by a long nose, his hair smeared with clay, and his summer robe painted of variegated colours. This chief was commended as a man thoroughly to be depended upon. When the portrait was finished he received a small present. On seeing our stock of snuff, which was laid out to dry, he frequently exclaimed with delight, "Oh! how much! How much!" He then drew out a bottle containing brandy, and drank some, on taking leave, intending to cross the Missouri on this day to hunt buffaloes. The good humour and merriment of the Indians was increased by the circumstance, that a clerk of the Company bought a wife of them, for whom he paid the value of about 250 dollars. The relations sat in a circle round the fire, roasting, eating, and drinking, and kept up their noisy mirth and revelry, with loud music, till late at night. Several beaver hunters

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arrived, among whom was the Cree Indian, Piah-Sukah-Ketutt (the speaking thunder), who is engaged as a hunter in the service of the Company. He brought me a part of the skin of the head of an original,¹⁵⁸ which he had killed on the Milk River, and affirmed that he had there found the entire skeleton of a colossal serpent. A part of a tooth which he brought proved that these bones belonged to a fossil mastodon, which, unluckily, was at too great a distance for me to be able to go and examine it. He said that he had broken the head to pieces, in order to obtain the piece of the tooth. Mr. Bodmer drew a very good portrait of this Cree in his Indian dress, and likewise

158 "Original" is the French-Canadian term for the moose (*Cervus Alces*). Moose were found in northern Montana until recent years.— Ed.

204 of a woman of that nation, who was married to the hunter Dechamp.¹⁵⁹

159 See Plate 66, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed

In this manner we continued to employ ourselves, and were sometimes agreeably interrupted by the arrival of fresh Indians. On the 25th of October, a party of twenty-four warriors arrived, who, as usual in such cases, were meanly dressed; some had painted their faces black, others red. Most of them wore leather caps, or an old piece of skin over their heads, and carried on their backs small bundles containing their effects—pieces of meat, generally a pair of shoes, and a large quantity of the plant *Arbutus uva ursi*, as a substitute for tobacco. Most of them wore wolf's skins. Their arms consisted of lances ornamented with feathers, a gun in its case, and bows and arrows on their shoulders. The chief of this savage band was Uatschin-Tonshenih (the fool); and there was among them a young Indian, whom his father, Uitchasta-Juta (the cannibal, a chief much devoted to the Company, and who lived at the distance of six days' journey), had sent to Mr. Mc Kenzie, to inform him that a war party of the Assiniboins was approaching, with the intention of stealing the horses belonging to the fort, and warning him to take the necessary precautions. He further informed him, that another chief, the Knife-holder,¹⁶⁰ being offended on account of the battle at Fort Mc Kenzie had gone northwards with a

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hundred tents to the English, in order to trade with the Hudson's Bay Company. The young man added, that he had several other messages, but that he had forgotten them by the way, as the journey was so long. The intention of this war party to do some injury to the Manitaries was no agreeable news for us travellers,

160 This is the same chief mentioned in note 120, *ante*, p. 147; he was usually called Tchatka or Gauche (the left-handed), one of his names being You-hah (the man that has the knife).— Ed.

205 because, in our voyage [308] down the river, we should have to take that very direction. As Mr. Mc Kenzie would soon return to Fort Pierre, it was intimated to the leader, that it would be advisable to go another way with his people; for, if he met the travellers, his young people might, perhaps, be tempted to steal the horses. The Indian immediately expressed his willingness to follow this advice. Most of the Assiniboins now gradually withdrew, and only a couple of tents remained near the fort, so that the prairie, already naked and desolate, was scarcely animated by a living creature, except that a hungry wolf or dog sometimes prowled about in search of food. The forests, too, had entirely lost their foliage; a cold wind swept the country; and, as early as the 27th of October, we had a heavy fall of snow, and the cold was so intense, that we did not willingly leave the fireside. On the following day the weather was again bright, calm, and cold, and the forest thickly covered with hoar frost. We now, for the first time, saw the prairie in its winter dress; all was drear and cheerless; only the smoke of the fires of the men that guarded the horses rose in the distant horizon. The horses could now find no food, except the bark of the poplar trees, and appeared to be quite ravenous; for, during the night, when they were always driven into the fort, they completely gnawed off the oil paint on the wooden palisades.

The four weeks that I lived at Fort Union passed rapidly away, to which the agreeable conversation of Mr. Hamilton, a well-informed Englishman, greatly contributed.¹⁶¹ Every evening we formed a circle round the fire, where the conversation turned as well on our distant native land as on the wildernesses of America. As the time for our departure

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approached, the necessary preparations were made. I had exchanged my boat, which was too small, for a larger one, which was old and in bad condition, but which Mr. Hamilton

161 For brief sketch of Hamilton see our volume xxii, p. 374, note 350.— Ed.

206 quickly had repaired. Mr. Chardon had caused a stone hearth to be fixed in this boat, but we were obliged to remove it, as it proved too heavy. A deck or covering of Indian tent skins was put up as a protection against the weather. The people whom I obtained from the Company for this voyage, were, besides my steersman, Henry Morrin, four Canadians, two of whom were inexperienced young men. Mr. Hamilton had the kindness to provide us with many necessaries and comforts. I shall always be grateful to him for his friendliness, and remember, with pleasure, the time passed at Fort Union. We took a cordial farewell of our obliging and courteous host, and of Mr. Chardon, who had likewise given himself much trouble for my accommodation.

CHAPTER XXIII VOYAGE FROM FORT UNION TO FORT CLARKE FROM OCTOBER 30TH TO NOVEMBER 8TH

Last Visit to Fort William—Flakes of Ice in the Missouri—Bad Condition of our Larder—Relief from this Distress—Mr. Bodmer misses his Way in the Forest—Loss of our Geological Collections—Conical Red Hills—Departure of the Antelopes—Tamelessness of the Magpies—Destruction of the Woods by the Beavers—Escape of a Visit from the Indians—Winter Village of the Manitaries—Unexpected Meeting with Dougherty and Charbonneau—The Manitari Chief, Lachpitzzi-Sirish—The Fontaine-Rouge, with the Petrified Trees—Visit to the Tent of Pare-Fleche-Rouge—Arrival at Fort Clarke.

On the 30th of October, the weather being fine, we left Fort Union, and stopped for a moment at Fort William, opposite the mouth of the Yellow Stone, to take leave of Mr. Campbell. The thicket of willows on the steep bank of the river had been cut down, in order to open a view to the yet unfinished fort, which is about 300 paces from the bank. Mr. Campbell presented me with some specimens of natural history, and furnished me

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with cigars, of which we had long been deprived; they really are a great comfort on a long voyage. We took charge of his letters, and having taken leave, proceeded on our voyage. As the provisions for my people consisted of bad old bacon, and my own stock was limited to a ham which had been obligingly left to me, from the very scanty stock of provisions at Fort Union, with some coffee, sugar, and ship biscuit, we were very desirous of obtaining some game, and went on shore on a tongue of land, on the south bank, where we soon saw several wolves, and a troop of seven deer, but could not get near enough to fire at them. Great clouds of smoke rose from several parts of the prairie, doubtless caused by the wood-cutters of Fort 208 William, the hunters of which we likewise perceived at a distance. The thickets were quite stripped of their foliage; the buffalo berry bushes alone yet bore some sere yellow leaves. Prairie hens, magpies, and the coal titmouse, the latter sitting among the willow bushes, were the only specimens of the feathered tribe which we observed. Numerous tracks of [310] animals were visible on the beach, and among them the small delicate footprint of two different kinds of mice. We proceeded till eight o'clock in the evening, when we lay to, as it grew too dark to venture farther. Afterwards, however, the moon rose in great splendour, and towards morning we had a sharp frost.

Very early on the 31st we saw numerous flights of prairie hens crossing the river in companies of thirty or forty, and heard the whistling of the elk stag, which, at times, like that of our European stags, is heard at a late hour. When we lay to for breakfast, we were in a thick forest, with the same underwood as we have before mentioned, especially buffalo berries, in great abundance. They were of a beautiful bright red colour, and very palatable, for, like our sloes, they require a touch of the frost before they are good eating, yet they were still astringent and acid; mixed with sugar, however, they were not unpleasant. With this fruit we refreshed our bears and my little fox, to which they afforded an agreeable variety in their food, but we did not fare so well ourselves, having hitherto tried, whenever it was possible, to obtain game, but in vain. Everywhere we found traces of beavers, gnawed trunks of trees, abattis and paths trodden smooth. The willow thickets were frequented by the coal mouse and magpie. As our firing had been ineffectual upon

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a flock of white swans and some wild geese, we again lay to near the Riviere Bourbeuse (White Earth River of Lewis and Clarke), 162 and

162 On his outward journey Maximilian gives this river the English form of its name—the Muddy. See our volume xxii, p. 373, note 348.— Ed.

209 some of our hunters traversed the country, while the boat remained fastened under the steep bank. Flakes of ice already floated down the Missouri, and broke, with much noise, against the snags in the water. This ice comes from the tributary rivers; in this place it came from the Riviere Bourbeuse, and the noise occasioned by it is increased by that of the banks falling in, the dashing of the waves, and the high wind. My live animals, which would not eat pork, were half famished, and the bears especially made an incessant growling, which was in every respect highly disagreeable. Our hopes were disappointed; the hunters had missed two head of game; and, at four in the afternoon, I continued the voyage, though very slowly, because my people complained of fatigue. If the Canadians are not always well fed, there is no depending upon their perseverance. We lay to early for the evening, and the people dispersed in the forest to hunt. At the spot where we now were, we saw many traces of all kinds of game. Beyond a close thicket of young poplars (cotton wood), were sand hills covered with yellow grass, and yet further distant, a forest of lofty poplars, beneath which the ground was clothed with a dark red undergrowth of cornus, rose, and buffalo berry bushes, entwined round their stems with clematis and vine; a few grapes were still hanging on the branches, but they were very small and indifferent, and did not suit the taste of even my little fox. The hunters were again unsuccessful: they had seen nothing but the usual species of birds; and as for me, I found only a small flock of *Fringilla linaria*, which were so tame that they almost settled upon our fowling-pieces. Our supper was extremely frugal; but on the morning of the following day, the 1st of November, when we lay to at a scattered forest, Morrin was so fortunate as to kill [311] a large elk, which quite revived our sunken spirits. In this forest there were deeply trodden paths of wild 210 animals, and great numbers of prairie hens, which, however, were extremely shy; when they were roused, they uttered a note almost like that of our

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snipes, not, however, fainter towards the close, but louder and stronger. The ground was so dry, and the withered leaves rustled so beneath our feet as we trod upon them, that we could not get near them. The small striped squirrel was pretty frequent here. Another elk was afterwards shot, so that we were well provided for several days, and the lamentations of my hungry animals were put a stop to. As we proceeded on our voyage we frequently saw game, and the prairie hens, like all birds of that kind, flew about us with the swiftness of an arrow.

The singular red, burnt, conical summits of the hills attracted our attention, till we lay to, at a little before four o'clock, near an extensive forest on the south bank, to dress our dinner. The poplar wood was thin, near the bank, but had a thick undergrowth of roses, in which were a greater number of traces of wild animals than we had yet seen, a sight which instantly set our hunters in motion. I found the pretty little four-striped squirrel (*Tamias quadrivittatus*), in great numbers, which ran quickly along the ground, and up the trees, with the fruit of the rose in its mouth. My people caught one of these delicate creatures alive, which, to my great regret, afterwards made its escape. On account of the dry leaves we could not closely approach large game, though we heard the noise of considerable herds of them; and all our hunters returned before dark, except Mr. Bodmer, whom we looked for in vain. Night came on, we called, fired our pieces, but could obtain no intelligence of our fellow-traveller. We waited till eight o'clock, in no small anxiety, till at length we heard a shot higher up the river, which we immediately answered. Dreidoppel and Hugron instantly proceeded in that direction, and at length happily returned with our lost companion. In pursuing a stag, Mr. Bodmer had often changed his direction, and at last got quite bewildered; he had walked eight or ten miles, had been entangled in terrible thorny thickets, and got into a morass. At length he reached the prairie, where he perceived a troop of about twenty Indians, and hastened back into the forest; then, notwithstanding the Indians were so near, he fired six shots as signals of distress, and at length had the pleasure of descrying, from a hill, the shining surface of the river; thitherward he worked his way, directly through the thickets. As soon as he had

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been refreshed with some food, we loosened from the bank, where our presence had been betrayed by so many shots. We, however, lay to at a sand bank a little further down on the opposite side, and there passed a cold night, without fire or covering, in a high wind.

Next day, the 2nd November, was cold and bleak, and the tempestuous wind so unfavourable that we could only pass one tongue of land, and were compelled to stop nearly the whole day. A boat, laden with maize, belonging to Mr. Campbell, here passed us; it had left the Mandan villages a fortnight before. We had made our fire in a close thicket of poplars, under a [312] high steep bank, sheltered from the wind. Our hunters dispersed in different directions, and I soon heard a shot not far distant, on which I advanced. Dreidoppel had roused two Virginian deer, and wounded one of them. We followed the trace of this animal, which we killed, and I succeeded in shooting the other deer, which would not abandon its companion. This success afforded us some fresh game, and my people employed themselves in cooking all the remainder of the day, nor would anything induce them to stir from the spot. We found, in the forest, traces of large bears, saw the prairie fox come out of its burrow, and found no other animals, except the small striped 212 squirrel and one species of birds, the coal mouse, which defies the severe winter in these parts. In the afternoon we hoped to shoot wolves or foxes that might be attracted by the entrails of the deer we had killed, and, therefore, concealed ourselves; but only crows, ravens, and magpies, were lured by the bait. At six in the evening it grew dark; we increased our fire for the night, about which we sat till nine o'clock, while my *engagés* lay snoring on the ground. The surrounding wood was pitch dark; the wolves howled incessantly on both sides of the river, till the moon rose, and the wind abated, so that we were able to proceed before daybreak on the 3rd of November.

We again observed the black strata of the bituminous coal, and found fine fragments, which had fallen down, together with the pieces of the grey sand-stone of the adjoining strata. I increased my collections with the most interesting series of the rocks of the Upper Missouri, which, I regret to say, have not reached Europe, as they were irrecoverably lost. On this voyage down the river I had better opportunities of examining the singular

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red, burnt, and conical tops of the summits of the bank, and they afforded me much interest. The rocky walls, and the red hills, covered with fragments burnt red, exactly resembled the refuse of our brick kilns, and they emitted, when struck, a clear sound, like that of the best Dutch clinkers. Under those red cones we generally saw a stratum of the bituminous coal; both often appeared together. I observed several slight hollows, resembling craters, surrounded by pyramids of the red rock. Caverns and holes, too, frequently appeared in this clay and sand-stone; and the remarkable light grey rocks, marked with darker transverse stripes, and with bright red tops, which now were pink, or different shades of crimson, as the faint rays of the sun here and there tinged them, and gave them a highly picturesque appearance. The swallows' nests fixed against the perpendicular walls, of which the Prince de Musignano¹⁶³ made a drawing, were now completely deserted by their tenants. At noon we lay to at a prairie, which we explored while my people were cooking their dinner; but we found only ravens, crows, magpies, and prairie hens. The ground between the yellow, sere grass, was so dry that the dust rose at every step; it was, in some places, overgrown with rose bushes, from two to four feet high, symphoria, and groups of poplars. We did not encounter any buffaloes till we reached Fort Clarke; they appeared to have retired from the river; very frequently, however, we saw the paths and traces of other animals. Flocks of prairie hens, forty or more [313] together, seemed particularly to choose, as their resort, the drift-wood on the banks of the river. A magpie was so tame that it settled on the rudder of the boat, while Morrin was at the helm. Towards evening we lay to, on the steep bank, where the kingfisher, the magpie, and the wren (doubtless, *Troglodytes hyemalis*), had taken up their abode, the latter among the dry drift-wood. Here we kindled our fire, in a tall poplar forest, where stems two feet thick nearly formed a circle. As we had passed the territory of the most dangerous Indians, and the nights became more and more cold, we constantly kept up a fire at our bivouac, and on this evening again began our night-watches, because we were approaching a very numerous Indian tribe near the Missouri. Mr. Bodmer amused himself with taking a sketch of our bivouac in the forest, where we leaned against the trees, sat round the fire and smoked our pipes, amidst the concert of the howling wolves and the screeching owls.¹⁶⁴

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163 Charles Lucien Bonaparte, prince de Musignano and Canino, for whom see our volume xxii, p. 39, note 15.— Ed.

164 See Plate 23, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

On the 4th of November, we passed, at noon, the mouth 214 of White Earth River (*Rivière Blanche*), or Goat Penn River of Lewis and Clarke. At this spot there was, formerly, a fort, which was abandoned in 1829, when Fort Union was built. 165 A little below the mouth of this river, the high wind obliged us to lay to; woods and thickets, with high dry grass, and prairies, either bare or covered with artemisia, formed an extensive wilderness, traversed by the paths of stags and buffaloes, where we found many deer's horns and other remains of these animals, as well as tracks of enormous bears (*Ursus ferox*). We did not, however, see any large game, but only prairie hens, and a few stray blackbirds and flocks of the small finches (*Fringilla linaria*), which were picking up the seeds of the plants among the grass. It appeared that this wilderness had been visited by Indians a short time before. After a considerable halt we proceeded at two o'clock, passed the Butte Carrée, and lay to, in the evening, near a narrow strip of wood on the steep southern bank, behind which extended the prairie. The night was clear, the wind cold, and the moon rose at twelve o'clock.

165 See our volume xxii, p. 369, note 345. The post was one built in 1825–26 by James Kipp (see our volume xxii, p. 345, note 319), for the Columbia Fur Company. This was transferred (1827) with other property to the American Fur Company, who maintained it, as Maximilian says, until the establishment of the Yellow-stone post.— Ed.

The morning of the 5th of November was bleak and chilly, and the wind numbed the fasting travellers, till we lay to, at eight o'clock, at a prairie overgrown with thick bushes, where we prepared our breakfast, and where the number of prairie hens immediately induced our hunters to bestir themselves. I had unluckily loaded my piece with small shot, for a Virginian deer ran close by me from out of a thicket, which I might otherwise have

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very easily shot. We saw a troop of elks, and our little friend, the striped squirrel, which, however, is not yet found so low down the river as the Mandan villages. At eleven o'clock we proceeded on our 215 voyage, in which we were protected by the high banks from the bleak wind, and enlivened and cheered by the sun. A herd of antelopes crossed the Missouri before us, and we in vain attempted to intercept them. These pretty animals generally leave the Missouri at this time, and hasten, on the approach of winter, to the Black Hills. A magpie alighted on the rudder, uttering its note, "twit, twit," which is quite different from that of the European magpie. We saw but few ducks [314] and other water fowl, which had before afforded us so much amusement; doubtless, because they found more subsistence on the lakes, which were not yet frozen. We lay to, for the night, on the southern bank, where the forest was completely laid waste by the beavers. They had felled a number of large trees, chips of which were scattered about on the ground. Most of the trees were half gnawed through, broken down, or dead, and in this manner a bare place was formed in the forest. Not far off we saw in the river a beaver den, or, as the Americans call it, a beaver lodge, to which there was a very well trodden and smooth path, which we availed ourselves of, to go to and from our boat. Nature appears to have peculiarly adapted these remarkable animals to the large thickets of poplar and willow of the interior of North America, where the Whites, on their first arrival, found them in immense numbers, and soon hastened to sacrifice these harmless creatures to their love of gain. Numerous tracks of animals of all kinds, especially elks, bears, and wolves, were observed; the wolves prowled around us at no great distance, and at ten o'clock, when I had the watch, they came between our bright fire and the boat, which was only forty paces distant, being attracted by the smell of the meat.

On the next day, the 6th, we likewise met with many gnawed trees, which proved that the number of the beavers was still pretty considerable. Morrin had shot in the morning 216 a fat fawn, which was gladly welcomed by us. We had traversed a forest admirably suited to the chase, when we met with a great deal of game, but, on account of the dry leaves,

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could not get near enough. Besides the animals which I have often mentioned, we saw some new species of birds, of which, however, I was quite unable to obtain a specimen.

At noon we passed the Little Missouri, at the mouth of which there were now extensive sand banks; we stopped a little below it, and found a spot very favourable for the chase, in a forest alternating with morass, high grass, and various plants, where we followed some fresh traces of large elks, without, however, being able to overtake them. We proceeded on our voyage till late in the night, and slept at a spot in the forest which was so dense, that we were compelled to hew down the bushes to make a space for our fire and resting-place. The night was dark, and the loud howling of the wolves was our never-ceasing music. Towards the morning there was a sharp frost, and the sky was partially clouded with the west wind. Our good genius had made us set out unusually early on the 7th November, for we had scarcely left the bank in the morning twilight, when we heard several shot, and soon after, at the very place where we had halted and slept, the loud voices of the Indians calling to us to return. They were, probably, a hunting party of Manitaries, who had been attracted in the early morning by the light of our fire. Being very happy at having, weak as we were, escaped visitors so little to be trusted, our *engagés* rowed with all their might, and there was soon a good distance between us. Our breakfast was prepared at nine o'clock, when we lay to on the north bank, in a narrow strip of forest, where we found some old Indian hunting lodges, built, in a conical [315] form, of dry timber. They had, doubtless, been left by the Manitaries, who had come thus far on their hunting excursions. The lower part of 217 the huts, or lodges, was covered with the bark of trees; the entrance was square, and bones were scattered in all directions. We proceeded with a bleak, high wind, saw the singular clay tops of the hills, and, in the forest, the stages made of poles, where the Indian hunters dry the flesh of the animals they have taken in the chase. About twelve o'clock we came to the spot where some stakes indicated the former site of a Mandan village. Manoel Lisa, the Spanish fur dealer, had formerly a trading post at this place.¹⁶⁶ Rather further on, after we had turned a point of land, we saw a white horse on the bank, and soon after a group of Indians, with their horses, which

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they had brought to the river to water. In the wood, close by them, was a winter village of the Manitaries, or Gros Ventres, to which they had removed only two days previous, from their summer dwellings, and whose present chief was Itsichaicha, which the Canadians translate, Monkey-face. They hailed us, but I would not stop, and, the current being strong, we rapidly passed them. An Indian woman, with a handsome brown hound, probably of the European race, stood on the bank, and formed a very interesting object in the wild winter scene. We were now in the centre of the territory of the Manitaries, and were in momentary expectation of meeting with these Indians; in fact, we soon saw several of them on foot and on horseback. We had just doubled a point of land, and were looking for a sheltered spot for landing, when we observed some huts in a lofty wood of poplars, and were immediately called to by some Whites and Indians. We recognized old Charbonneau, and landed at once. It appeared that Messrs. Soublotte and Campbell had founded

166 This post of Manuel Lisa was the one visited in 1811 by Bradbury and Brackenridge, who found Reuben, brother of Meriwether Lewis, in charge. See our volume v, pp. 152–167; vi, pp. 135–142. It was on the west bank of the Missouri about twelve miles above Knife River, near Emanuel Creek.— Ed.

218 a trading post in the Manitari villages, and that their people, together with these Indians, had arrived but yesterday at the winter village, situated at no great distance. The clerk, who had the management of the business here, was Mr. Dougherty, brother to the Indian agent,¹⁶⁷ who had likewise accompanied Major Long in his expedition to the Rocky Mountains, and who had, at present, old Charbonneau as interpreter. The latter had lately quitted the American Fur Company, but subsequently returned into their service. The Indians, under their principal chief, Lachpitzzi-Sihrish (the yellow bear), had arrived, as I have said, but yesterday, in the winter village; and Dougherty, with Charbonneau and several *engagés*, lived in some huts hastily erected on the bank of the river, while a better and more substantial house was building in the Indian village. Mr. Dougherty, to whom we delivered letters from Mr. Campbell, would not suffer us to proceed, and entertained us with much hospitality. It gave us much pleasure to be again in human society, after having

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been so long deprived of it. While we were chatting and smoking our cigars, we perceived, near where we were sitting, a row of large casks, and learned that they were all filled with gunpowder, which, considering the high wind that blew directly into the hut, was a great want of prudence. Many interesting Indians came successively, among whom was the old chief, who was particularly struck with our long beards, from which these people have a kind of [316] aversion. The night was stormy and very dark: some of us slept in the boat; Dreiboppel and our *engagés* in the huts on shore.

167 Probably Joseph L. Dougherty, who was in 1839 farmer at the Council Bluffs agency. His brother John accompanied Maximilian as far as Bellevue on the outward journey. The opposition of Sublette and Campbell to the American Fur Company was spirited though brief; consult Chittenden, *Fur-Trade*, i, pp. 350–354. The rival post was just below the former post of Lisa (see our volume xxii, p. 364), and above Fort Clark.— Ed.

219

The morning of the 8th November was bleak, cold, and frosty. I left the place early, accompanied by Charbonneau, and, after proceeding four miles, landed on the southern bank, to look for a petrified trunk of a tree, which Charbonneau had mentioned to me. While my people were taking their breakfast in a poplar wood, we proceeded alternately through thickets and open plains, towards the neighbouring hills, to the Fontaine Rouge, which was now a marsh covered with ice: not far from this was the tree, which is supposed to be part of an old cedar (*juniperus*); it is the lower part of a hollow trunk, with a portion of the roots; and, though this mass still perfectly shows the formation of the wood, it is now converted into a sounding stone. As the whole of this interesting specimen was much too ponderous to be removed, I carried off a good many fragments, without, however, disfiguring the tree, which will, doubtless, some day, find a place in some museum in the United States. This kind of petrified wood is not, by any means, unfrequent on the Missouri. Of the many interesting specimens of this kind which I had collected, very few have found their way to Europe.

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After breakfast we continued our voyage, at eleven o'clock, and came to the spot where Mr. Pilcher's residence formerly stood, about eleven miles from Fort Clarke.¹⁶⁸ At twelve o'clock we were opposite the first Manitari summer village, and saw, on the other side, many Indians, who hallooed to Charbonneau. They had some smooth-haired hounds, spotted brown and white, with hanging ears, which were, doubtless, of European race. The invitations to land became more vociferous and numerous, and Charbonneau advised us to comply with them, which we did: we were immediately conducted, by a distinguished man, Ita-Widahki-Hisha (the

168 For Joshua Pilcher see James's *Long's Expedition*, in our volume xiv, p. 269, note 193. For his post consult our volume xxii, p. 364, note 335.— Ed.

220 red shield),¹⁶⁹ to his tent, which stood apart on the prairie, on the summit of the bank. The white leather tent was new, spacious, and handsomely ornamented with tufts of hair of various colours, and at each side of the entrance finished with a stripe and rosettes of dyed porcupine quills, very neatly executed. It had been well warmed by a good fire, a most refreshing sight to us. We took our seats around it, with the numerous family, the brother and uncle of the chief, young men, women, and children. The chief had rather a long beard, like the Punca chief, Shudegacheh, and his right breast was tattooed with black stripes. The old uncle had a very ugly countenance; he was fat, and his dress negligent and slovenly. The wife of the chief held a child in her lap, with a thick hare lip. A large dish of boiled maize and beans was immediately set before us; it was very tender and well dressed, and three of us eat out of the dish with spoons made of the horn of buffalo, or bighorn; after which the red Dakota pipe went round. Our people had likewise obtained refreshments, and presented the Indians, in return, with some tobacco and gunpowder. After we had conversed half an hour, through Charbonneau, with these friendly people, and given them an account of our battle with the Assiniboins, their enemies, we took leave and proceeded on our voyage. The [317] Indians accompanied us to the river-side, and on our way thither we saw the skin of a large white wolf hung on a tree, doubtless, by way of medicine, or offering. We left at one o'clock, and at two reached

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the Manitari village, Awachawi, which lay close to the bank; 170 a couple of women, in their round leather boats, set us across the river; they had hung some wood to their vessel, and rowed with

169 Red Shield was a young chief at the time of Lewis and Clark's visit; see *Original Journals*, i, p. 230. He is said to have been the slayer of Le Borgne, the famous Minitaree tyrant; see our volume v, p. 162, note 90.— Ed.

170 For the location of this Minitaree village, see our volume xxii, p. 357, note 333.— Ed.

221 great rapidity; some others were proceeding towards the river, with their boats hanging on their heads and down their backs. I shall describe these boats in the sequel. 171 At three o'clock we reached the Mandan village of Ruhptare, where a number of Indians came to the bank to greet their friends; Charbonneau hid himself, that they might not recognise him and invite him ashore. He had five names among these Indians — the chief of the little village; the man who possesses many gourds; the great horse from abroad; the forest bear; and fifth, which, as often happens among these Indians, is not very refined. After we had passed the bend in the river, we saw the second Mandan village, MihTutta-Hang-Kush, and, at no great distance beyond it, Fort Clarke, which we reached at four o'clock, and were welcomed on the shore by Mr. Kipp, the director and clerk of the Fur Company, who led us to his house.

171 See the view of the village Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, Plate 49 [in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv] where one of these boats is introduced.— Maximilian.

CHAPTER XXIV DESCRIPTION OF FORT CLARKE AND THE ENVIRONS

History of the Fort — Description — Climate — Soil — Geological Formation of the Country — Plants — Animals — The neighbouring Indian Population — Indian Villages.

Lewis and Clarke gave an account of the state of this part of the country at the time of their residence in the vicinity of the Mandan villages, in the winter of 1803–4. 172 At that

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time they erected a fort on the north bank of the Missouri, a little above the place where Fort Clarke now stands, but, at present, there is not the smallest trace of that post. The river has since changed its bed in such a manner, that the site of that building, which was then at some distance from the shore, is now in the middle of the stream. Such changes in the channel of the Missouri are of very common occurrence, so that all the islands, sand banks, little bends, and points of land formed by them, laid down in the special maps, are correct for only a short time. Above the Manitari villages is a place where the river made its way through a tongue of land, and now forms a channel nearly four miles from its former bed. This took place in 1828. Some persons think that Lewis and Clarke's fort would now be on the south bank of the Missouri. Charbonneau, who was interpreter for the Manitari language, and had lived thirty-seven years in this part of the country, was here at the same time as those travellers, passed the winter with them, and afterwards

172 Fort Mandan was occupied by Lewis and Clark during the winter of 1804–05, the preceding winter having been spent by them in camp on Wood River, Illinois, opposite the mouth of the Missouri. Fort Mandan was begun November 3, 1804, and abandoned April 7, the following spring; see *Original Journals*, i, pp. 216–283.— Ed

223 accompanied them to the Columbia River. He generally lives at Awatichai, the second village of the Manitaris, and, excepting some journeys, has always remained at this spot: hence he is well acquainted with the Manitaris and their language, though, as he candidly confessed, he could never learn to pronounce it correctly.173

Mr. Kipp, a Canadian of German descent, now clerk of the American Fur Company, and director of Fort Clarke, came here in 1822, as agent of the Columbia Fur Company.174 At that time there was no fort here. Major Pilcher, the same gentleman who came with us up the [139] Lower Missouri, in order to take the management of the trading post of Mr. Cabanné, among the Omahas, was, at that time, a proprietor of the Missouri Fur Company, and directed a trading post a little above the Manitari villages, on the southern coast. In the spring of 1822,175 this fort was abandoned, the above-mentioned Fur Company having been dissolved. In May, the same year, Mr. Kipp commenced building a

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fort in the prairie, which lay between the present Fort Clarke, and the forest, in which the inhabitants of Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush live in the winter. This fort was completed in the month of November. In the same summer, Colonel Leavenworth,¹⁷⁶ with a considerable body of troops, artillery, and an auxiliary corps of the Dakota Indians, came up the river to the

173 After reading the pages of Lewis and Clark's journals, one has slight respect for Charbonneau's qualities, either mental or moral. It is to be regretted that Maximilian relied so much upon the testimony of this interpreter in his account of the Mandan and Minitaree Indians. For a sketch of what is known of this interpreter's life consult our volume vi, p. 32, note 3— Ed.

174 For Fort Clark and James Kipp see our volume xxii, p. 344, note 317, and P. 345, note 319 respectively.— Ed.

175 This is an evident error for 1823 — the well-authenticated date for Leavenworth's Arikara expedition.— Ed.

176 General Henry Leavenworth was a native of Connecticut (1783); entering the army (1812), he passed through all the grades until brevetted a brigadier-general in 1824. He won distinction for service at Chippewa and Niagara in the War of 1812–15, and afterwards for many years served on the Western frontier, where he died in Indian Territory (1834) while leading an expedition of troops to overawe the turbulent tribesmen. See account of this expedition in P. St.G. Cooke, *Scenes and Adventures in the Army*, pp. 225–227.— Ed.

224 Arikara villages, to chastise those people, who, not long before, had attacked the keel-boats of General Ashley, killed eighteen of the crew, and wounded many others. The inhabitants of the banks of the Missouri affirm that this enterprise was conducted with very little energy; they retired from the enemy's villages without destroying them, or doing much injury to the inhabitants, at which the allied Indians, especially, were much dissatisfied.¹⁷⁷ The Arikaras, on the other hand, became excessively arrogant, and henceforth attacked

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and murdered all the white men who were so unfortunate as to fall in their way. When Lewis and Clarke were here, these people were friendly, but now they are violently inimical to the Whites, and have killed many more than any other nation on the Missouri.¹⁷⁸ After Colonel Leavenworth's retreat, the Arikaras removed to a station higher up the river, and settled in the forest which the

¹⁷⁷ General Ashley started with a party of traders March 10, 1823, arriving at the Arikara villages May 30. He was received with apparent friendliness, but early in the morning of the second of June was attacked by the Indians who killed a number of his land party, the boats escaping with great difficulty. Ashley immediately notified the military authorities, and Colonel Leavenworth, then in command at Fort Atkinson, near Council Bluffs, at once determined to organize a punitive expedition. Pilcher, of the Missouri Fur Company, joined forces with him, and secured a band of Sioux auxiliaries. For many reasons the expedition was, as Maximilian implies, but slightly successful. For a full account of this campaign, gathered from many sources, consult Chittenden, *Fur-Trade*, i, pp. 264–209; ii, pp. 588–607. The expedition was notable as the first of a long series of trans-Mississippi Indian wars.— Ed.

¹⁷⁸ The Arikara (for whom see our volume v, p. 113, note 76) were the most treacherous of the village Indians upon the Missouri. After friendly treaties with Lewis and Clark (1804), they attacked the escort for the Mandan chief Shahake (1807); but two years later permitted his passage with a large fur-trade caravan, and in 1811 were friendly to the Astoria party. In 1816 or 1817 they attacked a party and killed one man, and again (x82o) robbed the trading houses of the Missouri Fur Company. Early in the year of the campaign of 1823, they made an unsuccessful attack upon a small post down the river among the Sioux.— Ed.

²²⁵ Mandans have now selected for their winter quarters.¹⁷⁹ The garrison of the fort, built by Mr. Kipp, consisted of only five men, besides Mr. Tilton, the director. It was, therefore, in constant danger, because of the near vicinity of the Arikaras. Those savages remained constantly close to the fort: one of their chiefs, Stanapat (the little hawk with the bloody

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hand) killed one of Mr. Tilton's people at the very door of the fort. Three white men, coming from the Rocky Mountains, were obliged by the Arikkaras, who lay in wait, to abandon their boat, and to escape, at imminent risk of their lives, to the opposite shore. In the same autumn these Indians murdered five persons belonging to the French Company on Cannon-ball River. Neither Messrs. Tilton and Kipp, nor any of their people, durst venture out of the fort, where they were obliged to remain in durance the whole of the autumn.. Subsequently, the latter resided in a Mandan village till the fort was completed, though those people were on a friendly footing with the Arikkaras. When the man above-named was shot at the door of the fort, the Mandans were very anxious to declare war against the Arikkaras; but this was overruled, because the people belonging to the Columbia Fur Company, who had to come hither by land from Lake Travers and St. Peter's River, would inevitably have suffered by it.¹⁸⁰

179 In his outward journey, Maximilian found that the Arikara villages had been abandoned for about a year. They had therefore re-occupied them after Leavenworth's expedition, but were never again permanently settled therein. See our volume xxii, p. 336, note 300.— Ed.

180 For the French Fur Company see our volume xxii, p. 232, note 160.

It is evident that Maximilian's knowledge of these events was obtained from Kipp, who had been a participant. For the Columbia Fur Company see our volume xxii, p. 233, note 161. Tilton would appear to have been a proprietor in this company, whose legal name was Tilton & Company; he was sutler at Fort Gibson in 1836. See Lawrence Taliaferro, "Autobiography," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, vi, p. 202. The main fort of this company was at Lake Traverse, on the boundary between the present states of Minnesota and South Dakota. For a visit to this place see *op. cit.*, vi, p. 91.— Ed.

226 At the beginning of December, Mr. Laidlow, now on the Little Missouri, came from Lake Travers with six wagons laden with goods, on which a sort of peace was concluded with the Arikkaras.¹⁸¹ They came first to the fort, because they could nowhere else obtain

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goods from the Whites, and the [320] precaution was always taken of admitting only a few of them at a time. The peace with these Indians was not, as might have been expected, of any long duration. They always behaved extremely treacherously, and it was at length dangerous even to go out for water, wood, or other necessaries, and the people were frequently threatened and intimidated; for which reason, Mr. Tilton left the fort, and went to the next Mandan village, where he resided in the hut of the distinguished chief, Tohp-Ka-Singka (the four men), who protected him against every attack. He afterwards went down to St. Louis.

181 For William Laidlaw see our volume xxii, p. 316, note 270.— Ed.

In the spring of that year the Arikkaras returned to their former villages, declaring that they would, in future, live in peace with the white men. Mr. Kipp alone remained behind, and, throughout the summer, did not see a white man; the skins and goods of the Company were in his keeping in the hut of the chief, but he afterwards built a house near the village, where he dwelt, till 1824, with one Jeffers, who, with seven men, and wagons laden with goods, had come from Lake Travers. The Mandans had hitherto protected the abandoned fort, and kept it in order, that the Arikkaras might not burn it. During the summer Mr. Kipp caused the palisades of the fort to be cut down close to the ground, and the Mandans conveyed the wood to their village, carrying some of the beams on their shoulders, and floated the remainder down the river. The buildings were likewise destroyed. Several apartments were added to Mr. Kipp's house, and the palisades were placed round it. As he had 227 not a sufficient quantity of goods, Mr. Kipp sent Charbonneau (who was likewise in the service of the Columbian Fur Company), in company with another man, to fetch a wagonload from Lake Travers; but, on their return, encountering a party of Assiniboins, they were compelled to abandon their wagon, horses, and goods, and all was lost. About this time the Crows arrived with a good supply of furs, but as Mr. Kipp had not a sufficient number of articles to barter, he himself undertook, with two Half-breeds, the journey to Lake Travers, and succeeded in bringing a wagon-load in safety.

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On his way he perceived a camp of the Dacota, and avoided it; and, during the night, lost his horses, but was fortunate enough to recover them. When he returned, General Atkinson, with 500 or 600 troops, had been at the Mandan villages, whence he proceeded upwards to Milk River. These troops returned during the summer, and hostilities had nearly ensued between them and the Crows, who were with the Mandans.¹⁸² The French Fur Company had sent some of their servants with the General to trade in the Mandan villages. Bissonette was the chief trader. In the autumn Mr. Tilton came up from St. Louis, in a keel-boat laden with goods. Mr. Kipp had, meantime, sent some people to the Assiniboins, Crees, and Ojibuas, to invite their chiefs to come hither and open a trade with them. The troops had

¹⁸² This was Atkinson's Yellowstone Expedition of 1825. After the Arikara troubles of 1823, President Monroe appointed General Henry Atkinson and Major Benjamin O'Fallon to conduct a military expedition into the Indian country to overawe the tribesmen, and impress them with the power of the national government. The commissioners left St. Louis in the spring of 1825. Organized at Council Bluffs, the expedition, consisting of nearly five hundred enlisted men, embarked on eight keelboats, with a cavalry escort by land. They met with no opposition and advanced a hundred and twenty miles above the Yellowstone, reaching Council Bluffs on the return the nineteenth of September. For the official report, see 19 Cong., 1 sess., *House Doc.* No. 117, in vol. vi. The difficulty with the Crows is described by Washington Irving, *Rocky Mountains*, i, pp. 216, 217, in which the white renegade Edward Rose figures as the hero who chastised the troublesome chiefs into obedience.— Ed.

²²⁸ brought a person named Wilson, as agent of the United States for the Indians;¹⁸³ and all these people lived together in the Mandan fort. Peace was therefore concluded between those three Indian tribes, as well with the Whites as with the Mandans and their allies. The object was to break off their connexion [321] in the north with the English, and to draw them to the Missouri. In April, 1825, Messrs. Wilson and Tilton returned to St. Louis, and Kipp alone remained in the fort, with five men.¹⁸⁴ In November, Mr. Tilton

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returned with a supply of goods, and Mr. Kipp went to White Earth River, carrying with him a fine selection. Here he built a fort, a little on this side of the mouth of the river, and remained there during the winter, trading with the Assiniboins. In the autumn of 1826 the Sioux made an attack on the Mandans and Manitaris, killed above fifty of the latter, a couple of the Mandans, and likewise a Crow Indian, who happened to be on the spot. This year, the Columbia Fur Company united with the American Fur Company, and commenced its operations here on the Missouri.¹⁸⁵ In the winter of 1830 Mr. Kipp caused the wood to be prepared for the present Fort Clarke, and the palisades were erected in the spring of 1831. Mr. Mitchell now undertook the direction of this new fort, which he completed to a certain extent, and called Fort Clarke. In July, with forty-five men, Mr. Kipp was sent to Maria River, where he built the fort, the ruins of which I have mentioned above. He remained there till the spring of 1832, when he was succeeded by Mr. Mitchell,¹⁸³ Peter Wilson of Maryland was sub-agent for the Mandan with a salary of eight hundred dollars. He died after about one year's service.— Ed.

¹⁸⁴ This date should be April, 1826. Maximilian has his dates one year behind, as is proved by the known time of Atkinson's Yellowstone Expedition.— Ed.

¹⁸⁵ This should be 1827. See on this subject our volume xxii, p. 233, note 161.— Ed.

²²⁹ who then built the present Fort Piekann, or Mc Kenzie.¹⁸⁶ Mr. Kipp has since had the direction of Fort Clarke, except in the winter of 1832–33, when Mr. Lamont had it,¹⁸⁷ and Kipp was under him as clerk. Skirmishes with the Sioux took place in the neighbourhood; and, on one occasion, when Lamont and Kipp were conversing by the fireside, they were startled by a shot fired through the window, while the ball passed between them, and lodged in the wall. The Mandans, who were brought hither by Mr. Kipp, have remained here for eleven years, in the same position as then, and their number has neither increased nor diminished. The trade with the Indians is, on the whole, unchanged, and the goods remain nearly at the same prices, except when their value is raised by foreign merchants. This year (1833), on account of the competition with Messrs.

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Soublette and Campbell, twelve dollars were paid for a large beaver-skin, though it was, in reality, worth no more than four dollars in the United States. But it was of great moment to the Company not to suffer any other party to compete with them. The Indians now generally require horses in exchange for their beavers; and as there are but few at Fort Clarke, messengers were despatched to Fort Pierre to fetch some. Messrs. Soublette and Campbell had, at present, one of their people in each of the neighbouring Indian villages. I have already mentioned their clerk, Mr. Dougherty, who lived among the Manitaris, and stated that they had taken Charbonneau into their pay. Mr. Kipp had likewise stationed a trader among the Manitaris, who, in the winter, visited the villages in a sledge. The circumstances which took place during the thirty-seven years of Charbonneau's residence in the Manitari and Mandan villages, were nearly as follows:—

186 See notes 74 and 75, *ante*, pp. 84, 85, 87.— Ed.

187 See our volume xxii, p. 314, note 274, for Lamont.— Ed.

At his first arrival, the three Manitari villages stood precisely 230 as they do now, and Charbonneau immediately took up his residence in the central one. No commercial intercourse had then been opened with St. Louis; and he, as the only white man on the spot, procured what he wanted [352] from the north, of the English. In the year of his arrival, 1300 or 1400 Sioux, united with 700 Arikkaras, attacked the foremost Mandan village, and about 1000 Manitaris hastened to assist the latter. They repulsed the enemy, killing more than 100 of them, among whom was the son of TanahahTahka (the white cow), an Arikkara chief. These people had before lived in the nearest forest, below that which the Mandans of Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush now inhabit during the winter; but, after this battle, they removed further down the Missouri, and built their villages at the spot where we saw them.¹⁸⁸ After the war, they left all their effects behind them in their huts. Subsequently they often returned in a hostile manner, but never in such numbers as at that time. Five or six years before Charbonneau arrived, the Sioux, with 1500 tents, came on a visit to the vicinity of the Manitari villages. Two of the latter, a man and woman,

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who were returning from the Crows, were murdered by some of the Sioux; on which the Manitaries recklessly killed five Sioux, who happened to be with them. This was the signal for war. The Sioux surrounded the village; the inhabitants were unable to procure either wood or water, as the river was at some distance. There they remained closely blockaded for nine days, drinking only the dirty stagnant water which was in the village. The horses collected in the huts suffered hunger and thirst, and gnawed off the bark of the wood of the posts. A chief, who had erected a kind of bulwark on the top of his hut, shot eleven Sioux, but was, in the sequel, killed by a successful fire from the enemy.

188 For the site of the Arikara villages see our volume xxii, p. 335, note 299.— Ed.

On the ninth day the old men gave orders that the young 231 warriors should mount their horses and go out to meet the enemy, while all the inhabitants should issue forth and fetch water from the river. This was done, but, when the Sioux observed the intended attack, they struck their tents and retired, conducting their women and children along the chain of hills. Eighty of the horses which were led to the river perished, because it was not possible to prevent them from drinking too eagerly. The Sioux were pursued, and many of them killed. During Charbonneau's time, another war party of the same nation appeared on the other bank of the Missouri; in the large Manitari village there were only eighteen men, the rest being out on a hunting expedition, but the other village collected all its warriors. The Mandans joined them, they forded the river on horseback to make an attack, and reached a ravine, where they faced the foe. The Sioux called to the Manitaries, that they would first smoke together, on which all sat down, showed each other their pipes, and began to smoke. This done, the chief of the Sioux advanced and called to his adversaries that they were come here to fight; both sides knew that they had brave men opposed to them, and he, therefore, considered it would be more honourable to leave the wood, and combat in the open plain, which was agreed to by both parties. They proceeded into the plain and commenced the attack. Two Mandans, the Coal, and the Black Cat, 189 had previously had a dispute with each other, and were now resolved to see which of them would fight the

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best. The Sioux soon gained considerable advantages, and the Mandans and Manitarines [323] were

189 Both these chiefs were still living at the Mandan villages when Lewis and Clark passed a winter (1804–05) among them. Black Cat, or Posecopsahe, lived at the second village, and was head chief of the tribe. Clark says of him (*Original Journals*, i, p. 256), “This chief possesses more integrity, firmness, intelligence, and perspicuity of mind than any indian I have met with in this quarter.” The Coal, or Shotaharrora, was chief of the first village. An Arikara, he had been adopted by the Mandan, among whom he had risen to a chieftainship.— Ed.

232 already beginning to retreat towards the forest, when the Black Cat called to the Coal, his adversary, who was among, the retreating party, whether this retreat was a proof of his vaunted courage? On which the Coal recovered himself, took his adversary by the arm, and said, “Well then, we will die together!” They both turned back and rode into the thickest of the enemy. Their example was instantly followed by all the other warriors; they recommenced the attack with renewed vigour; the enemy was totally worsted, and many of their people killed.

At another time a war party of the Sioux appeared opposite the village Les Souliers,¹⁹⁰ in the large prairie. The Manitarines crossed the river, defeated the enemy, and pursued them for twenty miles. The Sioux constantly remained near the river to keep their opponents from their camp in hills, where their women and children were placed. A Sioux, wearing a handsome feather cap and tufts of hair, proceeded along the hills, and a Manitari chief pursued this enemy on a fleeter horse, and overtook him. Both dismounted and fought with their knives till the Sioux was killed. Forty-eight of the enemy were slain, while the Manitarines lost only three men. The Mandans had supported their allies and neighbours in this battle. Charbonneau was witness of this action, and said that in the following night the scalp dance was performed. Ten or twelve years ago the Manitarines were preparing an antelope park, and one of their people, who was occupied in a ravine, collecting the wood necessary for the purpose, was shot by some Assiniboins, who were lying in ambush. The

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relations were in the act of placing the deceased on the stage for the dead, when about thirty Assiniboins, with two calumets, came to the village to conclude a

190 The French name for a people closely related to the Minitaree, but speaking a somewhat different dialect, and considered by many philologists as a separate tribe. See our volumes v, p. 163, note xoo; and xxii, p. 350, note 326.— Ed.

233 peace, not knowing that another band of their people had just committed the above-named murder. All the inhabitants hastened together, attacked and killed about twenty Assiniboins, took three of the women prisoners, while the few remaining of the party escaped by flight. Individuals are even now often murdered on both sides; and only three weeks before my arrival at Fort Clarke, three of the enemy had come to the bank opposite the fort, and made signals that they wished to be conveyed across. A man and two women accordingly went over in a leather boat, on which the strangers immediately shot the man, and the women with difficulty escaped.

Fort Clarke is about three quarters of a mile below the site of the old fort of Lewis and Clarke, 300 paces from the Mandan village, Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, and between eighty and ninety paces from the southern side of the river, in a level prairie, above the rather steep bank of the Missouri. This bank, immediately below the Indian village, is much higher and quite perpendicular. About 200 paces below the fort is a streamlet which has steep clay banks, and at the distance of 200 paces from the Missouri divides into two arms, one of which comes down further south, and the other about 700 paces behind the fort, after issuing from the hills into the level prairie. This chain of hills limits the background of the prairie, and closes on that side the view from the fort.¹⁹¹ The ground near the stream [324] is overgrown with grass, and, in its many windings, bushes and tall plants adorn the banks, especially of the class *syngenesia*, such as *solidago*, &c., the seeds of which are sought after in winter by the *Fringilla linaria*, and the *Emberiza nivalis*. In the spring and autumn wild ducks frequent this stream, which is inhabited by river tortoises; the *unio*, too, is found in it. As soon as it freezes, which,

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191 See the small plan of this spot on p. 363.— Ed.

234 In 1833, it did in November, the ducks migrate to the ponds and lakes a few miles distant, where they remain with pelicans, swans, wild geese, divers, cranes, and other water fowl, till these lakes are likewise frozen. About a league below Fort Clarke the Missouri makes a bend to the east or north-east, and on this part of the bank is a rather extensive forest, in which the inhabitants of Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush have built their winter village of sixty or seventy huts. From the above village there is easy access across the prairie, which is, in general, level, to Ruhptare, the second Mandan village, there being only a couple of small ravines filled with brushwood, the resort of prairie hens, to break the level. Opposite the fort, on the left shore of the Missouri, a fine forest of poplars, elms, maples, ash, &c., with a thick undergrowth of every variety of shrub, extends to the prairie hills. In this forest the inhabitants of Ruhptare live in the winter time, directly opposite their summer village.¹⁹²

192 This location of the Mandan villages corresponds with the account of Lewis and Clark, except that these explorers represent Ruhptare as situated on the north bank of the Missouri — doubtless their winter village, as explained by Maximilian. When the smallpox swept away the inhabitants of these villages (1837), the remnant of the Mandan abandoned them to the Arikara, and formed one small village between their former towns and the mouth of Knife River. By 1845 they began moving to the Fort Berthold reservation, where they have since lived, located on the west bank of the Missouri. Their dwellings are chiefly log huts, although a few earth lodges may yet be seen. See O. D. Wheeler, "Last of the Mandans," in *Wonderland*, 1903, pp. 1936.— Ed.

Fort Clarke itself is built on the same plan as the other trading posts of the Company. The front and back of the square are forty-four paces in length, the sides, forty-nine paces. The northern and southern corners have blockhouses; the buildings are of one story, and they were just erecting a new one, with a couple of rooms, having good glass windows, which, however, was not yet completed. In front of the postern gate was the machine in which

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the skins are made up into bundles, each bundle consisting of ten buffalo 235 hides, and weighing 100 pounds. A small piece of garden-ground is laid out behind the fort, and not far off, on the banks of the stream, the Indians had planted some small fields of maize and gourds. There were only three dogs in the fort, which were always shut out in the evening. At this time we had little opportunity of following the chase; the herds of buffaloes had gone to a distance, and the hunters were obliged to make long excursions before they could meet with them. There was, however, a sufficient stock of food for the horses in the fort, and sometimes a good many horses were kept there; but, at this season, most of them had been sold, in consequence of the competition in trade. These animals are very badly treated; they are scarcely housed in a stable during the whole winter, and in the coldest nights they were in the court-yard, while the congealed snow lay on their backs and shoulders, some inches thick. They had no food in the winter, except the bark of the poplar trees in the forest; and, when the weather was not too rigorous, and the snow too deep, they were driven thither daily. The dogs have also to pass the night in ice and snow. Fort Clarke possessed no oxen, nor any domestic animals, except some cocks and hens, which latter begin to lay in March. Oxen would be in danger from the numerous Indians, who consider them as a medicine [325] of the white men, which may be prejudicial to them in hunting the buffaloes. There were a few tame cats in the fort, but not sufficient to reduce the great numbers of rats. These animals (the Norway rats) were so numerous and troublesome, that no kind of provision was safe from their voracity; their favourite food was the maize, among which they committed sad havoc; and it was calculated that they daily devoured five bushels, or 250 pounds. There were often from 500 to 800 bushels of this corn in the loft at a time. The rats were brought hither by the American ships; but, as yet, they have not reached the Manitari 236 villages. The Indians killed seven of these creatures in the prairie, which were on their route from Fort Clarke to those villages. No rats have since attempted to visit them, but it is more than probable that they will, ere long, find their way thither.

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The only neighbours of the fort are the Indian villages. They are surrounded by their stages for the dead, which form a very strange appearance, and, in the warm season, when the wind blows from that direction, spread most disagreeable and unwholesome exhalations.¹⁹³ In the summer time, the many Indians engaged in various occupations in the prairie, and their numerous horses grazing around, give great animation to the country; but, in winter, the landscape is extremely dead and monotonous. The extensive white plain is enlivened by neither man nor beast, unless, indeed, some herds of buffaloes are in the neighbourhood, or a few hungry wolves are prowling about in search of food. At that season there is generally more life on the frozen river, as the Indians are continually going backwards and forwards from their winter to their summer villages, and to the fort. Men, women, children, and dogs, drawing little sledges, are seen on it all day long; and the people of the fort amuse themselves with skating, and the children with sledges, especially on Sundays.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ See illustration on p. 347, our volume xxii, for these burial stages.— Ed.

¹⁹⁴ See Plates 29, 68, and 59, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

The climate in the country about Fort Clarke is, in general, healthy; yet, in the spring and autumn, and even in winter, there are always some disorders which carry off many of the inhabitants, especially the Indians, who are entirely destitute of medical assistance. In the winter which we passed here, several such epidemics prevailed, which affected very many of the people; and some of the Whites, too, were 237 severe sufferers. A great many children were carried off by the hooping-cough, and some Indians by diarrhoea and colic; and the cholera having prevailed on the Lower Missouri, it was at first feared that it had penetrated thus far, though these apprehensions afterwards proved to be groundless. In consequence of the frequent and sudden changes of the temperature, catarrh is very common among the halfnaked Indians; agues are quite unknown here. The winter is usually accompanied with much rain, snow, stormy, and tempestuous weather. At times

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there have even been snowstorms late in May, from which Indians have perished in the prairie. In April, last year, a father and son were there frozen to death.

Great inundations are rare; since Charbonneau came to this country, which was about thirty-seven [326] years since, there have been only two, which, however, were very severe.¹⁹⁵ Earthquakes, which are frequent on the Mississippi, have not been noticed here; a circumstance confirmed by Volney. March and April are called by the Indians the horses' winter, because, when the weather is warm, the horses

¹⁹⁵ In the first and greatest (Charbonneau did not remember in what year it occurred) the water rose forty feet above its usual level. Only the tops of the poplars were to be seen, and the ice lay above a month on the land, till it was melted by the sun. The second inundation took place on the 6th of April, 1826; the water rose, at daybreak, so rapidly and so high, that Charbonneau was compelled to escape, with some of his property, to the middle Manitari village, two miles from the Missouri, and to take refuge on a stack of maize, where he passed three days without fire, in a cold north wind, and drifting snow. The water rose twenty-five feet above its usual level. The inhabitants of fifteen tents of the Sioux, below the Sêche (near the Grand River, below the Arikara villages), were all drowned. In the wooded point of land, at the mouth of the Chayenne River, lived a man named Pascal Seré, who traded with the Sioux. The water rising rapidly, he took refuge, with his goods, on the roof of his house, which, however, was, ere long, lifted up by the river and carried a good way down the stream. At this place the ice had formed a dam; the house was floated into the wood on the bank, and there deposited uninjured. In the year 1784, when there were such extensive inundations in Europe, they also occurred in America, as Volney relates of the Susquehanna.— Maximilian.

²³⁸ are often driven to pasture in the prairie, and then violent storms of snow sometimes occur suddenly, and destroy many of these animals.

The difference of climate a few days' journey down the Missouri is often very great; for in many seasons the gourds are ripe in the Arikara villages, when they are only in blossom

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with the Mandans, and the trees are in flower there, when the leaves are but just beginning to sprout here; a difference which is, of course, still greater the further you go down the river. At the Mandan villages, the leaves of the plants seldom appear before May; the willows on the banks, perhaps, a little sooner. The flowers in the prairie are said not to blossom earlier, and in some years the trees have not been clothed with foliage till the end of May. The changes of temperature are often sudden and unpleasant.¹⁹⁶ The summer is always dry and hot, yet the heat is not so enervating as on the Mississippi, though, in the prairies, when there is no wind stirring, it is excessively oppressive. Swarms of mosquitoes are a great torment in the summer time, but not in the same degree every year. Last summer they were not very numerous. We were assured that July is the only month in the year which is without frost; before and after it there are frosts nightly.¹⁹⁷ In the heat of summer the creeks become dry, and the crops of maize of the Indians often fail in consequence of the drought. In the year 1833, the crop was not very good, though it did not entirely fail. Autumn is generally the most pleasant season of the year.

¹⁹⁶ Mr. Laidlow, at Fort Pi re, rode out on a warm day about three years ago, to hunt a buffalo. At nightfall it began to rain, and the party was not well furnished with blankets. Towards morning, frost set in, and all their clothes were frozen quite stiff, so that many of the company did not, for some time, recover from the effects of this cold night.— Maximilian.

¹⁹⁷ Volney, who gives an admirable description of the climate of the United States, says, that July is the only month in the year without frost at Philadelphia. — Maximilian.

Comment by Ed. See Flint's *Letters* in our volume ix, p. 237, note 121.

²³⁹ Fine, bright, clear days, with moderate heat, prevail; the leaves, indeed, fall in October; and even in autumn [327] the changes of temperature are frequently great and rapid. On the 17th October the weather was fine, serene, and warm, and on the 18th such a sharp frost, with a storm of snow, that two Indians were frozen to death in the prairie. The winter is long, and generally severe; most animals then migrate, and, therefore, the

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winter Fauna has but a few species whereof to boast. We were told that, about new year, there is usually a very cold interval of about a week, which was the case during our visit; and the Indians have, on this account, called one of their months “the moon of the seven cold days.” The winter of 1833–34 is considered as one of the most severe. The mercury in the thermometer was frozen for several days, and, at Fort Union, the cold is said to have been 47°, Fahrenheit, below zero.¹⁹⁸ The snow is seldom more than two feet deep, but it remains a long time, often unchanged till the month of March — a proof of the dryness of the climate. In the dreadful storms of snow which perfectly darken the air, the compass is an important and necessary instrument; in fact, it is, at all times, indispensable in these prairies. The winter of 1832 was extremely mild; there was scarcely any snow, and the inhabitants did not remember to have had such a season for many years. The Missouri generally freezes in November. Last year (1832), on the 24th November, and likewise in the winter of this year (1833), it froze on the 23rd November, but only in some places, at which the ice was passable two days after.

¹⁹⁸ This probably means 47° below freezing point; for if it were to be understood as 47° below 0, of Fahrenheit, it would be 79° below freezing point.— H. Evans Lloyd.

Comment by Ed. A curious misconception on the part of Lloyd, the English translator, who could not believe this account of the intense cold on the western prairies of the United States. Maximilian undoubtedly intended just what he says — a temperature record not unknown in recent winters.

²⁴⁰ Close to the fort it is seldom frozen quite across, there being, generally, a narrow open channel, which, however, is not of any great length. The freezing of the Missouri in this part of the country, which continues uninterruptedly throughout the winter, is not to be compared with that of other large rivers; for instance, the Mississippi — for the Upper Missouri has at this season much less depth and rapidity, so that it freezes the more easily. Mr. Kipp recollected, in the eleven years of his residence here, the greatest degree of cold to have been 360 below zero. The east and north winds are generally accompanied, at Fort Clarke, with snow and rain: the north and north-west winds are cold.

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In spring and autumn there are violent storms, and but few days are without wind, which, in fact, is pretty nearly the case in all seasons of the year. In cold winters the sun often has a parhelion on either side. In the spring and autumn, there are often splendid northern lights, while in winter they are very rare, and are most frequently seen in autumn at about ten o'clock in the evening.

The water of the Missouri is cold, refreshing, and very wholesome. In spring and summer it is not so transparent as at other times; in frosty weather in winter, it is perfectly clear, as many travellers have testified. The water in the small streams is generally bad, having something of a brackish taste; and the banks of the Missouri are frequently covered with a very thin, white, saline coating. Lewis and Clarke frequently speak of this phenomenon. The soil in this country is said to be, in general, fruitful in the plains; and especially in the valleys which lie [328] between the hills, there is a stratum of black mould, more than two feet thick, but the excessive drought, in summer and winter, causes many crops to fail. The almost incessant wind dries the ground to such a degree, that it soon absorbs the little moisture proceeding from the rain. The dew, besides, is not sufficiently
241 copious to refresh and support the parched vegetation, as it does in hot countries. When manure was spread upon the prairies, it was immediately converted into dust, and blown away by the wind. The Mandans and Manitaris cultivate very fine maize, without ever manuring the ground; but their fields are on the low banks of the river, sufficiently sheltered by eminences, where the soil is particularly fruitful. When, after many years, the field is exhausted, they let it lie fallow, and cultivate another spot, since these extensive wildernesses offer them inexhaustible resources. They have been advised to use manure, at which, however, they only laugh. Mr. Kipp intended to make a trial with some exhausted Indian land, and to manure it; for this purpose, he meant to spread earth over the manure, that the wind might not so easily affect it, and in this way he hoped, in the sequel, to convince the Indians, who pertinaciously abide by their old prejudices. They have extremely fine maize of different species. Mr. Kipp has made frequent trials of blue flowering potatoes, which succeeded extremely well; but the Indians were so eager after

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these incomparable roots, that he could not keep enough for seed. One Indian, however, in Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, had prudently preserved some potatoes in order to plant them; and thus it may be hoped that they will be gradually propagated among these people.

It appears, from what has been above stated, that drought and want of wood are the chief impediments to the cultivation and settlement of the Whites in the prairies of the Upper Missouri—an opinion in which most of the persons engaged in the service of the Company agree, though Bradbury thinks differently.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ See our volume v, p. 267.— Ed.

With respect to the geological formation of the soil, it appears chiefly to consist of clay, sand, and sand-stone. All 242 the chains of hills which traverse the prairie, and of which there is one along both the banks of the Missouri, consist of clay mixed with sand, and of sand-stone, with many impressions and petrifications of shell-fish, and the singular baculites, which are found everywhere on the Missouri and its tributaries, and even here and there in the beds of the streams. Fossil bones are frequently found, and, in the calcareous rock further down the Missouri, entire skeletons, twelve, fourteen, or even more, feet in length, of reptiles of the crocodile kind, of which I brought back one, found in the vicinity of the Big Bend, for which I am indebted to the kindness of Major O'Fallon, at St. Louis.²⁰⁰ It appears that there are no minerals in this country, and, [329] in the immediate vicinity of Fort Clarke, not even lime. On the other hand, the strata of black, bituminous coal appear in the hills for many hundred miles. This coal ignites easily, with a strong sulphureous smell, but it does not emit sufficient heat to serve as fuel or for the forge.²⁰¹ In many places it may be evidently seen that these strata have been on fire. The surrounding clay is frequently burnt red, and the shards are perfectly coloured, hard and sonorous, like our bricks and Dutch clinkers. About Fort Clarke they know nothing of such fires, but they have frequently occurred lower down the Missouri. The red clay, which we have so often spoken of, appears to have been elevated by the action of fire. On

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200 A more accurate comparison has shown that this antediluvian animal does not differ from the Mosasaurus, which has been found in many parts of North America; and Professor Goldfuss, at Bonn, will give us a description of it. I have already mentioned that I am, unfortunately, not able to furnish any particulars of the several specimens of this kind which I had obtained, because I have lost the whole collection by the burning of the Assiniboin steamer in the Missouri. Many of the specimens observed by me are described, with figures, in Dr. S. G. Morton's "Synopsis of the Organic Remains of the Cretaceous Groups of the United States. Illustrated by nineteen plates, &c. Philadelphia, 1834."— Maximilian.

201 See, however, on the use of this coal, our volume xxii, p. 364, note 336.— Ed.

243 the banks, extremely light, porous, cellular, red brown scoriae are everywhere found, which the people here call pumice stone, though they are totally different from the fossil usually so called, and of which extensive strata are found on the banks of the Rhine. Petrifications of animals and plants are to be looked for only on the banks of the rivers, though they doubtless are as frequent in the chains of hills, where they are concealed by the greensward from the eye of the passing observer. I was told that, in the prairie, about twenty miles distant from Fort Clarke, there are places in the hills where the organic remains of the antediluvian world lie exposed on the surface, but that country can be visited only for short intervals of time, and that, too, attended with great danger, on account of the hostile Indians. Entire petrified trunks of trees, such as we had observed on the banks of the Missouri, are said to be there, and impressions of crabs, or similar crustacea, have been found. The Indians speak of a petrified man, at the distance of three or four days' journey, whose head is round, and lies detached from the body. The story about the head is, probably, incorrect, as they pretend to be able to discern the countenance; but the rest of the skeleton is said plainly and distinctly to be seen. These are, doubtless, the remains of some antediluvian animal. It is much to be regretted that it

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is impracticable to explore, without much risk, a country so abounding with remains of this nature.

The extensive prairies, and their hills, certainly produce a great variety of plants, of which a part only have been described. Bradbury collected many plants about the Mandan villages, which were described by Pursh;²⁰² and Nuttall's

²⁰² Frederick Pursh (1774–1820), a foreign botanist who came to the United States in 1799 and spent twelve years exploring its plant life. In 1811 he went to England where he published *Flora America Septentrionalis* (London, 1814). He died at Montreal while arranging a catalogue of Canadian plants. See also Bradbury's *Travels* in our volume v, p. 26.— Ed.

²⁴⁴ works likewise contain many;²⁰³ but there is, undoubtedly, much remaining to be done, especially in the chain of the Black Hills. The country, about the Missouri, has its peculiar botanical characters. The tongues of land at the bends of the river are generally covered with wood; other parts of the banks more rarely so; the species of trees and shrubs which occur here have already been mentioned. There are no pines in the vicinity of Fort Clarke; but they are found higher up the river; nor are there any birch trees; indeed, I did not meet with one on the whole course of the Missouri. These do not grow, except on the tributaries of the Upper Missouri, for instance, Knife River. At the distance of three days' journey from the mouth, at the foot of the mountains which are improperly called La Côte Noire, though they join the Black Hills, of which they are a branch, the latter form [330] a very interesting chain, which runs nearly in a north-east direction from La Platte and the great northern bend of the Missouri. They lie about 100 miles to the east of the Rocky Mountains, and form the watershed between the Missouri, Mississippi, and Arkansas, several rivers having their sources in those mountains.²⁰⁴ Many kinds of fossils, and numerous species of plants and animals, which do not occur on the Missouri, are found on those hills. The paper birch (*Betula papyracea*) grows there, of the bark of which the northern Indians make the large pirogues, which are described in various works on North America. This tree is often thicker than a man's body; the bark is stripped off

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203 See preface to our volume xiii, for sketch of life of Thomas Nuttall.— Ed.

204 Maximilian appears to distinguish between La Côte Noire and the Black Hills. The term Côtes Noires was, however, applied by the early voyageurs to the entire body of the highlands in Nebraska, and in South and North Dakota. The limitation of the term Black Hills to the particular chain now thus named in South Dakota, is of recent use. Maximilian makes a curious error in thinking that these hills form part of either the Mississippi or the Arkansas watershed. Taken in the wider sense they form the dividing ridge between the Platte, Yellowstone, and Missouri systems.— Ed.

245 in large sheets, by making two parallel transverse incisions above and below, and then a perpendicular incision; after which the bark is loosened by means of wooden wedges. It is dry, and comes off very easily. Within is the smooth watered skin used by the Indians for writing their characters upon, from which circumstance the tree has derived its botanical name. The Black Hills are said to be likewise interesting in a zoological point of view. Among other animals found there, are the panther (*Felis concolor*), several species of rodentia squirrels, &c.

In the prairies on the Missouri, near Fort Clarke, the same species of cactus are found as near Fort Union; the grasses are not of so many species as might be supposed; *Chondrosium oligostachyum* (Nees), which grows to the height of ten or twelve feet, and *Bryzophyrum spicatum* , are, however, found there. As I had no opportunity of botanizing here in the summer time, my list of plants of this part of the country is very incomplete; but Bradbury and Nuttall were more fortunate. Many officinal plants grow here, but there are no physicians to direct the use of them.

In the forests about Fort Clarke, only a very small quantity of useful timber is found. The poplar burns quickly, and emits much heat, and the bark serves for the winter food of the horses. The animal kingdom has many interesting species, for those of the extensive western prairies are united with those of the cold regions of North America. The best

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accounts of the former are given by Say, whose early death is deeply to be deplored:205 and for those of the more northern regions, Richardson's admirable *Fauna Boreali-Americana* is replete with interest and information. The buffalo herds do not appear in

205 For brief sketch of Thomas Say, see our volume xiv, James's *Long's Expedition*, p. 40, note I. Maximilian spent part of the winter of 1832–33 with this naturalist at New Harmony (see our volume xxii); and visited him upon his return; he died, however (October, 1834), just after the prince had reached Europe.— Ed.

246 the immediate vicinity of Fort Clarke, except when the winter is very severe, because they are too much disturbed by the numerous Indians in the neighbourhood. The hunters of the fort are often obliged to ride twenty miles before they find them. In the cold snow-storms, so prevalent during the winter, these animals take refuge in the forests on the banks, when great numbers of them are killed, and it is often almost impossible to drive them out of the wood. Their bones and skulls, scattered all over the prairie, prove the immense destruction which is made of these harmless animals. The elk may be shot at about eighteen miles from Fort Clarke; but it does not approach nearer, because of the Indians, to whom the skins of the elk are of great value in the manufacture of their shoes. The white-tailed [331] deer (*Cervus Virginianus*), called by the French, le chevreuil, is found in the nearest woods, not a mile from the fort. The black-tailed or mule deer is not to be seen within twenty or thirty miles. The cabri, or antelope (*Antilocapra Ord.*), lives the whole year in the immediate vicinity, and in the summer, great numbers congregate together; but in the winter they go towards the mountains, where they find protection against the snow, and return in April, when large herds of them are seen to pass the Missouri. The annexed woodcut, designed by Mr. Bodmer from the life, gives a perfect and correct idea of this animal.206

206 See opposite page for illustration of head of *Antilocapra Ord.*— Ed.

The bighorn (*Ovis montana*), the grosse-corne of the French, is not found nearer than fifty miles from this part of the country. The Manitaries, who go to the Black Hills and other

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mountainous tracts to hunt, kill a hundred or more of these animals in a season. The grizzly bear approaches to within four miles of the fort, because the Indians, who do not like to hunt them, leave them undisturbed. They are, however, very fond of the flesh of the young bear; and

Head of Antilocapra Ord.

Head of Canis latrans

249 the claws are much valued by them, for the manufacture of their necklaces. Of the genus canis, I met with five wild species in western North America. The changeable wolf (*Canis variabilis*), undoubtedly a distinct species, as Lewis and Clarke likewise affirm, is very common on the whole of the Upper Missouri. It is found to vary in colour from wolf grey to pure white. In winter these animals are nearly famished, and extremely lean. They closely follow the herds of buffaloes, and many sick, young, or weak animals become their easy prey; and when the hunters are abroad there is a rich harvest for the wolves. They even bite and devour each other, yet they did not meddle with the dead wolves which we left in the prairie; possibly they might not have been so [332] ravenously hungry just then. They distinguish the report of a gun so well, that they hasten to the spot almost immediately after the shot has been fired. The same is the case with the ravens; and the Indian hunters affirm that the wolves watch these birds, in order to ascertain the direction in which the prey is to be found: if a poor animal has only been wounded, they are on the alert, and instantly pursue it, and it inevitably becomes their prey. In cold winters they are often so bold that they come into the villages, and approach the people's dwellings.

The red fox (*Canis fulvus*) is very handsome, and at the same time common, though by no means so numerous as the wolves. The grey fox (*Canis cinereo-argenteus*), and the cross fox (*Canis decussatus*), are likewise found here. The black or silver fox (*Canis argentatus*), is met with sixty or seventy miles further north, but it is occasionally seen here, and the skin is highly prized, being sold for sixty dollars.

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The prairie fox is frequently seen, but the panther and the wild cat are not often found. Beavers become more numerous on the Missouri and its tributaries the higher they are ascended, and the Indians catch them in considerable numbers; their skins are much valued by the Whites. I saw one beautifully spotted with white; yellowish-white and pure white beavers are not unfrequently caught on the Yellow Stone.

There are, likewise, many interesting species of birds, among which are the turkey-buzzard, the stone falcon, the owl (a very hardy bird, which remains here throughout the whole of the rigorous winter), the Carolina parrot, the humming-bird (*Trochilus colubris*), wild pigeon, woodpecker, magpie, and many others. There are many interesting species of reptiles in this part of the country, and I much regretted that I was not here in the summer time, when, of course, they are more abundant and various. Several kinds of turtles frequent the Missouri and the prairies. [333] I was told that many species of lizard abound in summer, especially *phrynosoma* , of which there are many on the Yellow Stone, at Fort Union, and in the Valley of the Stone Walls. I was much surprised at not seeing a single animal of the lizard kind on my voyage on the Missouri. Of snakes there are many species; the black snake is not found here, but the *Coluber proximus* (Say) is abundant, as well as the *Coluber eximus*. There is only one kind of rattlesnake, which is very common, and of a considerable size. Of frogs there are several kinds, of which the *Rana pipiens* (Schreb.), is the most beautiful; small tree frogs likewise abound, and after a shower of rain, the ground is frequently quite covered with young frogs. Even many of the Whites believe that these little animals fall from the sky; they imagine that the rainbow draws the frogs up into the air at one end, and that they fall in a mass to the ground with the rain.

But few species of fish frequent this part of the Missouri; among them are two kinds of cat-fish, the pike, sturgeon, gold-eye, and occasionally the buffalo (*catostomus*). Doubtless there are many more species, but they have not been noticed by the inhabitants, and it is very difficult to procure them. Numerous insects of various species abound here, to the great annoyance of the inhabitants, such as mosquitoes, and innumerable grasshoppers,

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which quickly devour the plants in the prairie, and are themselves the food of many kinds of animals during the summer.

To give a complete picture of the country about Fort Clarke, we must subjoin an account of the numerous Indians who inhabit this territory; namely, the three tribes of the Mandans, the Manitaries or Gros Ventres, and the Arikkaras, the latter of whom were absent during our sojourn here. In order to make the narrative of our long residence at this spot (which will be given in the sequel) more intelligible, I shall annex, in the three following chapters, the information I collected respecting those three Indian nations.

CHAPTER XXV ACCOUNT OF THE MANDAN INDIANS

In communicating the information contained in the following chapters, in which I mean to treat especially of some tribes of the aborigines of North America, I shall take it for granted that the reader is acquainted with the interesting and important particulars which have been given us by Messrs. Edwin James, T. Say, and Schoolcraft. Dr. E. James speaks especially of the origin of the North American Indians, of their near affinity to each other; of the recently broached hypothesis of their descent from the Israelites, which he proves to be groundless, and which is contradicted by the bodily conformation of the Indians, and also of the injudicious and unjust treatment which they suffer from the Anglo-Americans. According to him many of the Indian nations would long since have been converted to the Christian religion, and have settled in fixed abodes, like the Cherokees, &c., if the earlier missionaries had better understood the work on which they were sent. It is notorious that this subject was treated, in early times, with the most unwarrantable want of discretion, and positive ignorance; that the greatest injustice was exercised towards the Indian population, and that, even now, wrongs untold are heaped on this much to be pitied and oppressed race. A large portion of those nations has entirely disappeared, and the accounts which have been preserved of them are extremely imperfect; others are expelled from their native seats, mixed together in small fragments of various tribes, half degenerated, and consequently now affording but little that can interest the inquirer. Such

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were the Indians whom Volney saw: 253 only to the west and north-west of the Mississippi may the Indians be yet found in their original state. Before, however, I speak of them in general, I will describe more in detail a small tribe which has hitherto been very imperfectly known.

The Mandans (called by the Canadians, les Mandals),²⁰⁷ by which name these Indians are generally known, though it was originally given them by the Sioux, were formerly a numerous people, who, according to the narrative of an aged man, lately deceased, inhabited thirteen, and [335] perhaps more villages.²⁰⁸ They call themselves Numangkake (*i. e.* , men), and if they wish to particularize their descent, they add the name of the village whence they came originally.²⁰⁹ Some, for instance, call themselves Sipuske-Numangkake, the men of the pheasant or prairie hens, from the village Sipuska-Mihte, pheasant village; others, Mato-Numangkake, the men of the bear, from the village Mato-Mihte, bear village, &c. &c. Another general name of this people is

²⁰⁷ Maximilian must have been misinformed in regard to the Canadian-French form for the name of this tribe. Probably the earliest account is that of La Verendrye, who visited them in 1738–39. See Douglas Brymner, *Canadian Archives*, 1889, pp. 2–29, for the journal of this expedition. La Verendrye had been informed by the Assiniboin, that the Mandan, whom he called “Mantannes,” were a different race from the Indians; he was therefore disappointed when upon meeting them he discovered their similarity to other known tribesmen. He was conducted in much state to their villages, of which there were five along the Missouri, and remained among them several weeks, reaching his fort on the Assiniboin January 10, 1739, upon the return journey.— Ed.

²⁰⁸ There is evidence both from the number of deserted Mandan villages on the Missouri, and from the accounts of the early travellers—and this accords with Mandan tradition—that the numbers of the tribe had formerly been larger and their villages more numerous; Bougainville, in his *Memoire sur la Nouvelle France* (1757), cited in *Northern and Western Boundaries of Ontario* (Toronto, 1878), p. 83, speaks of seven fortified villages; and

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David Thompson, who visited them in 1797–98, found the same number. Lewis and Clark reported that forty years before their visit, there had been nine, and that the population had wasted before the attacks of the Sioux and the ravages of smallpox.— Ed.

209 La Vérendrye (*Canadian Archives*, 1889, p. 5) gives their aboriginal name as Ouachipouanne.— Ed.

254 Mahna-Narra, the sulky, because they separated from the rest of their nation, and went higher up the Missouri.

The early history of the Mandans is involved in obscurity; their own traditions and legends will be discussed in the sequel, when treating on their religious ideas. They affirm that they descend originally from the more eastern nations, near the sea-coast.²¹⁰ Though the above-named villages do not all exist at this time, these Indians still call themselves by their several names. They formerly dwelt near the Heart River:²¹¹ when Charbonneau arrived here at the end of the last century, the two Mandan villages, which are still standing, were about six or eight miles further down the Missouri. The small-pox and the assaults of their enemies have so reduced this people, that the whole number now reside in two villages, in the vicinity of Fort Clarke. These two villages are Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush (the southern village), about 300 paces above Fort Clarke, and on the same side of the river, and Ruhptare,²¹² about there miles higher up,

²¹⁰ Warden is mistaken when he says (Vol. III. p. 559), that the Mandans are descended from the Crows; for this is applicable to the Manitaries, of whom we shall speak afterward.— Maximilian.

²¹¹ For Heart River see our volume v, p. 148, note 91. The modern North Dakota town of Mandan takes its name from the traditional Mandan village near its site.— Ed.

²¹² Lewis and Clarke write this name Rooptahee, which is incorrect. (See Account of their Journey, Vol. I. p. 120.) These celebrated travellers passed the winter among the Mandans, and give many particulars respecting them, which, on the whole, are correct; but

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their proper names and words from the Mandan and Manitari languages are, in general, inaccurately understood and written. It is said, they derived their information from a person named Jessaume, who spoke the language very imperfectly, as we were assured everywhere on the Missouri. Of this kind are many of the names mentioned by those travellers, which neither the Indians nor the Whites were able to understand; for instance, Ahnahaways (Vol. 1. p. 115), a people who are said to have formerly dwelt between the Mandans and the Manitari; likewise Mahawha, where the Arwacahwas lived (*ibid.*); the fourth village is said to have been called Metaharta, and to have been inhabited by Manitari (*ibid.*); of all these names, except, perhaps, Mahawha, which ought probably to be Machaha, nobody could give us the slightest information, not even Charbonneau, though he has lived here so many years. It is necessary to be much on your guard against bad interpreters, and I acted in this respect with much caution. All the information given by me, respecting Indian words and names, was carefully written down from the statements of sensible, well-informed men of these nations. I have endeavoured to write down their language exactly, according to its real pronunciation, in doing which, the German guttural sounds were of great assistance to me, as it is that of the Missouri Indians. Mr. Kipp and Charbonneau, with some of the others who have lived long among these Indians, daily assisted me, during a long winter, with much patience and kindness, in this work.— Maximilian.

255 likewise on the same bank. The first had, at the time of our visit, sixty-five huts, and contained about 150 warriors; the other, thirty-eight huts and eighty-three warriors. According to this, the tribe had not more than 230 or 240 warriors; and, on the whole, scarcely 900 or 1000 souls; Dr. [336] Morse,²¹³ therefore, estimates the number of these people rather too high, when he states it at 1250 Souls.

213 See Dr. Morse's Report, p. 252. He speaks (p. 349) of the Mandans, Blackfeet, Rapid (Fall) Indians, and Assiniboins. His tables of the Indian population of the United States are in page 362.— Maximilian.

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The Mandans are a vigorous, well-made race of people, rather above the middling stature, and very few of the men could be called short. The tallest man now living was Mahchsi-Karehde (the flying war eagle), who was five feet ten inches two lines, Paris measure (above six feet English). In general, however, they are not so tall as the Manitaris. Many of them are robust, broad-shouldered, and muscular, while others are slender and small limbed. Their physiognomy is, in general, the same as that of most of the Missouri Indians, but their noses are not so long and arched as those of the Sioux, nor have they such high cheek bones. The nose of the Mandans and Manitaris is not broad—sometimes aquiline, or slightly curved, and often quite straight. Their eyes are, in general, long and narrow, of a dark brown colour; the inner angle is often rather lower in childhood, but it is rarely so in maturer age. The mouth is broad, large, rather prominent, and the lower jaw broad and angular. No great difference occurs in the form of the skull: 256 in general I did not find the facial angle smaller than in Europeans, yet there are some exceptions.²¹⁴ Their hair is long, thick, lank, and black, but seldom as jet and glossy as that of the Brazilians: that of children is often only dark brown, especially at the tips; and Bradbury speaks of brown hair among the Mandans. There are whole families among them, as well as among the Blackfeet, whose hair is grey, or black mixed with white, so that the whole head appears grey.²¹⁵ The families of Sih-Chida and Mato-Chiha are instances of this peculiarity. The latter chief was particularly remarkable in this respect: his hair grew in distinct locks of brown, black, silver grey, but mostly white, and his eyebrows perfectly white, which had a strange effect in a tall otherwise handsome man, between twenty and thirty years of age. They encourage the growth of their hair, and often lengthen it by artificial means. Their teeth, like those of all the Missouri Indians, are particularly fine, strong, firm, even, and as white as ivory. It is very seldom

²¹⁴ Say, who, in general, gives a very accurate description of the North American Indians (see Major Long's Travels), lays too much stress, as it appears to me, on the character of the receding of the forehead; for, by a comparison of a great many skulls, I have fully convinced myself of the contrary. Say affirmed, also, that the facial angle is not so small as

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Professor Blumenbach supposes. The Indian features, as far as my experience reaches, cannot be called either Mongol or Malay, the latter of which is more perceptible in the Brazilians, notwithstanding the manifest affinity with the North Americans. The learned traveller, Augustus de St. Hilaire, even attributes to the Brazilians a conformation of the skull, according to which those people are endowed with inferior intellectual faculties. (See *Voyages dans les Districts de Diamande*). The missionary, Parker, in his *Travels to the Columbia River*, p. 155, expresses himself, in this respect, entirely in accordance with my views; and D'Orbigny confirms them in respect to the South Americans, in the conformation of whose skulls he found considerable diversities.— Maximilian.

215 La Verendrye (*Canadian Archives*, 1889, p. 21) says, "This nation is mixed white and black. The women are fairly good-looking, especially the white, many with blond and fair hair." All later travellers, also, note the presence of grey eyes and hair among the Mandan. If this arose from admixture with Caucasians, it probably was due to French *coureurs des bois*, who ranged far among the Western tribes. See, however, on this subject, Matthews, *Hidatsa*, pp. 43–45, who thinks fairness of skin but a variation of the usual Indian type.— Ed.

257 that you see a defect or a tooth [337] wanting even in old people, though, in the latter, they are often worn very short, which is chiefly to be attributed to their chewing hard, dry meat. The women are pretty robust and sometimes tall, but, for the most part, they are short and broad shouldered. They are but few who can be called handsome as Indians, but there are many tolerable and some pretty faces among them. It is usually said of the Mandan women that they, in some respects, have a natural conformation, such as Le Vaillant and Peron²¹⁶ ascribe to the Hottentot women; but it seems to be owing, in the Mandan women, less to nature than to artificial means.²¹⁷ The children have frequently slender limbs, and very prominent bellies. Deformed persons are very rare among the Mandans. I, however, saw a very little dwarf with a long, narrow face, and one man who squinted. Persons who had lost the sight of one eye, or with a cataract, are by no means

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uncommon. There were several deaf and dumb, among whom two brothers and a sister were all born with this defect. Some goitres, or, rather, thick necks

216 Francois le Vaillant (1753–1824) was born in Dutch Guiana, where his father held an official position. Returned to Holland at the age of ten, he completed his education in Paris, and embarked (1780) for the exploration of Africa. His two journeys lasted five years, but their results were more valuable to the other natural sciences than to geographic discovery. He published *Voyages dans l'interior de l'Afrique* (Paris, 1790–96).

François Peron (1775–1810), a younger naturalist, served first in the Revolutionary armies (1792–95). In 1800–04 he accompanied Baudin on his voyage to Southern lands and waters, publishing the results as *Voyage de decouvertes aux terres australes* (Paris, 1811–16). His collections of natural history, both plants and animals, were noted.— Ed.

217 Haec deformitas a viris ipsis ut dicunt, tractibus saepe repetitis producitur. In nonnullis labia externa in orbem tres ad quatuor digitis transversos prominent; in aliis labia interna valde pendent; immo virorum ars in partibus ipsis figuras artificiose fictas format.

Foemina hac raritate curens parvi cestimata, et neglecta est.

Moris est in Mandans, Mcennitarris, et in Crows, magis autem in Moennitarris; in Mandans, a mulieribus dissolutis, magis quam ab uxoribus hic mos perversus adhibetur.— Maximilian.

258 among the women, are, doubtless, caused by too great exertions in carrying burdens on their backs. Instances where joints of the fingers are wanting are frequent, but these come under the head of voluntary mutilations.

The colour of these Indians is a fine brown, sometimes reddish, more or less dark, which might, sometimes, come under the denomination of copper colour. In some it is more of a greyish-brown, in others yellowish; after a thorough ablution the skin of some of them appears almost white, and even some colour in their cheeks.218 They do not disfigure

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their bodies, only they make some apertures in the outer rim of the ear, in which they hang strings of beads, brass or iron rings of different sizes, or shells, the last of which they obtain from other Indian tribes. If they are questioned respecting these shells, they answer that they were brought from the sea. These Indians are vain, and in this respect childish, like all savage nations. They are very fond of ornament, and the young men have always a little looking-glass suspended from their wrists. The traders sell these looking-glasses in a pasteboard case, which, however, is immediately changed for a solid wooden frame, and attached to the wrist by a red ribbon or a leather strap. The looking-glasses are framed in various ways; the rude frame is often painted red, or with stripes of different colours, with footsteps of bears or buffaloes carved on it. Nay, sometimes these [338] frames are of a considerable size, divided at one end like a boot-jack, and ornamented with brass nails, ribbons, pieces of skin and feathers.²¹⁹ Some had very ingeniously

²¹⁸ Volney has many inaccuracies in what he says of the colour of the Indians (Vol. II. p. 435). According to him, the children are born quite white like the Europeans; that the women are white on the thighs, hips, and lower parts of the body, where the skin is covered by the clothing; that it is wholly erroneous to suppose that the copper colour is natural to them, &c. Mr. Von Humboldt has long since refuted all these assertions.— Maximilian.

²¹⁹ See p. 267 for plan of hand looking-glass.— Ed.

²⁵⁹ fastened this important appendage to their fan made of an eagle's wing. The Indian dandy is constantly consulting his mirror, and, if he has been travelling, especially in the high winds so prevalent here, he immediately has recourse to his looking-glass, and his disordered dress is most carefully arranged.

It is remarkable that the men are far more vain than the women, and the latter are obliged to be greatly inferior to the lords of the creation in their attire and adornments. The costume of the Mandans is rather simple: by far the greatest attention is paid to the head-dress. Their hair is parted transversely across the middle of the head, the front hair

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combed smoothly down, and generally divided into three flat bands, two of which hang down on the temples, and are generally plaited. To these plaits they attach the ornament already mentioned, which consists of two strips of leather or cloth closely embroidered with white or azure glass beads, and intertwined with brass wire, as represented in the portrait of Pehriska-Ruhpa.²²⁰ If the ground of this ornament is red or blue, it is studded with white beads, and if the ground is white the beads are blue. They put this ornament in their hair and pull it over the temples; a long string is fastened to the underpart, which reaches to the waist, and is adorned with alternate rows of blue beads and white dentalium shells. Between these two singularly decorated plaits there is, in the centre of the forehead, a smooth flat lock reaching to the nose, which is not ornamented, but only tied with a red ribbon. The back hair falls smoothly from the crown of the head to the waist, and is divided into many tails, an inch and a half or two inches broad, which are smeared with brownish or red clay. When the hair is not naturally long enough it is frequently lengthened with other human hair, often that

²²⁰ See Plate 50, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

²⁶⁰ of enemies whom they have killed, which is fastened on with rosin. At the back of the head they sometimes wear a long stiff ornament in the shape of a ruler, three or four fingers broad, made of small sticks entwined with wire, which is fastened to the hair, and reaches down to the shoulders. It is covered with porcupine quills, dyed of various colours, in very neat patterns. At the upper end of this ornament an eagle's feather is affixed horizontally, the quill end of which is covered with red cloth, and the tip is ornamented with a bunch of horsehair dyed yellow. The lower white half of the feather is frequently dyed red with vermilion, and the quill covered with dyed porcupine quills.²²¹ When the Indians are not in their best dress, when they are travelling, or going to the chase, they fasten their long hair in a thick bunch. [339] When, however, they are full dressed, they put a variety of feathers in their hair, frequently a semicircle of feathers of birds of prey, like radii, or sunbeams, or a bunch of tail feathers of the raven placed in a similar manner. Sometimes they have a thick tuft of owl's feathers, or small rosettes made of broad raven's feathers,

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cut short, in the centre of which is the tail of a bird of prey spread out like a fan. These feather ornaments are frequently determined according to the several bands or unions, of which I shall speak in the sequel. They likewise wear the large horned feather cap; this is a cap consisting of strips of white ermine, with pieces of red cloth hanging down behind as far as the calves of the legs, to which is attached an upright row of black and white eagle's feathers, beginning at the head and reaching to the whole length. Only distinguished warriors, who have performed many exploits, may wear this headdress.²²²

221 Such feathers are represented in Plate 54, figures 13, 14, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

222 See Plate 46, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv, “which,” Maximilian says, “is the best representation hitherto given of it.”— Ed.

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If they give away one or more of these head-dresses, which they estimate very highly, they are immediately considered men of great importance; the regular price of such a cap is a good horse; for a single eagle's feather is always valued at one or two dollars. On their buffalo robes they often represent this feather cap, under the image of a sun. Very celebrated and eminent warriors, when most highly decorated, wear in their hair various pieces of wood, as signals of their wounds and heroic deeds. Thus MatoTopé²²³ had fastened transversely in his hair a wooden knife, painted red, and about the length of a hand, because he he had killed a Chayenne chief with his knife; then six wooden sticks, painted red, blue, and yellow, with a brass nail at one end, indicating so many musket wounds which he had received. For an arrow wound he fastened in his hair the wing feather of a wild turkey; at the back of his head he wore a large bunch of owl's feathers, dyed yellow, with red tips, as the badge of the Meniss-Ochata (the dog band). The half of his face was painted red, and the other yellow; his body was painted reddish-brown, with narrow stripes, which were produced by taking off the colour with the tip of the finger wetted. On his arms, from the shoulder downwards, he had seventeen yellow stripes,

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which indicated his warlike deeds, and on his breast the figure of a hand, of a yellow colour, as a sign that he had captured some prisoners. A warrior so adorned takes more time for his toilette than the most elegant Parisian belle. The colour with which they paint their bodies is mixed with grease. When in mourning they colour the face and hands white. The women and children paint only their faces red, leaving the hair its natural colour. The Mandans and Manitaries, and all the Indians of the Upper Missouri, often wear the handsome necklace made of the claws of the grizzly bear. These claws

223 See his portrait, Plate 47, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

262 are very large in the spring, frequently three inches long, and the points are tinged of a white colour, which is much esteemed; only the claws of the fore feet are used for necklaces, which are fastened to a strip of otter skin, lined with red cloth, and embroidered with glass beads, which hangs down the back like a long tail. Such a [340] necklace is seldom to be had for less than twelve dollars; and very often the owners of them will not part with them on any terms. The Mandans adorn themselves with many other kinds of necklaces, such as strings of glass beads, scented roots, or fungi, elks' teeth, for 100 or 150 of which they will, in exchange, give a horse, or something equivalent. These Indians generally wear no covering on the upper part of the body; the leather shirt of the Assiniboins, Sioux, Crows, Blackfeet, and other nations that live more to the north and north-west, are seldom used among them; yet a few individuals have obtained them from those Indians, either as presents, or by barter. Even in the midst of winter, the Mandans wear nothing on the upper part of the body, under their buffalo robe.²²⁴ They paint their bodies of a reddish-brown colour, on some occasions with white clay; and frequently draw red or black figures on their arms. The face is, for the most part, painted all over with vermilion, or yellow, in which latter case the circumference of the eyes and the chin are red. There are, however, no set rules for painting, and it depends on the taste of the Indian dandy; yet, still, a general similarity is observed. The bands, in their dances, and also after battles, and when they have performed some exploit, follow the established rule. In ordinary festivals, and dances, and whenever they wish to look particularly

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224 See journal of La Vérendrye, *Canadian Archives*, 1889, p. 13: "I acknowledged that I was surprised [upon meeting the Mandan], expecting to see a different people from the other Indians, especially after the account given me. There is no difference from the Assiniboines; they are naked, covered only with a buffalo robe, worn carelessly without a breech clout."— Ed.

263 fine, the young men paint themselves in every variety of way, and each endeavours to find out some new mode. Should he find another dandy painted just like himself, he immediately retires and makes a change in the pattern, which may happen three or four times during the festival. If they have performed an exploit, the entire face is painted jet black. Sometimes, though seldom, the Mandans adorn the wrist and upper arm with polished steel bracelets, which they obtain from the merchants; often they wear many brass rings on their fingers, and are, on the whole, excessively fond of ornaments and finery. The chief article of their dress is the ample buffalo robe, called mahita, or mih-sha, which is often very elaborate and valuable. In dry weather these buffalo robes are worn with the hair inwards, and in rainy weather with the hairy side outwards. They are tanned on the fleshy side, and painted either white or reddish-brown, and ornamented with a transverse band of blue or white glass beads, and three large rosettes of the same beads, often of very tasteful patterns, at regular intervals. The centre is frequently red, surrounded with sky blue, embroidered with white figures, or sometimes the reverse. The transverse band is worked with variously dyed porcupine quills, and is then narrower. This, however, is now old-fashioned, and was worn before the coloured glass beads were obtained in such numbers from the Whites. Other robes are painted with a reddish-brown ground, and black figures, especially of animals; others have a white ground, with representations of their heroic deeds in black, or in gay colours, with the wounds they received, the loss of blood, the killed, the prisoners, the arms they have taken, the horses stolen (the number of which is indicated by the number of horseshoes), in black, red, green, or yellow figures, executed in their yet rude style of painting. The [341] nations on the Missouri are all in the habit of painting such robes; but the Pawnees, 264 Mandans, Manitaries, and Crows, are

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the most skilful in this art.²²⁵ Another mode of painting their robes is, to represent the number of valuable presents they have made. By these presents, which are often of great value, they acquire reputation and respect among their countrymen. On such robes we observed long red figures, with a black circle at the termination, placed close to each other in transverse rows; they represent whips, indicating the number of horses given, because the whip belonging to the horse is always bestowed with the animal. Red or dark blue transverse figures indicate cloth or blankets given; parallel transverse stripes represent fire-arms, the outlines of which are pretty correctly drawn. The robe is frequently cut, at the bottom, into narrow strips, like fringe, and ornamented on the sides with tufts of human hair, and horse-hair dyed yellow and green, and with glass beads. Formerly the Indians painted these robes more carefully than they now do, and it was possible to obtain one for five musket balls and some powder; now they are far inferior, and eight or ten dollars is not unfrequently paid for them. A robe handsomely painted is equal in value to two not painted.

²²⁵ There is a print of such a robe in Major Long's Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, and another in Plate 54, Fig. 1., of my atlas [See our volume xxv]. The original was painted by Mato-Topé himself, and the figures on it represent some of his principal exploits, in which he killed, with his own hand, five chiefs of different nations.— Maximilian.

Comment by Ed. See James's *Long's Expedition*, in our volume xiv, p. 202. See also group of painted robes in Catlin, *North American Indians*, ii, pp. 240–249; on the entire subject see Garrick Mallery, "Picture Writing of American Indians," in *Bureau of Ethnology Report*, 1888–89.

Their leggins are fastened with straps to their leathern girdles, and are embroidered at the outer seam with stripes, one or two inches in breadth, of porcupine quills, of beautiful various colours, and often with blue and white beads, and long leathern fringes, which form at the ankle a thick bunch, which trails upon the ground. The leather of which their ²⁶⁵ leggins are made is, for the most part, stained of a reddish-brown, or pale red, usually

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with clay, sometimes white, and often marked below the knee with black transverse stripes. They, as well as all the tribes of North America, use what the English call a breech-cloth (Nokka), which is a narrow strip of woollen cloth, striped black and white, which passes between the thighs under the girdle, before and behind, where it hangs down. Their shoes, which are made of buck skin, or buffalo leather, are generally plain, or very slightly ornamented; but, in full dress, they are embroidered with coloured rosettes, or strips of dyed porcupine quills or beads. Those men who have performed exploits wear, round the ankles, wolf's tail, or pieces of otter skin, which are lined with red cloth, and trail on the ground. In the summer, when the men are at home, and go about in state, they carry the fan of eagle's feathers in their hands, which we have before described. What the Anglo-Americans call "the crow," which is worn by the warriors of the nations of the Mississippi, and the Lower Missouri, is wholly unknown among the tribes of the Upper Missouri, the Sioux, Assiniboins, Crows, Mandans, Arikkaras, Manitaries, and Black-feet.²²⁶

226 For description of this ornament see our volume xiv, p. 235.— Ed

The boys are generally naked, and in winter merely have a robe thrown over them; the girls are dressed in leather in summer as well as winter. The women wear a long leather [342] garment, with open sleeves, and a girdle round the waist; the hem of this dress is often scalloped and fringed; they ornament the wrists with iron rings, and tie strings of glass beads round their necks, and sometimes in their ears. Their leggins, called, by the Canadians, mitasse, are short, reaching only from the ankle to the knee. Their shoes are simple, and without any ornament.

Tattooing is in use among these people, but by no means ²⁶⁶ general. Most commonly only the left half of the breast and the corresponding arm are marked with black parallel stripes, and a few other figures. The lower arm and some of the fingers are occasionally marked; the men do not tattoo their faces, and they are far inferior in this art to the New Zealanders and other nations of the South Seas. Among the women such designs are

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sometimes seen, but not frequently, and they are chiefly among the women's band of the white buffalo cow. The point of the needle is dyed a dark blue with the bark of the willow soaked in water.

In Major Long's *Travels to the Rocky Mountains* it is stated that the Crows rub their bodies with castoreum, on account of its pleasant scent.²²⁷ I must observe, however, that the custom is not confined to one nation, but is practised by the Mandans, Manitaris, Crows, and Blackfeet, and most of the other tribes of the Upper Missouri. They mix the castoreum with a red colour, and with it rub their face and frequently their hair.

Having obtained a clear idea of the outward appearance of these Indians, we will next consider their habitations, villages, and domestic life. Their villages are assemblages of clay huts, of greater or less extent, placed close to each other, without regard to order. Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, the largest of the Mandan villages, was about 150 or 200 paces in diameter, the second was much smaller. The circumference forms an irregular circle, and was anciently surrounded with strong posts, or palisades, which have, however, gradually disappeared as the natives used them for fuel in the cold winters. At four places, at nearly equal distances from each other, is a bastion built of clay, furnished with loop-holes, and lined both within and without with basket-work of willow branches. They form an angle,

²²⁷ See our volume xv, p. 71.— Ed.

Hand looking-glass

Cylinder of planks

Mandan huts

269 and are open towards the village; the earth is filled in between the basket-work; and it is said that these bulwarks, which are now in a [343] state of decay, were erected for the Indians by the Whites.²²⁸ There is nothing of the kind at Ruhptare. The huts, as I have before remarked, stand close to each other, leaving, in the centre, an open circular

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space, about sixty paces in diameter, in the centre of which (among the Mandans) the ark of the first man is set up, of which we shall speak in the sequel. It is a small cylinder, open above, made of planks, about four or five feet high, fixed in the ground, and bound with climbing plants, or pliable boughs, to hold them together.²²⁹

228 The early travellers speak of the fortifications of the Mandan villages. La Vérendrye (*Canadian Archives*, 1889, p. 17) mentions “ramparts” and “trenches.” Bougainville (*Northern and Western Boundaries of Ontario*, p. 83) says the villages are surrounded by staked earthworks with a moat; Catlin (*North American Indians*, i, p. 81) describes this village as picketed upon one side only — that exposed to the prairie.— Ed.

229 See p. 267 for illustration of this peculiar cylinder of planks, used as a religious emblem. Catlin, *North American Indians*, i, p. 88, says it was called the “Big Canoe.”— Ed.

At the north end of this circular space is the medicine lodge, in which festivals are celebrated, and certain customs practised, which are connected with the religious notions of this people, which we shall treat of in the sequel. At the top of a high pole, a figure is here placed, made of skins, with a wooden head, the face painted black, and wearing a fur cap and feathers, which is intended to represent the evil spirit, Ochkih-Hadda (corresponding with the devil), or a wicked man, as they affirm, who once appeared among them, had neither wife nor child, and vanished, and whom they now stand greatly in dread of. Other grotesque figures, made of skins and bundles of twigs, we saw hanging on high poles, most of them being offerings to the deity. Among the huts are many stages of several stories, supported by poles, on which they dry the maize. The huts themselves are of a circular form, slightly vaulted, having a sort of portico entrance. When the inmates are absent the entrance is shut up with twigs and thorns; and if they wish merely to close the door they put up a skin stretched out on a frame, which is shoved aside on entering. In the centre of the roof is a square opening for the smoke to find vent, over which is a circular sort of screen made of twigs, as a protection against the wind and rain, and which, when necessary, is covered with skins.²³⁰

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230 See p. 267 for illustration of Mandan huts. Alexander Henry (*Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, pp. 337–339) gives an account of the process of building these huts. The Mandan houses were the most elaborate Indian dwellings north of New Mexico, and characterized the tribal stage of industrial development. The energy required to cut and prepare the timbers with the rude implements in vogue, indicates an advance upon the industry of the wandering prairie tribes. See L. H. Morgan, “Houses and House Life of American Aborigines,” in *Geographical and Geological Survey of the Territories, Contributions to Ethnology*, 1881, iv, pp. 125–130. A few of these huts may still be seen on the Fort Berthold reservation, North Dakota. See O. D. Wheeler, “Last of the Mandans,” in *Wonderland*, 1903, who suggests that these Mandan dwellings were the forerunners of the sod-houses of the early settlers.— Ed.

The interior of the hut is spacious, tolerably light, and cleanly. Four strong pillars towards the middle, with several cross beams, support the roof. The inner circumference of the hut is formed by eleven or fifteen thick posts, four or five feet in height, between which other rather shorter ones are placed close to each other. On these shorter posts, which are all of an equal [344] height, are long rafters, inclining to the centre; they are placed near each other, and bear the roof. On the outside the huts are covered with a kind of mat, made of osiers, joined together with bark, and now the skeleton of the hut is finished. Over this hay is spread, and the outer covering is of earth. The men and women work together in erecting these huts, and the relations, neighbours, and friends, assist them in the work. The building of the huts, manufacturing of their arms, hunting, and wars, and part of the labours of the harvest, 271 are the occupations of the men; every other kind of work is left to the women, who, though in general well treated, are obliged to perform all the really laborious work. The women fetch fuel, in heavy loads, frequently from great distances, carry water, and, in winter, blocks of ice into the huts, cook, tan the skins, make all the clothing, lay out the plantations, perform field labour, &c. &c. In the centre of the hut a circular place is dug for the fire, over which the kettle is suspended. This fire-place, or hearth, is often enclosed with a ledge of stones. The fuel is laid, in moderately thick

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pieces, on the external edge of the hearth, crossing each other in the middle, when it is kindled, and the pieces gradually pushed in as they burn away. The Indians are not fond of large fires. The inmates sit round it, on low seats, made of peeled osiers, covered with buffalo or bear skin. Round the inner circumference of the hut lie or hang the baggage, the furniture, and other property, in leather bags, the painted parchment travelling bags, and the harness of the horses; and on separate stages there are arms, sledges, and snow-shoes, while meat and maize, piled up, complete the motley assemblage.²³¹ The beds stand against the wall of the hut; they consist of a large square case, made of parchment or skins, with a square entrance, and are large enough to hold several persons, who lie very conveniently and warm on skins and blankets.²³²

231 See Bodmer's drawing of the interior of the hut of Dipauch, Plate 52, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

232 See p. 285 for illustration of a Mandan bed. La Vérendrye (Canadian Archives, 1889, p. 21) speaks of these beds as “made like tombs surrounded with skins.” Catlin gave a more detailed description, in *North American Indians*, i, pp. 82, 83. A buffalo skin stretched upon the poles, with the fur side uppermost, made a comfortable reclining place. The curtains were frequently adorned with Indian embroidery or picture writing.— Ed.

In the winter huts they place, at the inside of the door, a high screen of willow boughs, covered with hides, which ²⁷² keeps off the draught of air from without, and especially protects the fire.

The summer huts are very cool, and, generally speaking, have no unpleasant smell. Mr. Say gives a very good description, and a tolerably accurate print, of a Konza lodge, or hut,²³³ and, with [345] some slight differences, the mode of building resembles, in the main, those of the Mandans, Manitaris, and Arikkaras. Among these differences are the mats which are fastened all round in the first hut, and which I did not observe among the tribes that I visited. The beds, too, are arranged in a different manner. The

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Mandans and Manitaries are seen in their huts, sitting round the fire, employed in all kinds of domestic labour. The man has, generally, no clothing except the nokka, and is often merely smoking, but the women are never idle. In winter, that is, at the beginning or middle of November, these Indians remove, with the greater part of their effects, to the neighbouring forest, where their winter huts are situated. These consist of precisely similar huts, of rather smaller dimensions. Their departure from the summer huts is determined by the weather, but, as beforesaid, is generally about the middle of November; and their return, in the spring, is usually about the latter end of February, or the beginning of March, so that we may reckon that they may pass above eight months in their summer quarters. Inside of the winter huts is a particular compartment, where the horses are put in the evening, and fed with maize. In the daytime they are driven into the prairie, and feed in the bushes, on the bark of poplars. There are, probably, above 300 horses in the two Mandan villages; some of the people, indeed, do not possess any, while others, again, have several. The Mandans and Manitaries, like all the other Indians of this country, sometimes make what are here called caches, or hiding-places,

233 See our volume xiv, pp. 188–190, 208.— Ed.

273 places, in the vicinity of their villages. These caches are holes, or magazines, underground, often so artfully contrived that it is very difficult to discover them.²³⁴ The Indians frequently go from their winter to their summer village, to fetch any articles they may happen to want, as they invariably leave part of their property behind. When they quit their huts for a longer period than usual, they load their dogs with the baggage, which is drawn in small sledges, made of a couple of thin, narrow boards, nine or ten feet in length, fastened together with leather straps, and with four cross-pieces, by way of giving them firmness. Leather straps are attached in front, and drawn either by men or dogs. The load is fastened to the sledge by straps.²³⁵ When the snow is deep, they use snow shoes,²³⁶ which are described by Captain Franklin, only those of the Mandans are much smaller, about two feet and a half long; whereas in the north their length is from four to six feet. The Mandans and Manitaries have not, by any means, so many dogs as the Assiniboins,

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Crows, and Blackfeet. They are rarely of the true wolf's colour, but generally black, or white, or else spotted with black and white. Among the nations further to the north-west they more nearly resemble the wolf, but here they are more like the prairie wolf (*Canis latrans*).²³⁷ We likewise found, among these animals, a brown race, descended from European pointers, hence the genuine bark of the dog is more frequently heard here, whereas among

234 It was into these caches, which he speaks of as “caves,” that La Vérendrye's bag of Indian presents disappeared upon his first visit to their villages in 1738–39; *Canadian Archives*, 1889, p. 17. Furthermore he says (p. 21), “Their fort is full of caves, in which are stored such articles as grain, food, fat, dressed robes, bear skins.”— Ed.

235 For such a sledge drawn by dogs see Plate 29, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

236 See Plate 54, figure 4, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

237 See p. 247 for drawing of head of this animal.— Ed.

274 the western nations they only howl. The Indian dogs are worked very hard, have hard blows, and hard fare; in fact, they are treated just as this fine animal is treated among the Esquimaux.

[346] The Mandans are hospitable, and often invite their acquaintance to come and see them. Their pipes are made of the red-stone, or of black clay. They obtain the red pipe-heads chiefly from the Sioux; sometimes they have wooden heads lined with stone; the tube is plain, long, round or flat, on the whole, of the same shape as among the Sioux, but they are not so fastidious about ornamenting their pipes as other tribes. They smoke the leaves of the tobacco plant, which is cultivated by them; the bark of the red willow (*Cornus sericea*), which they obtain from the traders, is sometimes mixed with the tobacco, or the latter with the leaves of the bearberry (*Arbutus uva ursi*). The tobacco of the Whites,

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unmixed, is too strong for the Indians, because they draw the smoke into their lungs; hence they do not willingly smoke cigars.

The meals of the Mandans are served in wooden dishes. The spoons are generally large and deep; they are made of the horn of the bighorn;²³⁸ sometimes they are yellow, or else they are shallow, made of black buffalo's horn. They have a considerable variety of dishes. The Indians residing in permanent villages have the advantage of the roving hunting tribes, in that they not only hunt, but derive their chief subsistence from their plantations, which afford them a degree of security against distress. It is true, these Indians sometimes suffer hunger when the buffalo herds keep at a great distance, and their crops fail; but the distress can never be so great among the Missouri Indians, as in the tribes that live further northwards. The plants which they cultivate are maize, beans, French beans, gourds, sunflowers,

²³⁸ See p. 105 for illustration of a horn drinking-cup or spoon.— Ed.

²⁷⁵ and tobacco (*Nicotiana quadrivalvis*), of which I brought home some seeds, which have flowered in several botanic gardens.

Of maize there are several varieties of colour, to which they give different names. The several varieties are:— 1. White maize. 2. Yellow maize. 3. Red maize. 4. Spotted maize. 5. Black maize. 6. Sweet maize. 7. Very hard yellow maize. 8. White, or red-striped maize. 9. Very tender yellow maize.²³⁹

²³⁹ I brought to Europe specimens of the several kinds of maize grown among the Mandans; these have been sown, but only the early species were ripe in September, 1835. The heads have by no means attained the same size, on the Rhine, as in their native country. There the plant attains a height of five or six feet, and the colours of the grains are very various, bright, and beautiful: while, on the Rhine, the plant grew to the height of four or four and a half feet. The later sorts grew to the height of ten feet, and

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were not quite ripe at the end of October. (See Bradbury, [our volume v, p. 158, note 96], for an account of the maize of the Mandans.)

According to Tanner (page 180), an Ottawa Indian first introduced the cultivation of maize on the Red River, among the Ojibwas, or Chippeways.— Maximilian.

The beans are likewise of various sorts — small white beans, black, red, and spotted beans. The gourds are — yellow, black, striped, blue, long, and thick-shelled gourds.

The sunflower is a large helianthus, which seems perfectly to resemble that cultivated in our gardens. It is planted in rows between the maize. There are two or three varieties, with red, and black, and one with smaller seeds. Very nice cakes are made of these seeds. The tobacco [347] cultivated by the Mandans, Manitaris, and Arikkaras, attains a great height, and is suffered to grow up from the seeds, without having any care whatever bestowed upon it. It is not transplanted. When it is ripe the stalks are cut, dried, and powdered; or the leaves, with the small branches, are cut into little pieces. The taste and smell are disagreeable to an European, resembling camomile rather than tobacco. The plant is not now so much cultivated as formerly, being superseded by the more pleasant tobacco of the Whites; but the species is still preserved.²⁴⁰ It is only on solemn occasions, for instance, in negotiations for peace, that this tobacco is still smoked; the seed is, therefore, preserved in the medicine bag of the nation, that the plant may never be lost. When they mean to smoke this tobacco, a small quantity of fat is rubbed on it.

²⁴⁰ La Vérendrye presumably first introduced the tobacco of the whites to these people. Upon first meeting the Mandan chief, he “presented me with a gift of Indian corn in the ear, and of their tobacco in rolls, which is not good, as they do not know how to cure it like us. It is very like ours, with this difference, that it is not cultivated and is cut green, everything being turned to account, the stalks and leaves together. I gave him some of mine, which he thought very good.”— Ed.

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The cultivation of the maize and other fields, of which each family prepares three, four, or five acres, takes place in the month of May. Rows of small furrows are made, into which the grains of maize are thrown singly, and covered with earth. Three times in the summer the plants are hoed, and the earth heaped up against them, that the moisture may have better access to them. The harvest takes place in October, when men, women, and children, each lend a helping hand. At present the women use, in their field labour, a broad iron hoe, with a crooked wooden handle, which they obtain from the merchants. Charbonneau recollected the time when they used the shoulder blade of the buffalo for this purpose. The fields are never fenced, but lie quite open and exposed.

The wild plants of the prairie are used by the Mandans, and other people of the Upper Missouri; and to those before-mentioned, I can only add the feverolles (*Faba minor equina*), a fruit resembling the bean, which is said to grow in the ground, but which I did not see; there are many other roots in the prairie, which are used for food. The gourds are eaten fresh as well as dry. The beans are seldom eaten of 277 one kind, but many sorts are mixed together. The maize is boiled or roasted, then pounded, mixed with fat, and made up into small cakes and baked. There are, of course, many other ways of dressing it. The sweet maize has a very pleasant taste, especially when it is in what is called the milky state; it is then boiled, dried, and laid by for use.

All kinds of animals serve the Mandans for food; the bear, when it is young and fat, the wolf, the fox, in short, everything except the horse; the ermine is not eaten by many; and of birds they dislike the turkey-buzzard, and the raven, because they feed on the dead bodies deposited on the stages. They have a great aversion from serpents, but eat the turtle; the buffalo is the chief object of their chase, as it supplies them with skins, meat, tallow, marrow-bones, sinews, and many other necessaries. Next to the buffalo the beaver is the most indispensable to them, since it not only furnishes them with valuable skins, but supplies them with delicate food, the fat tail, especially, being considered quite a dainty morsel by the Indians. Pemmican,²⁴¹ [348] which is so favourite a dish among the

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northern Indians, is not much in use among the Mandans. Their only drink is water, for they are unacquainted with the method of preparing fermented liquors. They did not obtain any spirits, either from the American Fur Company, or the agents of Messrs. Soublotte and Campbell; hence an intoxicated person is scarcely ever seen. They are extremely fond of sugar, and likewise of salt, which they procure from their lakes, and, if the supply is insufficient, purchase from the Whites. They are likewise fond of coffee and tea, well sweetened. It has been affirmed, that several North American nations, especially those which speak the Algonquin

241 For a good description of pemican see Franchère's *Narrative*, our volume vi, p. 380, note 197.— Ed.

278 language, are cannibals, and more particularly the Chippeways and the Potawatomis; but I found no trace of this unnatural custom among the Missouri nations.242

242 The only form of cannibalism practiced among the North American Indians, after they were known to the whites, was the custom of eating the heart or the flesh of a brave enemy, in order to acquire the victim's courage or other desirable qualities. As torture of prisoners was more common among Eastern than Western tribes, this practice may be the one referred to by Maximilian. Consult Livingston Farrand, *Basis of American History* (New York, 1904), pp. 226, 243.— Ed.

Two, and sometimes three, families usually live together in an Indian hut, commonly the father, with his married sons or sons-in-law. Polygamy is everywhere practised, and the number of wives differs; however, they have very seldom more than four, and, in general, only one.243 The women are very skilful in various kinds of work, particularly in dyeing and painting the buffalo robes. They extract a red colour from the roots of the savoyenne, or from buffalo berries; yellow from a lichen of the Rocky Mountains; black from helianthus, as well as from a black stone or clay; blue and green they extract from European substances. Among the Mandans, Manitaries, and Arikkaras, the women, as Lewis and Clarke relate, manufacture beads from coloured glass. They powder those

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which they have obtained from the traders, and mould them into different shapes.²⁴⁴ This custom is, however, no longer common. The dyeing of the skins, of which many travellers have spoken, employs a great portion of the women's time. These three nations understand the manufacture of earthen pots

²⁴³ Catlin (*North American Indians*, i, pp. 118–120) finds apologies for the custom of polygamy, which he says is chiefly confined to the chiefs and medicine men of the tribe.— Ed.

²⁴⁴ Lewis and Clark describe this process of primitive bead-making, related to them by Garreau, the Arikara interpreter, in *Original Journals*, i, pp. 272–274; see also Catlin, *North American Indians*, ii, p. 261. If the Mandan acquired this art from the Snake Indians, as tradition avers, their pounded glass was probably obsidian from the cliffs of the upper Yellowstone. See also Matthews, *Hidatsa Indians*, pp. 22, 23.— Ed.

²⁷⁹ and vessels, of various forms and sizes. The clay is of a dark slate colour, and burns a yellowish-red, very similar to what is seen in the burnt tops of the Missouri hills. This clay is mixed with flint or granite, reduced to powder by the action of fire. The workwoman forms the hollow inside of the vessel by means of a round stone which she holds in her hand, while she works and smooths the outside with a piece of poplar bark. When the pot is made, it is filled and surrounded with dry shavings, and then burnt, when it is ready for use. They know nothing of glazing.²⁴⁵ With respect to their boats, the North Americans are far more expert than the Brazilians, Patagonians, and other South Americans, who live on the banks of rivers, and yet have contrived no means to pass them. The Chippeways and other northern nations have handsome vessels of birch bark; the Esquimaux makes his kiack, which is curiously covered with seal skin; and on the Missouri, especially among the Mandans, there are boats of buffalo skin, which are represented in the plates accompanying this work.²⁴⁶ They are very light, of a circular form, stretched on a frame of several pieces of wood crossing each other, and may be carried on the shoulder of a single individual.

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245 The Mandan art of ceramics, with its similarity to the productions found in the mounds of the Eastern states, has been frequently noted. Compare *Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, p. 328; Catlin, *North American Indians*, i, p. 116; ii, pp. 260, 261; and W. H. Holmes, "Aboriginal Pottery of the Eastern United States," in United States Bureau of Ethnology *Report*, 1898–99, pp. 197–201, with illustrations.— Ed.

If a young Indian desires to marry, and has obtained the consent of the girl, he endeavours to procure that of her father; when he is certain of this, he brings two, three, nay,

246 See Plate 48, with buffalo boats in the foreground, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv. For a description of the process of making these bull-boats, see *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, v, pp. 325, 326; for a vivid account of the manner of navigating them, see *Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, pp. 331, 332.— Ed.

280 even eight or [349] ten horses, and fastens them to the hut of the young woman, who gives them to her father. The latter then takes other horses, and if he has them not himself, his relations assist him, and these horses are fastened, in return, to the hut of the intended son-in-law. In such a case an estimate is previously made of the number of horses possessed by the woman's relations, for all presents are returned in equal number. The bride next boils some maize, and daily carries a kettle or dish filled with it to the hut of the bridegroom. After some time has elapsed, the young man repairs to the hut of his bride, where he passes the night with her, and the marriage is considered as complete. The young couple often continue to reside in the hut of the father-in-law, but they more frequently build a new hut for themselves; sometimes, however, they afterwards separate. The father-in-law is, subsequently, the principal person in the hut; everything depends on him, and is done on his account, and for him; if game is killed, the flesh is first presented to him, &c.247 There are often many children in these Indian families; some had as many as ten; yet, on the whole, the Indians have not so many children as the Whites, doubtless because they keep them longer at the breast. They are extremely fond of them, but the children are often weak and sickly, in consequence, it is supposed, of the hard labour

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which the women have to perform. I was universally assured that the new-born children are of a reddish colour. The births are, in general, extremely easy, and the mother bathes in the river immediately afterwards, even if it is frozen; in ten days the child is considered as safe, having got over the most dangerous period. A person is paid to give it the name chosen by the parents and relations. The child

247 Consult on the subject of courtship and marriage, Catlin, *North American Indians*, i, pp. 120, 121. Matthews, *Hidatsa Indians*, pp. 52–54, claims that the custom of the more reputable families is not mere wife-purchase, but is based upon mutual respect, and the ability of the husband as a hunter and provider.— Ed.

281 is held up, then turned to all sides of the heavens, in the direction of the course of the sun, and its name proclaimed. They have cradles for their infants, consisting of a leather bag, which is suspended by a strap to a cross beam in the hut. These cradles of the Mandans are not so elegant and beautifully worked as those which we saw among the Sioux and Assiniboins. The children of these Indians are subject to no kind of discipline whatever; they may do and say whatever they please, and nobody finds fault with them. Everything is done to excite a spirit of independence and self-will in the boys; if the mother speaks to one of them, he will very likely slap her face, or kick her, nay, sometimes he will do the same to his father, who says, coolly, bowing his head, this boy will one day become a famous warrior. The men sometimes treat their wives very brutally; and it has not unfrequently happened, that a woman, after such treatment, has left the hut and hanged herself on a tree. This lately happened in the case of an aged woman, whose grown-up son had ill-treated her. She was missed, and was afterwards found suspended from a tree. The women have nothing to indemnify them for their incessant and laborious work, not even good clothing, for this right of the fair sex in Europe is claimed among the Indians by the men. It is singular that these women, who are condemned constantly to work like slaves, refuse to do any work whatever if they marry a white man, and, the Whites being entirely in the power of the Indians, and the relations of their wives, they are obliged to submit to this. Sisters have great [350] privileges among these Indians. All the

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horses which a young man steals, or captures in war, belong to them. If an Indian returns from an expedition on horseback, and meets his sister, he will immediately alight, and give her the horse; on the other hand, if he wishes to possess some object of value belonging to his sister, for instance, a dress, he goes and abruptly demands it, and immediately receives it; even should it be the very dress she is wearing, she will take it off at once, and give it to her brother.

Prudery is not a virtue of the Indian women; they have often two, three, or more lovers: infidelity is not often punished. There was only one woman among the Mandans, a piece of whose nose was cut off, a circumstance which is very common among the Blackfeet. If an Indian elopes with a married woman, the husband whom she has abandoned avenges himself by seizing the seducer's property, his horses and other things of value, to which the latter must quietly submit. Such a woman is never taken back. If a man has the eldest daughter of a family for his wife, he has a right to all her sisters. A chief business of the young men among these Indian tribes is to try their fortune with the young maidens and the women, and this, together with their toilet, fills up the greater part of their time. They do not meet with many coy beauties.²⁴⁸ In the evening, and generally till late at night, they roam about the villages, or in the vicinity, or from one village to the other. They have a singular mode of displaying their achievements in this field, especially when they visit the women in their best dresses. On these occasions they endeavour to gain credit by the variety of their triumphs, and mark the number of conquered beauties by bundles of peeled osier twigs, painted red at the tips. These sticks are of two kinds. Most of them are from two to three feet in length, others five or six feet. The latter, being carried singly, are painted with white and red rings alternately, which indicates the number of conquests. The shorter sticks are only painted red at the

²⁴⁸ Matthews, *Hidatsa Indians*, p. 15, criticises Maximilian for this statement, saying "Why boast of a deed which was no great achievement?" Catlin likewise extols the chastity of girls in respectable families. The evidence of Alexander Henry is in the opposite direction. Consult also Bradbury, in our volume v, p. 166.— Ed.

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283 tips, and every stick indicates an exploit, the number of which is often bound up into a pretty large bundle. Thick fasces of this kind are carried about by the dandies in their gallant excursions. Among the Mandans these sticks are generally quite plain; among the Manitaries, on the contrary, there is, usually, in the middle of the bundle, one larger stick, at the end of which there is a tuft of black feathers. These feathers indicate the favourite, and the dandies tell everybody that she is the person for whom this honour is intended.²⁴⁹

249 See Plate 54, figure 6, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

If these people have had familiar intercourse with a person who wore the white buffalo robe, a piece of skin of that colour is fastened to the stick; if she wore a red blanket, or buffalo robe, a piece of red cloth is fastened to the stick. This custom, which is well known among the Mandans and Manitaries, has not, to my knowledge, been mentioned by any traveller.

They have distinct names for the several degrees of relationship. The father's brother is called father, and the mother's sister, mother; cousins are called brothers and sisters. The [351] mother-in-law never speaks to her son-in-law; but if he comes home, and brings her the scalp of a slain enemy, and his gun, she is at liberty, from that moment, to converse with him.²⁵⁰ This custom is found among the Manitaries, who have, doubtless, borrowed it from the Mandans, but not among the Crows and Arikkaras. Among the Chippeways, and the Algonquins in general, the name must not be changed; and persons with the same name must not marry, but consider each other as brothers and sisters. Among all the North American Indian nations there are men dressed and treated like women, called by the Canadians,

250 Consult Matthews, *Hidatsa Indians*, pp. 54–57. Communication with the mother-in-law was formerly considered improper.— Ed.

284 Bardaches, of whom Mc Kenzie, Tanner, Langsdorff, and others, have spoken;²⁵¹ but there was only one such among the Mandans, and two or three among the Manitaries.

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251 The berdash was noted by most early travellers among Western Indians. Marquette found them among the Illinois (Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, lix, p. 129). See also *Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, pp. 53, 348.

For Mackenzie see Franchère's *Narrative*, in our volume vi, p. 185, note 4. Tanner is noted in our volume xxii, p. 390, note 367. George Henry, Baron von Langsdorff (1774–1852), was a German scientist and traveller who entered Russian service, making several journeys in the interest of that power. In 1803–07, he visited Kamschatka and Russian America as far as California, returning overland through Siberia. Maximilian here refers to his description of this journey, published first as *Bemerkungen auf einer Reise um die Welt in 1803–07* (Frankfort, 1812), and translated as *Voyages and Travels in various parts of the World during the years 1803–07* (London, 1813–14). Langsdorff later visited Brazil under the auspices of the Russian government.— Ed.

Volney, and some other writers, have spoken rather too unfavourably of the moral character of the aborigines of North America, and their domestic habits. According to them, distrust and hostile feeling prevail among them, for which reason they never leave their huts unarmed; but I can bear witness that they are frequently seen in their villages, as well as in the environs, without arms, and that it is only at greater distances, and when they appear in state, that they carry their weapons in their hands. I have never observed any disputes among them, but, on the contrary, much more unity and tranquillity than in civilized Europe. It has often been asserted that the Indians are inferior in intellectual capacity to the Whites; but this has been now sufficiently refuted; and Harlan is not wrong in saying that, among the races of men, of which Blumenbach reckons five,²⁵² the American should be ranked immediately after the Caucasian. If man, in all his varieties, has not received from the Creator equally perfect faculties, I am, at least, convinced that, in this respect, the Americans are not inferior to the Whites. Many of the Mandans manifest

252 For these two savants see our volume xxii, notes 27 and 87 respectively.— Ed.

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Mandan bed

A Mandan letter, in hieroglyphics

Child's dart, of stag-horn

287 a great thirst for knowledge, and many desire to hear something of objects of a higher order; and if they were not so much attached to the prejudices inherited from their ancestors, many of them might be very easily instructed. The bad examples which they so often observe in the white men, who roam about their country in quest of gain, are not calculated to inspire them with much respect for our race, or to improve their morality. And if they have not been found inclined to the Christian religion, this is, certainly, in some measure, the consequence of the bad conduct of the Whites, who call themselves Christians, and are often worse, and more immoral, than the most uncivilized of the Indians. Many American and foreign works have taken notice of the striking good sense and wit, the correct judgment of the Indians, in all the occurrences of daily life, and it would be mere repetition here to quote examples. One is often at a loss to answer their questions, founded on correct and natural judgment. The inactive mode of life natural to the Indians, which disdains all laborious exertion, is a great obstacle to their adopting a different system. But they are not deficient in talent for drawing, music, &c., and this is quite manifest at first sight. Several Mandans not only took much pleasure in drawing, but had a decided talent for it. The hieroglyphics are well known, which the Indians employ [352] instead of writing; for instance, the figures on their robes, the drawing of Mato-Topé, and the subjoined Indian letter from a Mandan to a fur trader.²⁵³

253 See Plate 55, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv, and p. 285 for illustration of Mandan letter in hieroglyphics.— Ed.

The following is the explanation of the hieroglyphic figures contained in it:

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The cross signifies, "I will barter, or trade." Three animals are drawn on the right hand of the cross: one is a buffalo; the two others, a weasel (*Mustela Canadensis*), 288 and an otter. The writer offers, in exchange for the skins of these animals (probably meaning that of a white buffalo), the articles which he has drawn on the left side of the cross.

He has, in the first place, depicted a beaver very plainly, behind which there is a gun; to the left of the beaver are thirty strokes, each ten separated by a longer line; this means, I will give thirty beaver skins and a gun for the skins of the three animals on the right hand of the cross.

Many of them dispute, with great earnestness, on more elevated subjects; thus, they inquired our ideas of the various heavenly bodies, and of the origin of the universe, as they, themselves, declare their own silly traditions to be insufficient. Some, indeed, thought our ideas on these subjects much more silly than their own. They laughed outright, when we affirmed that the earth was round, and revolved about the sun. Others, however, would not reject our views, and were of opinion that, as the Whites could do so much which was incomprehensible to them, it was possible they might be right on this point also.

In all works that treat of these remarkable people, we find recorded very energetic and well-digested speeches of their chiefs. They frequently use very appropriate figures, and often said bitter truths to their white oppressors. Dr. Morse quotes some such phrases, used at the conclusion of treaties of peace, or declarations of war, which express much in a few words. Thus, in declarations of war: "The blood of our wives and children smokes on the ground! The bones of our warriors and old men are uncovered, and whiten the earth! The tomahawk is raised!" And on the conclusion of peace: "The bones of our warriors are buried! the tomahawk is buried! the blood of our women and children is covered! The path which leads to them must be kept clean; no weeds may grow there. The chain which binds us together must not become rusty." [353] Or, on 289 the contrary: "The chain begins to rust," &c. &c. Though these people often manifest great energy of character, many have committed suicide on account of disappointments in love, or of wounded honour, of which

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Dr. Morse relates a remarkable instance, where an Indian killed himself because he was reproached with cowardice, after his mother had suffered death for him. Many travellers speak of the extraordinary memory of the Indians; several of them relate the entire history of their people in a continuous narrative.

The Mandans and Manitaries are proud, and have a high sense of honour. If a person expresses a wish to possess some article belonging to them, he generally receives it as a present, but a present of equal, or greater value, is always looked for in return. They estimate all their effects at a very high rate, ascribing to them an imaginary and far too great value; and a trifling thing is often paid for with one or two horses. Among the articles of great value is the skin of a white buffalo cow. Fifteen florins are paid for a small ermine skin; whereas, a wolf's skin may be purchased for a small quantity of tobacco. One or two horses are frequently given for a feather cap; a horse for 100 or 150 elks' teeth, or for a handful of dentalium shells.²⁵⁴ The men are much given to indolence, when they cannot pursue their chief avocations, hunting and war. In general, the Mandans and Manitaries are not dangerous, and, though there are many rude and savage men among them, they are, on the whole, well-disposed towards the Whites: the former, especially, manifest this, and have many good and trustworthy men among them. Some of them are addicted to thieving, especially the women and children; and it is said, that many of

²⁵⁴ The dentalium shells were by intertribal exchange brought from the Pacific Ocean; the Mandan prized them so highly that white traders began to import them, and Matthews reports (*Hidatsa*, p. 28) that ten of these shells would buy a superior buffalo robe.— Ed.

²⁹⁰ the Manitaries, when they meet the Whites in the prairie, though they do not kill them, as they used to do, generally plunder them.

They have always free access to the forts of the trading companies; and, as at Fort Clarke, there was no separate apartment for the Indians, we were molested by them, during the whole day, in every room; nay, they often took the place of the owners, which, during the severe cold in the winter time, was quite intolerable, as they stood in front of the fire,

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with their large buffalo robes, and kept the warmth from coming into the apartment. They require to be always regaled, which is generally done, and it was estimated that in one year they smoked 200 lbs. of tobacco at the expense of the Company. A few among them, indeed, manifested a much greater delicacy of feeling than the mass of them, and left the dining-room when the dinner-hour approached; but only a very small proportion possessed this correct sense of propriety, for the others generally came just at our dinner time; it is true they had but little meat in the winter season, and fared but badly. Disputes and quarrels are very rare among them; but duels are frequent; and revenge for blood is still exercised.

Many of them are particularly cleanly in their persons, and bathe daily, both in winter and summer; their hands, however, are often smeared with colours and fat, nay, sometimes the whole body is bedaubed. The women are, in general, less cleanly, particularly their hands, [354] which arises from their continual and severe labour. They generally let their nails grow long.

The rude inhabitants of the prairies are extremely agile and hardy; they bathe, in the depth of winter, in the half frozen rivers, and wear no covering on the upper part of their body under the buffalo robe; they are very expert swimmers, even when quite young. I have already observed that all 291 these nations swim in the same manner as the Brazilian Tapuyas, which is confirmed by other writers. They often practise riding on horseback without a saddle, and very swift horse-racing.²⁵⁵ They are capital marksmen with the bow; all their senses are remarkably acute.

²⁵⁵ See the amusing description by Catlin (*North American Indians*, i, pp. 197, 198) of a horse-race in which he participated.— Ed.

Among the Mandans, and all the nations of the Upper Missouri, as well as among most of the North American tribes, there are certain bands or unions or companies, which are distinguished from the others, and kept together by certain external badges and laws.²⁵⁶

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They have three kinds of war or signal pipes, which are hung round the neck, and are among the badges of the unions, which divide the men into six classes, according to their age. The first band or union is composed of “the foolish dogs,” or “the dogs whose name is not known.” They are young people from ten to fifteen years of age, and wear a pipe made of the wing bone of the wild goose, which is but small. When they dance, three of them have a long broad piece of red cloth hanging from the back of the neck to the ground. Like every distinct class they have a particular song to accompany their dance. Formerly old people likewise belonged to this band, but then they never dared to retreat before the enemy; this has since been changed to the present limited rule. If a boy desires to enter the first band in order to become a man, he goes to a member of it, addresses him by the appellation of father, and endeavours to purchase the rank, the dance,

256 The following account by Maximilian of the societies or bands among the Mandan is the most complete description by any early traveller, of these peculiar social organizations. J. O. Dorsey, “Omaha Sociology,” in United States Bureau of Ethnology *Report*, 1881–82, pp. 342–355, classifies these societies or corporations according to their purpose—as those organized for sacred ends, for bravery or war, or simply for social pleasure. According to Maximilian's account these purposes would appear to be commingled, and several of the bands to have been organized for general police and governmental purposes.— Ed.

292 the song, and the war pipe belonging to it, for certain articles of value, such as blankets, cloth, horses, powder, ball, and the like, which the father pays for him. If this place is sold to him he has a right to all the distinctions and privileges of the band, and he who sold it thereby renounces all claim to it, and endeavours to purchase admission to a higher band. The dances of the several classes are in the main very similar, but there is a particular song belonging to each, and sometimes even a different step. The drum and schischikué must likewise be purchased at the same time. The latter, among this band, is spherical, with a handle, and is made of leather.

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The second class or band is that of the crows or ravens; it consists of young men from twenty to twenty-five years of age. Frequently young people are in none of the bands for half a year or more. They then go to the band of the crows, and say, "Father, I am poor, but I wish to purchase from you." If the possessor agrees, they then receive the raven's feathers, which the band wear on their heads, a double war-pipe, consisting of two wing bones of a goose joined together, a drum, schischikué, the song and the dance. Each of these bands has a leader, called, [355] by the Americans, head-man, who decides on the sale of its rights and attributes. This head-man is chiefly applied to when any one wishes for admission; a festival then takes place in the medicine lodge, which is continued for forty successive nights, of which I shall speak in the sequel.²⁵⁷ They dance, eat, and smoke there; the purchasers defray the expenses, and give up their wives every night to the sellers, till the fathers, as they are called, are satisfied, and transfer their rights to the purchasers, with which the festival concludes.

²⁵⁷ See our volume xxiv.— Ed.

The third class or band is that of the soldiers, the most 293 eminent and esteemed warriors. In their dances they paint the upper part of the face red, and the lower part black. Their war pipe is large, and made of the wing bone of a crane. Their badges are two long straight sticks bound with otter skin, to which owl's feathers are appended. When they go to war, they plant these sticks in the ground in front of the enemy, and, this done, they dare not leave them, not unlike the colours in a European army. They have a similar stick ornamented with raven's feathers.²⁵⁸ They likewise have a dance and song peculiar to their band, and must purchase their admission into higher classes. Their schischikué or rattle is made of iron plate, in the form of a small kettle, with a handle. They likewise possess two tobacco pipes, which are used for smoking on special occasions. Two men keep and carry with them these pipes. All the higher classes may, at the same time, belong to the band of the soldiers, who act as police officers; it is, however, understood that all the members must be satisfied with the purchase. If but one object to the sale, the

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bargain cannot be concluded. It often happens that some individuals do not immediately give their consent, in order to raise the price and sell to more advantage afterwards. These soldiers, as they are called, form a kind of committee, which decides all the principal affairs, particularly general undertakings, such as changes of their places of abode, buffalo hunting, and the like. If the buffalo herds are in the vicinity, they watch them, and do not suffer them to be disturbed by individuals, till a general chase can be undertaken.

258 See p. 113 for badge of Raven band.— Ed.

If, during this time, any one fires at a wolf or other animal, the soldiers take away his gun, ill-use, and sometimes beat him, to which he must submit; even the chiefs are not spared on these occasions. The Whites living in the neighbourhood are subject, during such a time, to the same laws, 294 and the soldiers have often taken their hatchets from the woodcutters of the fort, or forbidden them to cut wood, that the buffaloes might not be disturbed by the noise.

The fourth band, that of the dogs, wear in their dance a large cap of coloured cloth, to which a great number of raven's, magpie's, and owl's feathers is fastened, adorned with dyed horse-hair and strips of ermine; they have a large war pipe of the wing bone of a swan. Three of them have the same strips of red cloth hanging down the back, as have been mentioned, when speaking of the first band. The head is generally adorned with a thick tuft of owl's, magpie's, and raven's feathers hanging down behind, and often all the three kinds of feathers are mixed together. [356] The three men before-mentioned, who wear the strips of red cloth (the dogs, properly so called), are obliged, if any one throws a piece of meat into the ashes, or on the ground, saying, "There, dog, eat," to fall upon it, and devour it raw, like dogs or beasts of prey. The schischikué of this band is a stick, a foot or a foot and a half long to which a number of animals' hoofs are fastened. The costume of these three dogs is shown in the portrait of Pehriska-Rupe.259

259 See Plate 56, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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The fifth band is that of the buffaloes. In their dance they wear the skin of the upper part of the head, the mane of the buffalo, with its horns, on their heads; but two select individuals, the bravest of all, who thenceforward never dare to fly from the enemy, wear a perfect imitation of the buffalo's head, with the horns, which they set on their heads,²⁶⁰ and in which there are holes left for the eyes, which are surrounded with an iron or tin ring. This band alone has a wooden war pipe, and in their union they have a woman, who, during the dance, goes round with a dish of water, to refresh the dancers, but she must give this water only

260 See Plate 51, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

295 to the bravest, who wear the whole buffalo's head. She is dressed, on these occasions, in a handsome new robe of bighorn leather, and colours her face with vermilion. The men have a piece of red cloth fastened behind, and a figure representing a buffalo's tail; they also carry their arms in their hands. The men with the buffaloes' heads always keep in the dance at the outside of the group, imitate all the motions and the voice of this animal, as it timidly and cautiously retreats, looking around in all directions, &c.²⁶¹

261 See account of buffalo dance of the Omaha (Dorsey, *op. cit.*, in note 256, pp. 347, 348), also in James's *Long's Expedition*, our volume xv, p. 127. This is not the same ceremony as that intended to attract the buffalo, or the buffalo-medicine dance, for which see *post.*— Ed.

The sixth band is that of the black-tailed deer. It consists of all the men above fifty years of age, who, however, likewise dance. Two women belong to the band, who wait on them at the dance, cook, carry water round to refresh them, and the like. All the men of this band wear a garland of the claws of the grizzly bear round their heads, and all insignia of their warlike exploits about their bodies, such as feathers on their heads, tufts of hair on their arms and legs, scalps, painting, &c.²⁶²

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262 A similar dance was practiced among the Omaha, by whom it was known as the grizzly bear dance. See Dorsey, *op. cit.*, p. 349.— Ed.

All these bands, as well as the following dances, are bought and sold, and, as has been already observed, on these occasions, the buyer must give up his wife to the seller during the festivity. But if a young man is still unmarried, he will sometimes travel to a great distance to another village, to ask a friend or companion for his wife, who accordingly goes with him, and, on the evenings of the dance, gives up his wives for him. A man often brings three or four, and even more, wives, and gives them to his father, as he is called, as soon as the dancing, eating, smoking, and the relating of their exploits, are concluded. Thus one woman ²⁹⁶ after the other comes, as will be described in the account of the buffalo medicines of the Manitaries, strikes, with her hand, the arm of the man whom she will favour, and goes to the entrance of the tent, where she waits till he follows her. The man so invited often keeps his seat, and bows down his head; the woman then goes home, brings articles of value, such as guns, robes, blankets, &c., which she lays, piece by piece, before him, till he is satisfied, stands up, and follows her.

[357] There are other dances which are bought and sold, among which are a second dance of the third band, and the dance of the half-shorn heads, which the lower class may buy before they are old enough to belong to the third band. The medicine feast, the insignia, and the dance belonging to the half-shorn heads, will be described in the sequel. Another dance is that of the old dogs. The band of the dogs can buy it of the buffaloes before they can become buffaloes, or purchase their admission to the fifth band. In the dance of the old dogs they paint themselves white, the hands red and black, and wear a girdle of the skin of the grizzly bear, and a bunch of feathers hanging down at the back of the head.

What is called the hot dance is now danced at Ruhptare, and by the Manitaries, who bought it from the Arikkaras. It is executed by the little dogs, whose name is not known. A large fire is kindled on the occasion, and a quantity of live coals is scattered on the

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ground, about which the young men dance, quite naked and barefooted. The hands, with the lower part of the arms, and the feet and ankles, are painted red. A kettle, with meat cut in small pieces, is hung over the fire; and when the meat is done they plunge their hands into the boiling water, take out the meat, and eat it, at the risk of scalding themselves. The last comers are the worst off, having to dip their hands the deepest into the boiling water. During the dance they have in their hands their weapons and the schischikué.

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There is another dance which will be described in one of the following chapters. The dance is accompanied with the schischikué and drum, and is generally performed in a circle: the dancers carry in their hands the bow-lance,²⁶³ which is adorned with feathers and bears' entrails.

²⁶³ The bow-lance is a large bow, to one end of which the iron point of a lance is fastened. It serves only for show, and is never used in serious combat. It is very handsomely adorned with eagle's feathers, frequently with red cloth also, and, when completely decorated, is worth from 100 to 250 florins. It descends from father to son, and cannot be obtained except at a high price. Sometimes a horse or more must be given for it.— Maximilian.

The Mandan women are divided precisely in the same manner as the men, into four classes, according to their age. The youngest band is called "the band of the gun." They wear in their hair some down feathers of the eagle, and have their peculiar dance.

The next class into which they obtain admission by purchase is "the river class." When they dance they wear an eagle's feather, fastened to the fore part of the head with a piece of white ribbon, which projects on the left side, and is entwined round the quill with grass.

The third class consists of the women of the hay, who, when they dance, put on their best clothes, and sing the scalp song.

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The fourth and last class is the band of the white cow. They paint one eye with some colour according to their taste, generally sky-blue. On the chin, this class, mostly consisting of aged women, tattoo themselves with black lines; round their heads they wear a broad piece of the skin of a white buffalo cow, something like a hussar's cap, with a tuft of feathers in it. A more [358] particular description of the dress of this band is given in the sequel.²⁶⁴

These unions, or bands, give occasion to many festivities,

²⁶⁴ For a representation of this dance see Plate 28, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

²⁹⁸ with singing, music, and dancing, But they have likewise other dances and diversions. One of these is the scalp dance, which may be more appropriately described among the usages of war. Their musical amusements are very simple. The mode of singing varies but little among all the American Indians; it consists of broken, deep exclamations, often intercepted by loud shouts, and is accompanied by a violent beating of time on the drum, and the rattling of the schischikué. Besides these two instruments, the Mandans have long wooden pipes, at the lower end of which there is generally an eagle's feather hanging by a string.²⁶⁵ Other pipes are thicker, about twenty inches long, and are perforated with holes; in this respect they differ from the war pipe. They are sometimes ornamented with pieces of skin, &c. These are the only musical instruments of the Indians besides the war pipes.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ See our volume xxii, p.361, for illustrations of Mandan pipes.— Ed.

²⁶⁶ For Indian music compare Bradbury's *Travels*, in our volume v, p. 116, and accompanying note.— Ed.

The Indians have also many games; the game called billiards, by the French Canadians, is played by two young men, with long poles, which are often bound with leather, and have

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various ornaments attached to them. On a long, straight, level course, or a level path in or near the village, they roll a hoop, three or four inches in diameter, covered with leather, and throw the pole at it; and the success of the game depends upon the pole passing through it. This game is also practised among the Manitaries, and is described, in Major Long's Travels to the Rocky Mountains, as being played by the Pawnees, who, however, have hooked sticks, which is not the case with the tribes here mentioned.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁷ See Dorsey's description of this game, *op. cit.*, pp. 337, 338; Catlin also speaks of it as "Tchung-kee," and remarks upon the grace and agility developed by it For a description of this game as practiced among the Pawnee, see our volume xv, pp. 214, 215.— Ed.

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The women are expert at playing with a large leathern ball, which they let fall alternately on their foot and knee, again throwing it up and catching it, and thus keeping it in motion for a length of time without letting it fall to the ground. Prizes are given, and they often play high. The ball is often very neat and curiously covered with dyed porcupine quills.²⁶⁸ Card-playing has not yet reached these Indians, though it is in use among the Osages and other tribes. The children of the Mandans and Manitaries play with a piece of stag's horn, in which a couple of feathers are inserted; this is thrown forward, the piece of horn being foremost.²⁶⁹ About the middle of March, when the weather is fine, the children and young men play with a hoop, in the interior of which strips of leather are interwoven; its diameter is about a foot. This hoop is either rolled or thrown, and they thrust at it with a pointed stick; he who approaches the centre most nearly is the winner.²⁷⁰ [359] As soon as the ice in the rivers breaks up, they run to the banks and throw this interlaced hoop into the water. In the summer time the Mandans and Manitaries often amuse themselves with races in the prairie, for which they have the best opportunity in the vicinity of their villages; twenty young men, or more, often run at once, and on these occasions there is always high betting. Some of them are very swift runners, and can hold out a long time.

²⁶⁸ See Plate 81, figure 14, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

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269 See p. 285 for illustration of a child's dart of stag-horn.— Ed.

270 The hoop and the stick are represented in Plate 81, figure 15, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

The Mandans and Manitaries are extremely superstitious, and all their important actions are guided by such motives. They have most strange ideas of surrounding nature, believe in a multitude of different beings in the heavenly bodies; offer sacrifices to them; invoke their assistance on every 300 occasion; howl, lament, fast, inflict on themselves cruel acts of penance, to propitiate these spirits; and, above all, lay very great stress upon dreams.²⁷¹ Some of their traditions have a resemblance to the revelations of the Bible; for instance, Noah's Ark and the Deluge, the history of Samson, &c. The question here arises whether these particulars have not been gradually introduced among them, from their intercourse with Christians, and this seems highly probable. If they have not yet embraced the Christian religion, it would, however, appear that they have adopted some portions which strike them as being either remarkable or interesting.²⁷² The belief in a future life, or a better state of things after death, exists among all the American nations; this is confirmed by D'Orbigny (*Voyages*, tom. iii. p. 90), who justly blames Azara for denying all religious ideas to the people of Paraguay.²⁷³ In order to obtain correct information respecting all their traditions and ideas, we persuaded Dipauch ²⁷⁴ to enliven

²⁷¹ The North American Indians are conceded to have been in that state of religious or superstitious development known as “animism;” consult Farrand, *Basis of American History*, pp. 248–250; and E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (New York, 1871). For the primitive cults of the Mandan and Minitaree, Maximilian is an approved authority; consult on this subject, J. O. Dorsey, “Study of Siouan Cults,” in *United States Bureau of Ethnology Report*, 1889–90, particularly chapter vi.— Ed.

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272 This conjecture is adopted by Dr. Edwin James, the learned author of *Tanner's Life among the Indians*, p. 357 of that work. I refer to this interesting book for the remarkable hieroglyphics of the people of the Algonquin tribe.— Maximilian.

273 Alcide Dessalines d'Orbigny (1802–57), a French naturalist and palæontologist. In 1826 he was sent to South America, where for eight years he travelled and made observations, which were embodied in his *Voyages dans l'Amérique meridionale* (1834–47); he also published *L'Homme Américain considéré sous ses rapports physiologique et moreaux* (Paris, 1839). In 1853 he was appointed to the chair of palæontology in the Jardin des Plantes, Paris.

Felix d'Azare (1746—1811), a Spanish soldier, traveller, and naturalist, spent twenty years (1781–1801) in South America. His published work was *Voyage dans l'Amérique méridionale* (1809). Tylor calls attention to d'Orbigny's strictures on Azare's statements.— Ed.

274 Dipauch is a very distinguished man, and might have been a chief long ago if he had pleased, as he possesses all the necessary qualifications. His father was shot by the Sioux during Lewis and Clarke's winter residence among these Indians. Those travellers offered to assist the Mandans against their enemies, and to take the field with them, to which, however, they would not consent.— Maximilian.

Comment by Ed. See *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, i, pp. 229–232. It is somewhat misleading to say that the Mandan would not accept the aid of the explorers. The snow was too deep, and the cold too severe to permit pursuit of the Sioux.

301 our long winter evenings by his narratives, which he readily agreed to do. He spoke with much seriousness and gravity, and I had a most excellent interpreter in Mr. Kipp. I give these narratives, which are often extremely silly, as they were written down from his communications, though I must beg my reader's patience and indulgence. It was not possible to curtail them or to choose only the more interesting parts, since all their

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traditions and legends have a certain connection, and really possess some influence on the actual mode of life of this people.

According to Dipauch, these Indians believe in several superior beings, of whom the lord of life, Ohmahank-Numakshi, is the first, the most exalted and the most powerful; who created the earth, man, and every existing object.²⁷⁵ They believe that he has a tail, and appears sometimes [360] in the form of an aged man, and, at others, in that of a young man. The first man, Numank-Machana, holds the second rank; he was created by the lord of life, but is likewise of a divine nature. The lord of life gave him great power, and they, therefore, worship and offer sacrifices to him. He is nearly identical with Nanabush among the Chippeways, or the people of the Algonquin language, who, according to the notion of those tribes, acts as mediator

²⁷⁵ Brackenbridge, p. 71, is very much mistaken in believing that the Mandans and Manitaris worship only buffalo heads, for, if the latter are medicine, it is incontrovertibly true that they believe in a number of superior beings who make a figure in their mythology. — Maximilian.

Comment by Ed. Our author is citing Brackenridge, *Views of Louisiana* (Pittsburgh, 1814).

302 between the creator and the human race. Nanabush and the creator frequently had disputes, and the Mandans have similar legends. Omahank-Chika, the evil one of the earth, is a malignant spirit, who has, likewise, much influence over men, but who is not as powerful as the lord of life and the first man. The fourth being is Rohanka-Tauihanka, who lives in the planet Venus, and it is he who protects mankind on the earth; for without his care the race would have been long since extinct. A fifth being, who, however, has no power, is something like the wandering Jew, ever in motion, and walking on the face of the earth in human form. They call him the lying prairie wolf. Besides these there is a sixth being, Ochkih-Hadda, whom it is difficult to class, and of whom they have a tradition, that whoever dreams of him is doomed soon to die. He appears to figure in their traditions as a kind of devil, is said to have once come to their villages, and taught them many things,

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but has not since appeared. They are afraid of him, offer sacrifices to him, and have in their villages a hideous figure representing him.²⁷⁶ They worship the sun, because they believe it to be the residence of the lord of life. All their medicines or sacrifices are offered chiefly to the sun, or rather to the lord of life, as inhabiting it. In the moon, say they, lives the old woman who never dies, and who wears a white band from the front to the back of the head; sacrifices and offerings are likewise made to her. They do not know who she is, but her power is great. She has six children, three sons and three daughters, who all live in certain stars. The eldest son is the day (the first day of the creation), the second is the sun, in which the lord of life has his abode. The third son is the night. The eldest daughter is the star that rises in the east, the morning star; and they call her, “the woman who wears

²⁷⁶ Catlin calls this spirit Okeehcedee, and identifies him as the devil. It is he who creates the great disturbance on the third day of the Okippe; see *post.*— Ed.

³⁰³ a plume.” The second daughter, called “the striped gourd,” is a high star which revolves around the polar star; and, lastly, the third daughter is the evening star which is near to the setting sun.

The old woman in the moon desired to find a wife for her son, and brought a girl, whom she desired to wait outside the door. When the old woman sent out to fetch her, they found in her place a toad; indignant at the exchange, the toad was boiled in a vessel, that it might be destroyed. But this could not be done, nor could it be eaten, and it was, therefore, cursed, on which it remained always visible as a spot in the moon. The narrator could not say whether the sun was large or small, but, at all events, it was glowing hot. The son married a woman whom they called “the narrow-leaved wormwood.” They had a son, of great promise, who appeared destined to act an important part. He was very skilful in making arrows, and versed in all kinds of hunting and catching of animals. He shot birds for his mother, though she had [361] forbidden him to kill the prairie larks, yet he shot all his arrows at these birds, but he was unable to kill any. Upon this, one of the birds said to him, “Why will you kill me, since I am related to you?” He dug up in the moon the pomme blanche (*Psozalea esculenta*), for which his mother reproved him, because, through the

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hole which he had dug, they could see the Manitari villages in the earth beneath. And his mother said, "See, all those men are our relations; I did not intend to descend to the earth yet, but now we must go thither." The father once ordered the son to shoot a buffalo for him, and to bring him all the sinews of the animal; but the son twisted a rope with part of those sinews, in order thereby to let himself down to the earth. Accordingly he descended to the earth in the vicinity of the Little Missouri, but his rope reached only to the top of the trees. If he had had all the sinews of the 304 buffalo, his rope would have reached the ground, but now remained suspended, and swung backwards and forwards. A large stone was thrown at him from the moon, which stone was in existence not very long since. The stone, however, could not kill him, he being medicine, that is, charmed.

The Mandans believe that the thunder is produced by the motion of the wings of a gigantic bird. When this bird flies softly, as is usually the case, he is not heard, but when he flaps his wings violently, he occasions a roaring noise. This huge bird is said to have only two toes on each foot, one behind and the other before. It lives in the mountains, where it builds an immense nest, as big as Fort Clarke. Its food consists of deer and other large animals, the horns of which are heaped up round the nest. The glance of its eyes produces lightning; it breaks through the clouds, the canopy of heaven, and makes a way for the rain. The isolated and peculiarly loud claps of thunder are produced by a gigantic tortoise, which lives in the clouds. When the lightning strikes, it is a sign of anger. They believe the stars to be deceased men. When a child is born, a star descends and appears on the earth in human form; after death it reascends and appears again as a star in the heavens.

The rainbow is a spirit accompanying the sun, and is especially visible at its setting. Many affirm that the northern lights are occasioned by a large assembly of the medicine men and distinguished warriors of several nations in the north, who boil their prisoners and slain enemies in immense cauldrons. The Chippeways are said to call this phenomenon "the dancing spirit," and the milky way, "the path of the ghosts."

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Dipauch related a history of the creation and the origin of the Mandan tribe, in the following manner. Though this narrative is equally silly and tiresome, I subjoin it, as 305 giving an idea of the intellectual condition of this people, and the nature of their conversations.

Before the existence of the earth, the lord of life created the first man, Numank-Machana, who moved on the waters, and met with a diver or duck, which was alternately diving and rising again. The man said to the bird, "You dive so well, now dive deep and bring up some earth." [362] The bird obeyed, and soon brought up some earth, which the first man scattered upon the face of the waters, using some incantations, commanding the earth to appear, and it appeared. The land was naked; not a blade of grass was growing on it; he wandered about and thought that he was alone, when he suddenly met with a toad. "I thought I was here alone," said he, "but you are here, and who are you?" It did not answer. "I do not know you, but I must give you a name. You are older than I am, for your skin is rough and scaly; I must call you my grandmother, for you are so very old." He went further and found a piece of an earthen pot. "I thought I was here alone, but men must have lived here before me." Thereupon he took the potsherd and said, "I will give you also a name, and, as you were here before me, I must, likewise, call you my grandmother." On going further he met with a mouse: "It is clear," said he to himself, "that I am not the first being; I call you also my grandmother." A little further on he and the lord of life met. "Oh, there is a man like myself," exclaimed he, and went up to him. "How do you do, my son?" said the man to Omahank-Numakshi; but he answered, "I am not your son, but you are mine." The first man answered, "I dispute this." But the lord of life answered, "You are my son, and I will prove it; if you will not believe me, we will sit down and plant our medicine sticks which we have in our hands in the ground; he who first rises is the youngest, and the son of the other." They sat down and looked at 306 each other for a long time, till, at length, the lord of life became pale, his flesh dropped from his bones, on which the first man exclaimed, "Now you are surely dead." Thus they looked at each other for ten years, at the end of which time, when the bare bones of the lord of life were in a decomposed state, the first man rose, exclaiming, "Now he is surely dead." He seized Omahank-Numakshi's stick,

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and pulled it out of the ground; but at the same moment the lord of life stood up, saying, "See here, I am your father, and you are my son," and the first man called him his father. As they were going on together, the lord of life said, "This land is not well formed, we will make it better." At that time the buffalo was already on the earth. The lord of life called to the weasel, and ordered him to dive and bring up grass, which was done. He then sent him again to fetch wood, which he brought in like manner. He divided the grass and the wood, giving one half to the first man. This took place at the mouth of Heart River. The lord of life then desired the first man to make the north bank of the Missouri, while he himself made the south-west bank, which is beautifully diversified with hills, valleys, forests, and thickets. The man, on the contrary, made the whole country flat, with a good deal of wood in the distance. They then met again, and, when the lord of life had seen the work of the first man, he shook his head and said, "You have not done this well: all is level, so that it will be impossible to surprise buffaloes or deer, and approach them unperceived. Men will not be able to live there. They will see each other in the plain at too great a distance, and will be unable to avoid each other, consequently they will destroy each other."

[363] He then took the first man to the other side of the river, and said, "See here, I have made springs and streams in sufficient abundance, and hills and valleys, and added all 307 kinds of animals and fine wood; here men will be able to live by the chase, and feed on the flesh of those animals." They then both proceeded to the mouth of the Natke-Passaha (Heart River), in order, according to the directions of the lord of life, to make medicine pipes. He himself made them of ash, lined with stone. The man, on the contrary, made his pipes of box-alder, a soft wood. They placed these pipes together, and the lord of life said, "This shall be the heart, the centre of the world; and this river shall be the Heart River." Each of them had now his pipe in his hand, and when they met any creature, the lord of life laid the pipe down before it: on doing this to a buffalo, it said, "This is not enough; there must be something to smoke in the pipe." And the lord of life said, "Then do you get something to smoke." On which the buffalo cleared a spot on the ground with his fore foot, and said, "When the rutting time of the buffaloes approaches, come here and

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you will find something to smoke.” The lord of life accordingly sent at the time appointed to fetch tobacco, but it was not yet dry and prepared; he therefore ordered the buffalo to be called, which at once spread out the leaves and dried them; and the lord of life smoked, and found the tobacco very good. The bull then taught him to pull off and smoke the flowers and the buds, for these are the best parts of the plant.

The lord of life and the first man were now resolved to create the human race. They began their operations near the bank of the Missouri; and, in order to promote the increase of the species, they placed the part necessary for that purpose in the forehead; but the frog came up out of the water, and said, “How foolish you are!” and altered the situation of the part. “What business have you to speak?” said the lord of life, and struck the frog upon the back with his stick, and since that time the frog has had a humped back. God had made man, and told him he should increase and multiply, 308 but not live longer than a hundred years; since, otherwise, there would not be room enough for all. The first man now said to his father, “When buffaloes are hunted, the skins of the animals killed must be immediately taken off to wear as robes, the stomach must be emptied, and pemmican made of the flesh.” The lord of life, however, answered, “This would not be advisable. Men would then quarrel and destroy each other. Let them rather take the animals home, and tan the hides, then they will have robes for their own use, and for sale.” And it appeared that the lord of life was always right.

The first man was once on the banks of the Missouri, when a dead buffalo cow, in the side of which the wolves had eaten a hole, floated down the stream. A woman was on the bank, who called to her daughter, “Make haste, pull off your clothes, and bring the cow on shore.” The first man heard this, and brought the cow to the spot. The girl eat some of the flesh, which the first man gave her, and became pregnant. She was ashamed, and said to her mother, that “she could not tell how she came into this state, as she had had no intercourse with any man,” and her mother was [364] ashamed with her. The daughter was afterwards delivered of a son, who grew with extraordinary rapidity, and soon became a robust young man.²⁷⁷ He was immediately the first chief of his people—a great leader

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among men. The first thing he did was to build a boat, which understood whatever he said to it. He filled it with men, ordered it to cross the river and come back, and in this manner he sent it over several times. The new chief was of the nation of the Numakshi (the Mandans). A saying was then current among these people, that on the other side of the great water, or the sea, there lived white men, who possessed wampum

277 Catlin gives a variant of this legend, in *North American Indians*, i, pp. 179, 180.— Ed.

309 shells. Bodies of fifteen or twenty men were frequently sent thither, but they were all killed. Hereupon the chief said, "I will send my boat thither, with eight men; this is the right number." And the boat went, arrived at the right place, and brought to the white men the red mouse hair (beaver hair), which they highly valued. They were well received, feasted in the dwellings, and materials for smoking were given them. Each received buffalo skins filled with wampum shells, and the boat returned quickly. The boat then went, for the second time, with eleven men, and the lord of life accompanied it. He had dressed himself in mean apparel, and took with him a large hollow cane. On their arrival they went into a village, but the first man remained sitting near the boat, and dug a deep hole, over which he seated himself. The inhabitants of the village agreed to kill the strangers by overfeeding them, and, with this view, gave them abundance of food. The first man, to whom the overplus of the provisions was brought, let them drop through his cane into the hole, and the white men were astonished at the quantity of provisions consumed. They then agreed to kill them by smoke; but the first man made the smoke pass through his cane, and their plan was again defeated. They now thought of killing them by means of women, all of whom they left at their disposal.²⁷⁸ As they could not kill the strangers either by eating, smoking, or women, they gave them as many wampum shells as they could take in their boat, and sent them away. When the children learnt that the boat understood what was said to it, they ordered it to go down the river to the white people; it obeyed, and was never afterwards seen.

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278 Numank-Machana autem, partis naturalis loco cauda vacuna usus erat: incolæ loci, valde stupefacti præstantes et assiduas primi hominis vires admirarunt. — Maximillain.

The first man now said to the Numangkake that he should 310 leave them, and never return; that he was going to the west; but that, in case of need, they might apply to him, and he would assist them. They were living in a small village, on Heart River, when their enemies surrounded them, and threatened to destroy them. In this great distress they resolved to apply to their protector; but how were they to get to the first man? One man proposed to send a bird to him; but birds could not fly so far. Another thought that the eyesight must be able to reach him; but the prairie hills were in the way. At last, a third said that thought would undoubtedly be the best means of reaching the first man. He wrapped himself in his robe and fell to the ground. Soon afterwards he said, "I think! — I have thought! —I return!" He threw off his [365] robe, and was in a profuse perspiration all over. "The first man will quickly come," he exclaimed; and he was soon there, fell furiously on the enemy, drove them away, and immediately vanished. Since that time he has not been again seen.

The lord of life once told the first man, that if the Numangkake should go over the river they would be devoured by the wolves; on which they both crossed the river, and killed all the old wolves. They ordered the young wolves not to devour men in future, but to confine themselves to buffaloes, deer, and other wild animals. They threw the old wolves into the north ocean, where they became putrid, and their hair swam on the surface of the water, from which the white men originated. The lord of life also told the Numangkake, that when they had boiled their maize they should keep up only a small fire for the rest of the day; and this they still do. When the fire would not burn, they were to take the larger brands from below, and lay them on the top. When the lord of life was a little below Heart River, in the spring, when the first wild geese flew past, he told them to wait, because he would fly with them, and assumed the form 311 of a goose. The Indians are accustomed to shout and halloo when they see the flocks of geese, by which they are frightened, and thrown

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into confusion. So it happened on this occasion to the lord of life, and he fell to the ground. He was carried into the hut of the chief, who sent for the youngest woman to pluck the goose, but it bit her, and she gave it to the oldest, who was likewise bitten; so that the lord of life escaped. He then flew to the Manitaries. A young woman, who refused to marry, was here whipped and beaten by him. She went to the lower village, and complained that God had punished her, because she would not marry. A young man, who wished to have her for his wife, took the dress of the lord of life, as she was resolved to marry none but him. She now desired to know whether her lover was really what he pretended to be, and with this view placed some pointed stakes in the ground, on which he must wound himself in the night, if he were not of a superior nature. He came and wounded himself, on which she fell on him, took away all his clothes and hid them, so that he looked for a long time both for them and his weapons. When day came, two long lines, like fishing lines, were hanging down from the sun to the earth, and near to the place where the girl was. A voice called to her, from above, to climb up by the lines; that the clothes were no longer in the place where she had hidden them; it was, therefore, the lord of life who had appeared to her under the form of the young man. The girl took hold of the lines, and the sun seemed to come down. Several of her relations, and other men, pulled the lines, but could not draw the sun down, while the lord of life lay quietly in it. A very strong man, who was able to pull up the largest trees by the roots, and cast them from him, was not able to do anything on this occasion; the line turned round his shoulders. "I can pull up the largest trees," said he, "and my strength is greater than that of 312 all other men united, and yet I cannot break this small line." To which the lord of life answered, "If you reach and kill me, the human race will be destroyed from the face of the earth."

[366] At the time that the first man had incensed the Whites by his voracity, the latter made the water rise so high that all the land was overflowed. On this, the first man advised the ancestors of the Numangkake to build a wooden tower, or fort, upon an eminence, assuring them that the water would not rise higher than that point. They followed his advice, and built the ark, on the lower side of Heart River, on a large scale, and a part

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of the nation was preserved in this building, while the remainder perished in the waves. In remembrance of the kind care of the first man, they placed in each of their villages a miniature model of this ark, one of which still exists in the village of Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush. The waters afterwards subsided, and they still celebrate the festival of Okippe in honour of this ark, of which we shall have to speak in the sequel.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁹ Deluge-myths are very widespread among the American aborigines. D. G. Brinton, *Myths of the New World* (Philadelphia, 3d ed., 1896), pp. 234–249, finds over thirty-four tribes among whom distinct traces of deluge myths were prevalent.— Ed.

Before the first great deluge, the Numangkake lived below ground, but a band of them (the same of which we have been speaking) took up their abode above ground at an earlier period. They believe that there are four stories below ground and as many above, and they now inhabit the fourth from below. The band which first came above ground is called by them Histoppa (those with the tattooed countenance), and these, for the most part, perished in the great deluge. Those who lived under ground one day perceived a light over their heads, which made them desire to ascertain what was above. They accordingly sent up a mouse, which looked about, returned, and reported that the land above was similar to that which they inhabited. They then sent up a certain animal, called by them, Nahsi, about the size of a polecat, and distinguishable by black stripes on its face and legs. Perhaps this was the racoon, which is not now to be found in this part of the country. This animal, when he came back, said that it was much more pleasant above than below. They, therefore, ordered the badger to dig a larger opening, as the present issue was too small. After the badger had performed his task, the black-tailed deer was ordered to go up and enlarge the opening by means of his horns. He ran about the whole day, ate service berries, and returned in the evening. His tail was at that time white, but as this deer returned at sunset, and the sun went down at the very moment when his tail only was above ground, that was ever afterwards black.

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The Numangkake now resolved to go up. The great chief, with his medicine and his schischikué in his hand, went first. They climbed up, one after another, by the aid of a branch of a vine; and when exactly half their number had ascended, and a corpulent woman was half-way up the vine, it broke, and the remainder of the nation fell to the ground.²⁸⁰ This happened in the neighbourhood of the sea-shore. Those who had reached the surface went on till they came to the Missouri, which they reached at White Earth River. They then proceeded up the Missouri to Moreau's River.²⁸¹ At that time they knew nothing of enemies. Once, when a Mandan woman was scraping a hide, a Chayenne Indian came and killed her. The Mandans followed the traces of this new enemy till they came to a certain river, where they

²⁸⁰ See variants of this tradition in *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, v, pp. 346, 347; Catlin, *North American Indians*, i, pp. 178, r,79.— Ed.

²⁸¹ This is not White Earth River of North Dakota, but the one in South Dakota now usually known as White River; see our volume xxii, p. 302, note 259. For Moreau River consult Bradbury's *Travels*, in our volume v, p. 127, note, 82.— Ed.

³¹⁴ all turned [367 back with the exception of two, the husband and the brother of the woman who was killed. These two men went on till they discovered the enemy, killed one of them, and took his scalp with them. Before they got back to their village they found some white clay which they had never seen before, and took a portion of it with them. When they came to their great chief, the first who had climbed up the vine, and whose skull and schischikué they still preserve, as a relic, in the medicine bag of the nation, they gave him the white clay, with which he marked some lines on his schischikué. The name of this chief was, at first, Mihti-Pihka (the smoke of the village), but when he ascended to the surface of the earth he called himself the Mihti-Shi (the robe with the beautiful hair). When he had received the clay and the scalp, he commanded all his people to shoot buffaloes, but only bulls, and to make shields of the thickest part of the hide, which they did. When this was done, they asked the chief what were his next commands? To which

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he replied, "Paint a drooping sunflower on this shield" (as a sort of medicine, or amulet), on which the sister of the chief said, "You are fools! paint a bean on it; for what is smoother than a bean to ward off the arrows?"

The chief now introduced the establishment of the bands or unions, and founded first that of "the foolish dogs." He made four caps of crow's feathers, and commissioned the Mandans to make a number of similar ones. He then gave them the war pipe and song, and exhorted them to be always valiant and cheerful, and never to retreat before the point of the arrow. He also gave them the strips of red cloth which hang down behind, and added that, if they would follow his directions, they would always be esteemed as brave and worthy men. The chief then made two of the bent sticks covered with otter skins, and gave them the kana-kara-kachka, and then two others adorned with raven's feathers, 315 which he also presented to them. The first represent the sunflower, and the latter the maize. "These badges," said he, "you are to carry before you when you go against the enemy; plant them in the ground, and fight to the last man, that is to say, never abandon them." He next founded the band of "the little foolish dogs," and assembled many young men, whom he ordered to paint their faces of a black colour, and gave them a song of their own, with the war whoop at the end, and said he would call them "the blackbirds." He afterwards went to war with his people against the Chayennes. They reached the enemy and laid all their robes in a heap together. The chief wore a cap of lynx skin, and had his medicine pipe on his arm. He did not join in the action, but sat apart on the ground during the whole time that it lasted. They fought almost the whole day, drove the enemy into their village, and were then repulsed, which happened three or four times, and one of the Numangkake was killed. When the chief was informed of this, he ordered them to go to the river and bring him a young poplar with large leaves, which he planted in the ground near to the enemy, and challenged the Chayennes to attack him; but they answered, they would wait for his attack. As [368] he would [not] commence the combat, the enemy shot at him, but their arrows only grazed his arm and robe. He then held up the poplar, which suddenly shot up to a colossal size, was thrown, by a violent storm which arose, among

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the enemies, crushed many of them, and obliged the Chayennes to retreat across the Missouri.

The Numangkake now went up the Missouri to beyond the Heart River, where a Mandan village had long stood. An old man of their tribe was fishing at this place, when four men appeared on the opposite bank. On his inquiring who they were, they told him their names, and put the same question to him, which he answered; and, having an ear 316 of maize with him, he fastened it to an arrow, and shot it over to the strangers. Finding the maize very agreeable to the taste, they called to him and said that, within four nights, a great many men would come, for whom he would do well to prepare plenty of food. They then returned to their camp, and gave their countrymen an account of the maize. They had likewise tasted the pomme blanche, and several other vegetables, but considered the maize as the best of all. The camp was accordingly broken up, and they proceeded slowly onwards. The Numangkake expected the strangers for four nights; they cooked and made everything ready for their reception, but, as their visitors did not make their appearance at the end of the fourth night, they ate the provisions themselves. A year passed by, and the strangers did not come; the second and the third year likewise; at length, in the spring of the fourth year, all the surrounding hills were covered with red men. Thus, instead of four days, four years had elapsed. The new comers crossed the river, and built a village near the Numangkake, and the name of Manitaries was given, *i. e.*, those who came over the waters.²⁸²

²⁸² The Minitaree had a creation-myth similar to that of the Mandan, by which they were represented as climbing from a lake when a tree broke, the remainder of the tribe being left below.— Ed.

The principal chief of each nation met, and had a conference together. The Manitari chief asked the other whence they procured so much red maize? To which he replied, “When we fought with our enemies, and they killed our wives and children in the maize fields, the maize grew up, and was for the most part red.” To which the Manitari chief replied,

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“that he would assist them with his people against their enemies.” Already on the following day many Chayennes came and killed a number of women in the plantations; the united nations attacked them, killed 317 many during the whole day, and drove them back to a small river which falls into the Missouri. The two allied nations now remained united, but, being so numerous that the country did not afford them sufficient subsistence, the Mandans said to the Manitaris, “Remove higher up the Missouri: this whole country belongs to us. There are the rivers Little Missouri, Yellow Stone, and Knife River, on the banks of which you can settle, but do not go beyond the latter river, for it is only in this case that we shall remain good friends. If you go too far we shall have disputes, make peace and again disagree; but if you remain on this side there will be constant friendship between us.” The Manitaris removed as proposed, but built [369] one of their villages on the other side of Knife River, which frequently occasioned dissension between them, and it is only within these fourteen years that permanent peace and concord have existed between the two people.

At the time when our narrator was a young man, the Arikkaras were near and dangerous enemies to the Mandans. They often fought with them as well as with the Sioux. When one of the two allied nations fought alone, it was almost always defeated, but when they were combined they generally triumphed. The preceding long narrative throws, as I have said, much light on the actual condition of this people, and of their prevalent superstitious customs.

At the time of their first alliance with the Manitaris, the Mandans are said to have inhabited eight or nine villages on the two banks of the Missouri, on the Heart River, and higher upwards. Subsequently a great number of the Mandans were carried off by the small-pox, and their enemies, the Sioux, entirely destroyed their largest village, and massacred the inhabitants. The remaining population then collected in the two villages that still exist— Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush 318 and Ruhptare.²⁸³ Previously to the devastations of the small-pox, the Sioux were not very dangerous enemies to the Mandans, because they lived at too great a distance from them, but the Chayennes and the Arikkaras were their

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natural adversaries. I shall now proceed to treat of the religious and superstitious practices which still prevail among them.

283 See Plate 49, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv, for a view of MihTutta-Hang-Kush, of which the ground plan is found on p. 363, *ante*.— Ed.

These Indians are full of prejudice and superstition, and connect all the natural phenomena with the before-mentioned silly creations of their own imaginations. They undertake nothing without first invoking their guardian spirit, or medicine, who mostly appears to them in a dream. When they wish to choose their medicine or guardian spirit, they fast for three or four days, and even longer, retire to a solitary spot, do penance, and even sacrifice joints of their fingers; howl and cry to the lord of life, or to the first man, beseeching him to point out their guardian spirit. They continue in this excited state till they dream, and the first animal or other object which appears to them is chosen for their guardian spirit or medicine. Every man has his guardian spirit. 284 There is, in the prairie, a large hill where they remain motionless many days, lamenting and fasting; not far from this hill is a cave, into which they creep at night. The choice and adoration of their medicine are said to have been taught them by the strange man or spirit who appeared in their villages many years ago, and has not since been seen, and of whom mention has already been made by the name of OchkihHadda. He is said also to have taught them the art of tattooing, and to have instituted their medicine feasts. In all natural phenomena, which are not of daily occurrence, they

284 This belief in the influence of dreams and in a guardian spirit was widespread among the aborigines of North America; consult J. Long's *Voyages*, in our volume ii, pp. 123–126; also J. O. Dorsey, "Siouan Cults," p. 475.— Ed.

319 see wonders, and indications of favourable or unfavourable events. If the falling stars are numerous, or in a certain direction, it is to them an indication of war, or of a great mortality in the human race. They were not willing to have their portraits painted, because they alleged that they should soon die if their portraits came into other hands; [370] at

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least they endeavoured to obtain the portrait of the painter as an antidote. One of their chiefs never smoked out of a stone pipe, but always used a wooden one. Mato-Topé never partook of other people's tobacco, but always smoked by himself, with the doors shut. They do not willingly show their medicines or amulets, which are usually kept wrapped up in a bundle or bag, and never opened except on important occasions. They have particular medicine pipes, or, as the English call them, medicine stems, which are uncovered and used for smoking only on solemn occasions. Many make such pipes according to their own taste; such, for instance, was the pipe of Dipauch.²⁸⁵ The bowl was nearly in the form of a Turkish pipe, and was made of brownish-red clay; the tube, which was rather short and thick, represented the lord of life in human form, but which it required some stretch of the imagination to discover. The nation preserves a celebrated pipe of this kind as a sacred relic, which no stranger is permitted to see. It has been in their possession since remote ages, and they offered to show it to me for the value of 100 dollars.²⁸⁶ The Indians cannot obtain such pipes but at a considerable expense: many of the necessary ornaments are not to be procured among them, such as the upper bill and the red crown of a species of woodpecker (*Picus pileatus* , Linn.), a bird which is not found so high up the Missouri. For the head of one of these woodpeckers, which was brought

²⁸⁵ See Plate 54, figure 3, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— 1

²⁸⁶ For sacred pipes among the Omaha, see Dorsey, "Omaha Sociology," pp. 221–224.— Ed.

320 from St. Louis, they gave a large handsome buffalo robe, worth six or eight dollars. If a man possesses such a pipe, he sometimes conceives the idea of adopting a medicine son. The young man whom he is to choose appears to him in a dream; it is, however, requisite that he should be of a good family, or have performed some exploit. He acquaints him with his intention, and, after having provided two similar medicine pipes, he asks his newly-adopted son, whether he is ready to undergo the ceremony of the pipes? The latter frequently answers in the affirmative, and the time for the ceremony is fixed: but, if he has not yet made up his mind, it is deferred. The adoptive father then chooses two young men,

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who practise the medicine dance together, with the two pipes in their hands. The father often dances, in the morning, on the roof of his hut, and instructs these two young men. When the time arrives, and the adopted son is ready for the ceremony, the father, with all his relations, and the two young dancers, repairs to the hut of his newly-chosen son, and brings him a present of maize, cloth, blankets, kettles, and other valuable articles. The father takes his son by the hand and makes him sit down, after which the company dance round him, with the two pipes; they sing, accompanied by the drum and schischikué, the two young dancers keeping time to the music with their pipes. When the ceremony is over, and the presents laid in one or two heaps, the relations of the medicine son bring horses, cloth, blankets, and other things of value, which the two parties reciprocally divide between them. The father then again takes his son by the hand, makes him rise from his seat, and dresses him in new clothes from head to foot, and likewise paints his face according to his fancy. The dress and pipe are henceforth his property, and he is considered as a real son, who must support and defend his father. (371) This custom exists among most of the nations on the Missouri, and even among the Esquimaux 321 maux there is a somewhat similar usage.²⁸⁷ If the adopted son and father have not happened to meet for a long time, they make presents to each other; the father gives the son a new dress, and the latter presents him with a good horse. Among all the Indian nations of North America, there is a particular class of men, who are specially engaged in all the above-mentioned ceremonies and medicines. They are, also, the physicians, and are called, among the Mandans, Numak-Choppenih, which signifies medicine man.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ The ceremony of adoption was frequent among North American Indians. It was of vast service in preserving the lives of white captives, and in promoting intercourse between whites and Indians. For typical instances consult Lewis H. Morgan, *League of the Iroquois* (Rochester, 1851), pp. 341–346; J. Long's *Voyages*, in our volume ii, pp. 82–86; and *Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, pp. 388–390.— Ed.

²⁸⁸ Consult on this subject, Brinton, *Myths of the New World*, pp. 304–334.— Ed.

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The skin of a white buffalo cow is an important article, and an eminent medicine in the opinion of the Mandans and Manitaris. He who has never possessed one of them is not respected. Suppose two men to be disputing about their exploits, the one an old veteran warrior, who has slain many enemies, the other, a young lad without experience; the latter reproaches the other with never having possessed a white buffalo cow hide, on which the old man droops his head, and covers his face for shame. He who possesses such a hide generally offers it to the lord of life, to whom he dedicates it, or, which is equivalent, to the sun, or to the first man. He collects, perhaps, in the course of a whole twelvemonth, various articles of value, and then hangs them up all together on a high pole in the open prairie, generally in the neighbourhood of the burying-place, or in the village before his hut. Distinguished men and chiefs of eminence are for the most part poor, because, in order to gain reputation and influence, they give away everything of value which they possess. A large number of relatives is one of the chief means of acquiring riches, for a young man who wishes to distinguish himself, and to be liberal, does honour to the whole family, who assist him to the utmost of their power. When one of his relations has anything of value, the young man goes to the owner to demand it, and not unfrequently takes it away without ceremony. Sometimes he hangs his head in silence, and then something of value is given him, a handsome dress, a horse, &c. If he wishes to gain reputation and a claim to distinction, it is necessary that he should make presents. All the people in the village notice very accurately what presents are made, and the donor has a right to display all such presents painted on his robes, and in this manner to hand down his reputation to posterity, as has been already related. This and military glory are, in the eyes of these men, the greatest virtues. They dare not draw a stroke too much on their robes for the horses, guns, &c., which they have given away, for the young men keep a most strict account against each other, and universal ridicule would be the immediate consequence of violating this rule. Among the distinctions of any man, the white buffalo hide is the greatest. He who has not been so fortunate as to kill a white buffalo himself, which is generally the case, as these animals are very rare, purchases a hide, often at a great distance from home, and other nations bring them hither, being well aware of the great value attached to them by

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the Mandans.²⁸⁹ The hide must be that of a young cow, not above two years old, and be taken off complete and tanned, with the horns, [372] nose, hoofs, and tail. The value of ten to fifteen horses is given for it. A certain Mandan gave ten horses, a gun, some kettles, and other articles, for such a hide. The white hide of a bull or of an old cow is by no means so valuable. The white hide of a young cow suffices for all the daughters of a family.

²⁸⁹ See Catlin's description of the purchase of a white buffalo robe from the Blackfeet—a matter of public concern to the entire tribe—and its dedication to the Great Spirit, in *North American Indians*, i, pp. 133, 134.— Ed.

³²³ They do not wear it as a robe, like the Manitaries, or, at the utmost, the wife, or one of the daughters of the family, wears it once at some great festival, but never a second time. The Mandans have particular ceremonies at the dedication of the hide. As soon as they have obtained it they engage an eminent medicine man, who must throw it over him; he then walks round the village in the apparent direction of the sun's course, and sings a medicine song. When the owner, after collecting articles of value for three or four years, desires to offer his treasure to the lord of life, or to the first man, he rolls it up, after adding some wormwood or a head of maize, and the skin then remains suspended on a high pole till it rots away. At the time of my visit there was such an offering at Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, near the stages for the dead without the village. Sometimes, when the ceremony of dedication is finished, the hide is cut into small strips, and the members of the family wear parts of it tied over the head, or across the forehead, when they are in full dress. If a Mandan kills a young white buffalo cow, it is accounted to him as more than an exploit, or having killed an enemy. He does not cut up the animal himself, but employs another man, to whom he gives a horse for his trouble. He alone who has killed such an animal is allowed to wear a narrow strip of the skin in his ears. The whole robe is not ornamented, being esteemed superior to any other dress, however fine. The traders have, sometimes, sold such hides to the Indians, who gave them as many as sixty other robes in exchange. Buffalo skins with white spots are likewise highly valued by the Mandans; but there is a race of these animals with very soft silky hair, which has a beautiful gold lustre when in

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the sunshine: these are, likewise, highly prized, and sold for ten or fifteen dollars, and, sometimes, for the value of a horse. Besides the white buffalo skins which are offered in sacrifice and hung on poles, there are, in the vicinity of 324 the villages of the Mandans and Manitaris, other strange figures on high poles.²⁹⁰ These figures are composed of skin, grass, and twigs, which, it seems, represent the sun and moon, perhaps, also, the lord of life, and the first man. The Indians resort to them when they wish to petition for anything, and sometimes howl and lament for days and weeks together.

²⁹⁰ These are represented in Plate 58, in the accompanying atlas, xxv.— Ed.

The Mandans have several medicine festivals, of which the Okippe, or the penitential ceremony of the ark, is by far the most remarkable. It is celebrated in the spring or summer, and I regret to say that I cannot describe it as an eyewitness. I am, however, enabled to give a circumstantial description of it, word for word, as it was communicated to me by men initiated in the mysteries of the nation.²⁹¹

²⁹¹ The author refers to a letter on this subject, written by Mr. Catlin, and published in a New York paper; but this is by no means so complete as that given in his valuable work published last year.— H. Evans Lloyd.

Comment by Ed. Catlin's letter, dated at the Mandan village, August 12, 1832, was published in the *New York Spectator*, and a German translation incorporated in the first edition of Maximilian's work published at Coblenz in 1841 (ii, pp. 658–667). Upon the issue of Catlin's *North American Indians*, (1841), the fuller account of Okippe therein given caused Maximilian's English translator to omit from his work Catlin's first description. Catlin's veracity in this description was impugned both by Schoolcraft and David D. Mitchell, and their criticism was embodied in an authorized government publication. Catlin thereupon (1866) appealed both to Kipp and Maximilian, who both unhesitatingly endorsed his account as correct. See evidence in Smithsonian Institution *Report*, 1885, part ii, pp.

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368–383. Catlin then published *O-kee-pa* (London, 1867), with colored illustrations of the ceremony.

[373] Numank-Machana, the first man, ordered the Numangkake to celebrate this medicine feast every year.²⁹² When the village has fixed the time for this festivity, they

²⁹² The ceremony of Okippe was for many years celebrated annually; but as the numbers of the tribe decreased it occurred less frequently, and has now with the progress of missionary work become extinct. See, however, description of the celebration in Henry A. Boller, *Among the Indians, Eight Years in the Far West* (Philadelphia, 1868), pp. 100–111. — Ed.

³²⁵ choose a man of distinction, in whom confidence can be placed, who must put himself at the head, and direct the solemnities. In the year 1834 Mato-Tope was chosen. He is called Kani-Sachka. This man then causes the medicine lodge to be prepared and cleaned before the appointed time, and wood and other necessaries to be provided.

First Day Of The Okippe. —At sunset the Kani-Sachka goes into the lodge, and begins the fast, which continues four days. With him are six men, who are to strike what is called the tortoise, a vessel or sack made of parchment, and filled with water.²⁹³ Three of the men must strike in the direction of the river downwards, and three in the direction upwards. They strike the tortoise during the whole night. Before sunrise a man representing the Numank-Machana, or the first man, arrives. He dresses himself in the medicine lodge in the following manner: round his body he fastens a wolf's skin, on his head, raven's feathers, in his arms he carries the medicine pipe, and in his robe a portion of pemmican. His face is painted red, and on the small of the back he binds a piece of wood, to which the tail of a buffalo cow is fastened. Dressed in this manner, he goes early in the morning of the first day of the festival, and sings on the open space in the centre. All kinds of valuable articles, such as guns, robes, blankets, &c., are thrown towards him, of which he afterwards takes possession,²⁹⁴ while on his part he distributes

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293 According to Catlin these drums were supposed to be filled with water enclosed in them at the time of the deluge, and thus were objects of much veneration. For one of them he offered goods to the amount of one hundred dollars, but was refused, they being deemed “medicine” or mystery objects. Captain Maynardier, who witnessed this ceremony in 1860, and thought he was the first to describe it (see *Senate Ex. Docs.*, 40 Cong., 1 sess., No. 77, pp. 149–151), also testifies that the drums were supposed to be filled with water; but he believed they were stuffed with hair.— Ed.

294 According to Catlin, “the first man” collects an edged tool from each lodge, since the “big canoe” was made therewith, and in another deluge these would be needed.— Ed.

326 pemmican among the people. He then returns to the medicine lodge, but is not at that time permitted to speak a word. The most eminent men of the nation now come to the lodge, address the first man as their uncle, and say, “Well, uncle, how did you fare in the villages? How did you find them? Were you well received?” To which he replies, “Very well, nephew. I have not once lowered my pipe to the ground.” By which he means to say that he has received ample presents, and offerings of all kinds have been hung upon his pipe. He then says, “I have seen a great many buffaloes feeding in the prairie and drinking at the river; they are very abundant everywhere.” These were the horses; but he means to intimate that, by the medicine of this day, the buffaloes will be attracted in great numbers. All those who intend to submit their bodies to a penance or certain tortures, in order to render themselves acceptable to the lord of life and the first man, come to the medicine lodge early in the morning. Their number is, of course, uncertain; sometimes many present themselves, at other times only a few. They are smeared all over with white clay, with no other covering besides their robes, with the hairy side outwards, and drawn over their heads, so that the face is covered, and they are quite wrapped up in them. In the medicine lodge they lay aside their robes. On the first day of the feast they go four times, wrapped up as before described, and dance around the ark, which stands in the centre of the open space. The Kani-Sachka remains during all this time moaning and leaning against the ark.

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All [374] this is done in the forenoon. In the afternoon all is silent, and neither dance nor procession takes place.

Second Day Of The Okippe. —On the second day, early in the morning, eight men appear, who represent buffalo bulls. They are naked, wearing only an apron of blue and white striped woollen cloth. Their body is painted black in front, with two red perpendicular stripes like the facings of 327 a military uniform, and with several white transverse stripes looking like lace or bands. The fore arm and ankles are alternately striped white and red. In their hands they carry a fan of green willow twigs, and on their back a buffalo robe, the head of which, with the long hair on the forehead, hangs over the face. To the middle of the robe a single buffalo horn is fastened, while at the head and loins green willow branches are appended. The eight buffalo bulls put on this fantastic dress in the lodge, and, when this is done, march out two abreast in an inclined posture, extending their robes with outspread hands, and holding the willow fans upright. In this manner they dance up to the ark, where they divide, four going to the left and four to the right round the space. They again join opposite the medicine lodge, and then return as before to the ark, where they continue to dance. When they are opposite to each other they stand upright and imitate the roaring of the buffalo. As soon as this dance begins, the six tortoise strikers bring their instrument from the centre of the lodge, and place it near the ark in an easterly direction, striking it, and singing a certain song which is said to be a prayer. The Kani-Sachka stands, with his head bowed, leaning on the ark, directly opposite the tortoise, and moans without ceasing. He is quite naked except an apron of buffalo skin. His whole body is bedaubed with yellow, and on his forehead he has a wreath of bleached buffalo hair or wool hanging over the eyes. The eight buffalo bulls form a ring and dance round him, covering him with their robes; they dance in like manner to the tortoise, and next go to the door of the medicine lodge, where they make a kind of covered way with their robes, beneath which the tortoise is conveyed into the lodge. The whole ceremony is repeated eight times on this day, four times in the morning and four times in the afternoon.²⁹⁵

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295 That is, they dance twice to each of the four quarters of the globe, four being a sacred number. See plates of the costume in Catlin, *O-kee-pa*, nos. v, vi.— Ed.

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Third Day Of The Okippe. —The same masks as yesterday dance on this day twelve times, and are prohibited from either eating or drinking. A number of other masks join them. 1. Two men, dressed like women, who dance in this costume, keeping by the side of the eight buffalo bulls. They wear clothes of bighorn leather, women's leggins (mitasses), the robes having the hair outwards. Their cheeks are painted red, their chins tattooed, and their heads adorned with glass beads, as is the custom among the women. 2. Two other men represent a couple of swans; they are naked, carry a swan's tail in their hand, are painted all over white, only the nose, mouth (representing the bill), and the lower part of the legs and feet, black. 3. A couple of rattlesnakes; the back is painted with black transverse stripes, in imitation of those [375] animals, the front of the body yellowish; a black line is drawn from each eye down the cheeks, and in each hand they carry a bunch of wormwood.²⁹⁶ 4. One man represents the evil spirit; he is conducted by two men of the village to the river, where he is dressed and painted; his entire body is painted black, and, as soon as this is done, he is not permitted to speak a word. They put on his head a cap, with a black cock's-comb; he likewise wears a mask, with white wooden rings left for the opening round the eyes. They then make for him large teeth of cotton yarn, paint the sun upon his stomach, the crescent upon his back, and on each joint of the arms and legs, a white circle; they then put on a buffalo's tail, and place a small stick in his hand, with a ball, made of skin, at the end, to which a scalp, painted red on the under side, is fastened. The ball represents the head of an enemy.²⁹⁷ When this monster is completed, they

²⁹⁶ See *O-kee-pa*, plate viii, for the rattlesnake man.— Ed.

²⁹⁷ An exact description of the representation by Catlin, *op. cit.*, plate ix. According to the painter, this evil spirit does not appear until the fourth day of the ceremony.— Ed

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329 let him loose, and he runs, like one possessed, about the prairie, comes into the village, gets upon the huts, one after the other, and prys into every comer, while the inhabitants throw out to him all kinds of valuable articles as presents. As soon as he perceives this he turns towards the sun, and intimates to it, by signs, how well he is treated, and that it is foolish of it (the sun) to keep at so great a distance. He goes about and looks on the people's heads for vermin, and, if he finds any, he pretends to be very happy, and runs about with great rapidity. The Indians are very much afraid of the devil, for which reason this part cannot be assigned to anybody; but he who wishes to perform it must offer himself. My informant added that this medicine feast was once celebrated on the banks of Heart River, where the Mandans then resided, and the man who had undertaken this part was conducted into the river. When his clothes were taken off, in order to paint and dress him, he appeared very uneasy, and required to be let loose; and when this was done he seemed as one possessed by the evil spirit, and ran, with the velocity of an arrow, on the hills and about the plain. His two attendants were alarmed, and pursued him to the village, but the new demon darted past them, leaped over the high fence of the village, jumped down into the huts, and again made his egress, and then ran to the river; this now convinced them that he was possessed. It cost the inhabitants much trouble to catch and wash him, but he trembled like an aspen leaf, wrapped himself in his robe, and continued in this condition for the remainder of his life without ever speaking a word.²⁹⁸

298 When these Indians fast for three or four days together, they dream very frequently of the devil, and, in this case, they believe that they have not long to live. The narrator had once fasted for a long time at this festival, and suffered himself to be hung up by the back. During the night he dreamed of the devil, who appeared far more frightful and taller than he could ever be represented. His plume of feathers reached to the clouds, and he ran about as quick as lightning. On several other occasions he dreamed of this devil, but now he is resolved not to fast any more, that he might not die prematurely. He added, that he had often looked without apprehension, and with pleasure, on the mask representing the

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devil; but he now regarded the matter in a different light, for, the more he thought of him, the taller and the more frightful did he appear to him, and, under these circumstances, the spirit had been very near him, and, if he had but once touched him, he certainly should have been dead already.— Maximilian.

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While the devil is walking about, the other masks continue dancing, and [376] act in conformity with their parts, endeavouring to imitate the natural attitudes of the animals they represent. 5. Two men, representing white-headed eagles, are painted of a dark brown colour; the head, neck, fore arm and hands, and the lower part of the legs, are white; they carry a stick in their hands, and their business is to pursue the antelopes. 6. Are two beavers; they wear the robe with the hairy side outwards, have a piece of parchment, resembling a beaver's tail, fastened to their girdle, and are painted brown.²⁹⁹ 7. Are two birds of prey; their shoulders are blue, the breast yellowish and spotted; they have feathers on their heads, and the feet of birds of prey in their hands. 8. Are two or four bears (mato), wrapped in bears' skins, with the head and claws, which cover their head and their whole body; they generally walk in a stooping attitude about the dancers, and growl like those animals. 9. Two men represent the dried meat, which is cut in small strips. They wear a cap of white hare skin; their body is painted with zig-zag stripes; round the waist they have a girdle of green boughs, and they dance with the others. 10. Forty or fifty Indians of different ages perform the part of antelopes; they are painted red on the back, the rest of the body and limbs are white, the nose and mouth black; they carry small sticks, and run about very swiftly. 11. Two men personate the night; they are naked, painted quite black, with white stars; on their backs they have the setting moon, and on

²⁹⁹ See *O-kee-pa*, plate viii, for a representation of the masker imitating the beaver.— Ed.

³³¹ their breast the rising sun; they are not allowed to sit, during the whole day, till the sun has set: they then sit down and must not rise till the next morning.³⁰⁰ 12. Are one or two wolves; they are painted white, wear a wolf's skin, and pursue the antelopes, which fly before them: if they catch one, the bears come and take it from them and devour it. All

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these animals imitate the originals to the best of their power. 13. Two prairie wolves; the tops of their heads are painted white, their faces yellowish-brown; they wear dry herbs in their hair, and carry in their hands a stick, painted with reddish-brown stripes, and run in the prairie before the other animals when they leave the village. Almost all these animals are said to have different songs, with words, which the uninitiated do not understand; they sometimes practise these songs for a whole summer, and are frequently obliged to pay a high price for instruction. Originally there were only ten masks at this festival. The white-headed eagles, the beavers, and the prairie wolves, are a modern addition, and no part of the true ancient observances of it. When all these animals come together they fight with each other, and perform all sorts of antics. Every animal acts according to its natural character; the beavers strike with their tails, making a loud clapping noise; the buffaloes roll and wallow in the sand; the bears strike with their paws, &c.

300 Represented in *O-kee-pa*, plate vii; also another, intended to symbolize the dawn, or the rays of the morning.— Ed.

During all these masquerade dances, the penitents have remained three entire days in the medicine lodge, where they have fasted and thirsted, sitting perfectly still and quiet. On the afternoon of that day, the persons of the ten masks also meet in the medicine lodge, and all together then leave this place. The penitents lie down on their bellies, in a circle round the ark, at some distance from it; the masks dance among them and over them, to the sound of [377] the schischikué. 332 Some already begin to suffer the tortures: they give a gun, a blanket, or some other article of value, to an eminent person, to inflict the tortures on them. During this time the Kani-Sachka has been moaning, and leaning on the ark. The tortures of the penitents now begin. In many of them strips of skin and flesh are cut from the breast, or the arms, and on the back, but in such a manner that they remain fast at both ends. A strap is then passed under them, and the sufferers are thrown over the declivity of the bank, where they remain suspended in the air; others have a strap drawn through the wound, to which the head of a buffalo is fastened, and they are obliged to drag this heavy weight about; others have themselves suspended by the muscles of the back;

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others have joints of their fingers cut off; others, again, are lifted up by the flesh, which is cut across the stomach, or have some heavy body suspended to the muscles, which have been cut and loosened, and other similar tortures. Those who have been tortured on this day return directly to their huts; but those who can bear to fast longer do not submit themselves to the torture till the fourth day.

Fourth Day Of The Okippe. — All those who have endured fasting for four days are now assembled in the medicine lodge. Such as feel themselves faint beg that the dancing may begin early. Accordingly, the masquerade, and the dances performed yesterday, begin at daybreak. They dance on this day sixteen times — eight times in the morning, and eight times in the afternoon. The candidates for the torture are out about two o'clock in the afternoon; and when they have suffered to the utmost of their power, a large circle is formed; two men, who have no part in the festival, take one of the penitents between them, hold him by the hand, and the whole circle moves round with the greatest rapidity. The Kani-Sachka is likewise treated in this manner. The famished and tortured penitents, 333 for the most part, soon fall down, and many faint away, but no regard is paid to this; they are dragged and pulled about as long as they can possibly bear it; they are then let loose, and remain stretched on the ground as if dead. The eight buffalo bulls now come forward to execute their last dance. Meantime, Numank-Machana (the first man) stands on one side of the place, and invites the inhabitants to assemble. The men come on foot and on horseback, with their bows and arrows: the arrows are adorned with green leaves at the wooden points; and, when the eight buffaloes have approached, dancing, the first man, and been repulsed by him, they are shot at from all sides, fall, roll on the ground, and then lie still as if dead. The first man then invites the inhabitants to take the flesh of the buffaloes. The latter, whose robes have already fallen off, rise, and retire into the medicine lodge. Then the dancers divide into two parties, extend their arms and legs, strike themselves on the stomach, exclaiming that they feel themselves strong; some, that they will kill enemies; others, that they will slay many buffaloes, &c. They then retire, take food, and rest themselves, and the festival is concluded.

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301 Catlin's account of the tortures is more detailed than that of Maximilian, but presents similar features. Upon inquiry, the former learned that but one young man was known to have died from the exhaustion consequent thereupon. Consult also the *Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, pp. 364, 365.— Ed.

The wounds that have been inflicted on this occasion are now healed, but they remain visible [378] during the whole life, like thick swollen weals.³⁰¹ This is to be observed in a much higher degree among the Manitaries than among the Mandans; the former seem to submit to much more severe tortures. The buffalo skulls, which these Indians have dragged about with much pain, are preserved in their huts, where they are everywhere to be seen, to be handed down from the father to the children. Many such heads are looked upon by them as medicine; they are kept in the huts, and ³³⁴ sometimes the Indians stroke them over the nose, and set food before them. In general, the buffalo is a medicine animal, and more or less sacred.

Another very remarkable medicine festival is that for attracting the herds of buffaloes, which is usually celebrated in the autumn, or winter. I shall describe this festival, as an eye-witness among the Manitaries, where it is observed precisely in the same manner as among the Mandans. At this festival they leave their wives to the older men, and individual Indians do the same on certain occasions, when they desire to ask good wishes for the attainment of some object they have in view. A man, in such a case, goes, with his pipe, and accompanied by his wife, who wears no clothes except her buffalo robe, to another hut. The wife carries a dish of boiled maize, which she sets down before a third person, and the man does the same with his pipe. The woman then passes the palm of her hand down the whole arm of the person favoured in this manner, takes him by the hand, and he must follow her to a retired spot, generally to the forest surrounding the huts in the winter time; after which she returns and repeats the same process, often with eight or ten men. As soon as the man so favoured has resumed his seat, the person who asks his good wishes presents his pipe to him that he may smoke; whereupon he expresses his best

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wishes for the success of the undertaking or project in hand. By way of returning thanks, his arm is again stroked.³⁰²

³⁰² Compare *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, i, p. 245; and James's *Long's Expedition*, in our volume xv, pp. 129, 130.— Ed.

A third medicine feast is that described by Say, by the name of the corn dance of the Manitaries. He is pretty correct in his account of it, and it is used as well among the Mandans as the Manitaries. It is a consecration of the grain to be sown, and is called the corn dance feast of 335 the women.³⁰³ The old woman who never dies sends, in the spring, the water-fowl, swans, geese, and ducks, as symbols of the kinds of grain cultivated by the Indians. The wild goose signifies maize; the swan, the gourd; and the duck, beans. It is the old woman that causes these plants to grow, and, therefore, she sends these birds as her signs and representatives. It is very seldom that eleven wild geese are found together in the spring; but, if it happens, this is a sign that the crop of maize will be remarkably fine. The Indians keep a large quantity of dried flesh in readiness for the time in the spring when the birds arrive, that they may immediately celebrate the corn feast of the women. They hang the meat, before the village, on long stages made of poles, three or four rows, one above another, and this, with various articles of value, is considered as an offering to the old woman. The elderly females, as representatives of the old woman who never dies, assemble on a certain day about the stages, carrying a stick in their hands, to one [379] end of which a head of maize is fastened. Sitting down in a circle, they plant their sticks in the ground before them, and then dance round the stages. Some old men beat the drum, and rattle the schischikué. The maize is not wetted or sprinkled, as many believe, but, on the contrary, it is supposed that such a practice would be injurious. While the old women are performing these ceremonies, the younger ones come and put some dry pulverized meat into their mouths, for which each of them receives, in return, a grain of the consecrated maize, which she eats. Three or four grains are put into their dish, and are afterwards carefully mixed with the seed to be sown, in order to make it thrive

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and yield an abundant crop. The dried flesh on the stages is the perquisite of the aged females, as the representatives of the old woman who never dies. During the ceremony,

303 See our volume xiv, pp. 127, 128.— Ed.

336 it is not unusual for some men of the band of dogs to come and pull a large piece of flesh from the poles and carry it off. As members of this band, and being men of distinction, no opposition can be offered.

A similar corn feast is repeated in the autumn, but at that season it is held for the purpose of attracting the herds of buffaloes, and of obtaining a large supply of meat. Each woman then has not a stick with a head of maize, as in the former instance, but a whole plant of that grain, pulled up by the roots. They designate the maize as well as the birds, which are the symbols of the fruits of the earth, by the name of the old woman who never dies, and call upon them in the autumn, saying — “Mother, have pity on us; do not send the severe cold too soon, so that we may have a sufficient supply of meat; do not permit all the game to go away, so that we may have something for the winter.”

In autumn, when the birds emigrate to the south, or, as the Indians express it, return to the old woman, they believe that they take with them the presents — especially the dried flesh — that were hung up at the entrance of the village, for the giver and protectress of the crop. They further imagine that the old woman partakes of the flesh. Some poor females among these Indians, who are not able to offer flesh or any valuable gift, take a piece of parchment, in which they wrap the foot of a buffalo, and suspend it to one of the poles as their offering. The birds on their return, go to the old woman, each bringing something from the Indians; but, towards the end, one approaches, and says — “I have very little to give you, for I have received only a very mean gift.” To this, the old woman, on receiving the buffalo's foot from the poor women, or widows, says — “This is just what I love; this poor offering is more dear to me than all the other presents, however costly.” Upon this she boils a piece of the foot with some maize, and eats it with much satisfaction.

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The old woman who never dies has very extensive plantations of maize, the keepers of which are the great stag and the white-tailed stag. She has, likewise, many blackbirds, which help to guard her property. When she intends to feed these keepers, she summons them, and they fall with avidity upon the maize fields. As these plantations are very large, she requires many [380] labourers, and the mouse, the mole, and the before-mentioned stags, perform the work. The birds, which fly from the sea-shore in the spring, represent the old woman, who then travels to the north to visit “the old man who never dies,” and who always resides in that quarter. She does not, however, stop there long, but generally returns in three or four days. In former times, the old woman's hut was near the little Missouri, where the Indians often went to visit her. One day, twelve Manitaries came to her, and she set before them a pot of maize, which was so small, that it was not sufficient to satisfy even one; but she invited them to eat, and, as soon as the pot was empty, it was instantly refilled, and all the twelve men had enough. This occurred several times while the old woman resided in that spot.

Serpents, especially the rattlesnakes, are in a greater or less degree “medicine” for these people, who kill them, and cut off the rattles, which they regard as an effectual remedy in many diseases.³⁰⁴ They chew one of the joints, and wet various parts of the body of the patient with the saliva. They likewise believe in the existence of a colossal medicine serpent, which lives in a lake three or four days' journey from this place, and to which they make offerings. The following is their tradition of this monster: — Two young men were strolling along the bank of the river, and observed a cavern, through which curiosity led them to go. On reaching the

³⁰⁴ Compare *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, i, pp. 257, 258, on the use of rattlesnake joints as medicine.— Ed.

³³⁸ further end, they were surprised at beholding a picturesque country, wholly unknown to them, where numerous herds of buffaloes were grazing. Suddenly, however, an immense giant stood before them, who demanded — “Who are you, you little people? I

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am afraid if I were to lay hold of you, I should crush you!" He then lifted them in his hands very carefully, and carried them into the village, which was inhabited by giants like himself. Accompanied by the two Mandans, they went out to hunt buffaloes. The giants killed the buffaloes by throwing stones, but the Mandans destroyed many with their arrows, which greatly delighted the giants. At that time the giants were at war with the eagles, which were very numerous, and which they slew by flinging stones. The Mandans, however, shot them with arrows, so that they speedily procured a large quantity of eagles' feathers. They then took leave of the giants, and were permitted to depart with all their valuable feathers. On their return they found the cave blocked up by a colossal serpent. At first they were at a loss how to make a passage, but they soon collected a large pile of wood and burnt the monster. One of them tasted the roasted flesh of the serpent, and, finding it palatable, partook of more. They proceeded on their way, when the head of the Mandan who had tasted the serpent's flesh began to swell prodigiously, and an intolerable itching came to his face. He begged his friend not to leave him, but to take him home. On the second day he continued to swell, increased in length, felt an irritation all over, and was soon afterwards transformed into a serpent, upon which he begged his companion to take him to the Missouri, which the latter accomplished in three days. As soon as the serpent reached the water, he dived, but speedily rose to the surface, and said, "There are many like me below, but [381] they hate me, therefore carry me to the long water, three days' journey from the Missouri." This, too, was done, but the serpent 339 not liking his new abode, his comrade was obliged to carry him to a second lake, called Histoppa-Numangka (the place of the tattooed countenance), when the serpent was satisfied, and resolved to remain. He commissioned the young man to bring him four things, viz. a white wolf, a polecat, some pounded maize, and eagles' tails: after this he was to go to war four times, and kill an enemy in each combat. All this accordingly took place. The serpent then added that he would always remain in this lake, never die, be medicine, and, when the Mandans desired anything, they might come hither, do penance, or make offerings, that is to say, hang robes, eagles' tails, and other articles of value, on poles on the banks of the lake, which the Indians sometimes do even to this day.

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Another curiosity of a similar nature is the Medicine Stone, which is mentioned by Lewis and Clarke, and which the Manitaries likewise reverence.³⁰⁵ This stone is between two and three days' journey from the villages on Cannon-ball River, and about 100 paces from its banks. I was assured that it was on a tolerably high hill, and in the form of a flat slab, probably of sandstone. The stone is described as being marked with impressions of the footsteps of men, and animals of various descriptions, also of sledges with dogs. The Indians use this stone as an oracle, and make offerings of value to it, such as kettles, blankets, cloth, guns, knives, hatchets, medicine pipes, &c., which are found deposited close to it. The war parties of both nations, when they take the field, generally go to this place, and consult the oracle as to the issue of their enterprise. Lamenting and howling, they approach the hill, smoke their medicine pipes, and pass the night near the spot. On the following morning they copy the figures on the stone upon a piece of parchment or skin,

³⁰⁵ For the mention by Lewis and Clark see *Original Journals*, i, p. 264; also our volume xv, pp. 57–59.— Ed.

³⁴⁰ which they take to the village, where the old men give the interpretations. New figures are undoubtedly drawn from time to time on this stone, near to which the celebrated ark, in which part of the nation was saved in the great deluge, formerly stood.

The Mandans have many other medicine establishments in the vicinity of their villages, all of which are dedicated to the superior powers. Mr. Bodmer has made very accurate drawings of those near Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, one of which consists of four poles placed in the form of a square; the two foremost have a heap of earth and green turf thrown up round them, and four buffalo skulls laid in a line between them, while twenty-six human skulls are placed in a row from one of the stakes at the back to the other; some of these skulls are painted with a red stripe. Behind the whole a couple of knives are stuck into the ground, and a bundle of twigs is fastened at the top of the poles with a kind of comb, or the teeth of a rake, painted red.³⁰⁶ The Indians repair to such places when they desire to

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make offerings or put up petitions; they howl, lament, and make loud entreaties, often for many days together, to the lord of life, which the French Canadians call weeping, though no tears are shed. A similar medicine establishment is represented,³⁰⁷ where a couple of human figures, very clumsily made of skins, [382] were fixed upon poles, representing, as we were told, the sun and moon, probably the lord of life and the old woman who never dies. Wormwood, of which they generally fasten a bunch to the poles, is a sacred medicine herb, to which they ascribe various effects.

Dreams, as I have before said, afford the usual motives for such actions, and for the penances which they impose upon themselves, and they believe all that appears in their

306 See Plate 14, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

307 See Plate 58, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— ed.

341 dreams to be true. They were not yet acquainted with fire-arms, when one of the Indians dreamt of a weapon with which they could kill their enemies at a great distance, and soon afterwards the white men brought them the first gun. In the same manner they dreamt of horses before they obtained any. Even the Whites who live among them are infected with this belief in dreams, and other superstitions. They frequently promise, on undertaking anything, the joint of a finger, which they cut off at once, and keep in a handful of wormwood; this I myself saw among the Blackfeet, where, at that time, it was a sign of mourning. It is also done at the time of the Okippe in May and June. Almost all the Mandans and Manitaries have lost one or two joints of the fingers, and several of them more. There are numerous superstitious ideas and prejudices among these Indians. Thus, they believe that a person to whom they wish ill must die, if they make a figure of wood or clay, substituting for the heart, a needle, an awl, or a porcupine quill, and bury the image at the foot of one of their medicine poles. When a child is born, the father must not bridle a horse, that is to say, he is not to fasten the halter to the lower jaw, otherwise the child would die in convulsions. If the wife be pregnant, this circumstance is often the cause of much ill fortune to the husband, and he is frequently unsuccessful in hunting. If an Indian,

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in such cases, wounds a buffalo, without being able to kill it quickly, he endeavours to carry the heart of a buffalo home, and makes his wife discharge an arrow at it; he then again feels confidence in his weapons, that they will speedily kill. The Indians affirm that a pregnant woman is very lucky at a game called billiards. Many consider it a bad omen when a woman, while several Mandans are smoking together, passes between them. If a woman is lying on the ground between the men who are smoking, a piece of wood is laid across her, to serve as a communication between 342 the men. The strongest man now living among the Mandans, who has been the victor in several wrestling matches with the Whites, always takes hold of his pipe by the head, for, were he to touch it in another part, the blood would suddenly rush from his nostrils. As soon as he bleeds in this manner, he instantly empties his pipe, and throws the contents into the fire, where it explodes like gunpowder, and the bleeding immediately stops. Nobody, they say, can touch this man's face, without at once bleeding at the nose and mouth. A certain Indian affirms that, whenever another offers him a pipe to smoke, out of civility, he immediately has his mouth full of worms, handfuls of which he throws into the fire. The medicine of another man consists in making a snow-ball, which he rolls a long time between his hands, so that it at length becomes hard, and is converted into a white stone, which, when [383] struck, emits fire. Many persons, even Whites, pretended they had seen this, and it is utterly useless to attempt convincing them to the contrary. The same man pretends that, during a dance, he plucked white feathers from a certain small bird, which he rolled between his hands, and formed of them, in a short time, a similar white stone. Sometimes an Indian takes it into his head to make his gun medicine, or to consecrate it, which he does not dare afterwards to part with. With this view he generally makes a yearly feast in the spring. The crier (kettle-tender, or marmiton) must invite a certain number of guests, and receive an equal number of small sticks, which he delivers to them, as a sign of their being invited; nay, now, European playing cards are actually sent round for this purpose. The guests appear, lay their guns aside, and take their places, on which the drum and schischikué go round, and every guest sings, and plays the drum and rattle. While this music is going on, they eat the food which has been dressed, nor are they allowed 343 to leave any of it.

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The host then takes his gun, cuts a piece of flesh, and with it rubs the barrel, and flings the meat into the fire; this is repeated thrice. He then takes up some of the water in which the meat was boiled, rubs the whole length of the barrel with it, pours the rest of the broth into the fire; and, lastly, takes fat, with which he rubs the whole of his gun, and then throws the remainder into the fire.

A great many Mandans and Manitaris believe that they have wild animals in their body; one, for instance, affirmed he had a buffalo calf, the kicking of which he often felt; others said they had tortoises, frogs, lizards, birds, and so forth. Among the Manitaris we saw medicine dances of the women, where one pretended that she had a head of maize in her body, which she cast out by dancing, and then ate, after it had been mixed with wormwood. Another discharged blood, but of this we shall speak in the sequel. Similar feats are seen among the Mandans also. They likewise relate a number of foolish stories of miraculous and supernatural events. Thus, a girl refused to marry, and had no intercourse with the other sex. One night, while she was asleep, a man lay down by her side, on which she awoke, and saw him go away in a white buffalo robe. As he returned on the two succeeding nights, she resolved to mark him, and stained her hand with red. He appeared, and she gave him a blow, with her hand, on his back, not being able to hold him. On the following day she examined all the robes in the whole village, but could not find the mark of her hand, till at length she discovered it on the back of a large white dog. Some months after, as the Indians are fully persuaded, she was delivered of seven young dogs. The people consider owls as medicine birds, and pretend to hold conversations with them, and to understand their attitudes and voices; often, indeed, they keep these animals 344 alive in their huts, and look upon them as soothsayers. I shall, subsequently, have occasion to speak of the manner in which they catch all kinds of birds of prey, which feed on the flesh of dead animals, particularly eagles, which they sometimes preserve alive. They frequently look upon them as medicine.

[384] Many instruments used by the Whites, especially mathematical, are a great medicine, or charm, in their eyes, because they do not comprehend the use of them.

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Thus, the Indian women were frequently embarrassed when we looked at them through a telescope, because they believed that we had the power of penetrating their inmost thoughts, and of discovering their past and future actions.

The division of time, especially that of the year into months, is pretty conformable to nature; they count the years by winters, and say so many winters have passed since such an event. They are able to reckon the winters either by numbers, or on their fingers, for their numerals are very complete.

1. The month of the seven cold days, answering to our January.
2. The pairing month — February.
3. The month of weak eyes — March.
4. The month of game. Some call it the month of the wild geese. It is likewise often called the month of the breaking-up of the ice.
5. The month in which maize is sown, or the month of flowers — May.
6. The month of ripe service berries.
7. The month of ripe cherries.
8. The month of ripe plums.
9. The month of ripe maize.
10. The month of the falling leaves.

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11. The month in which the rivers freeze.

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12. The month of slight frost.308

308 Matthews, *Hidatsa Indians*, pp. 71; 72, takes exception to this list, and from his own observation thinks that the Mandan and Minitaree have no formal names for the lunar periods, and that they are aware that twelve do not quite complete the year.— Ed.

Here and there other names are given to the months, but the above are the most common.

The chief occupations of the Indians, besides adorning and painting their persons, looking in the glass, smoking, eating, and sleeping, are the chase and war, and these fill up a great part of their time. The principal beast of chase is the buffalo, or, rather, the buffalo cow. The men generally go hunting in a body, on horseback, in order to be the more secure against a superior force of their enemies. The equipments of their horses are much like those of the Blackfeet, and their saddle resembles the Hungarian; though, now, they sometimes obtain saddles from the Whites, which they line and ornament with red and blue cloth. In riding, they never leave hold of their whip, the handle of which is made of wood, and not of elk's horn, as among the more western nations. They never wear spurs. In the summer time, if the herds of buffaloes are dispersed to great distances in the prairie, the chase, of course, requires more time and exertion; but in winter, when they approach the Missouri, and seek shelter in the woods, a great number are [385] often killed in a short time.³⁰⁹ On these hunting excursions the Indians often spend eight or ten days; generally they return on foot, while the horses are laden with the spoil.³¹⁰ The buffaloes

³⁰⁹ For representation of a buffalo hunt, see Plate 64, in the accompanying atlas' our volume xxv.— Ed.

³¹⁰ The economy of the buffalo in the life of the plains Indians is well known; its flesh was the staple for food, its skin for shelter, dress, and utensils of many sorts, its horn for implements, and its sinews for strings and thread. The sedentary aborigines of the Missouri were scarcely less dependent upon this animal than their plains kinsmen, their agricultural products forming but a small supplement to the food supply. Hunting the

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buffalo was thus the chief employment of the male Indians. For this purpose guns were but little used, they being reserved for war or occasional encounters with grizzly bears. Compare descriptions of Mandan buffalo hunts in *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, i, pp. 234, 278; *Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, pp. 336, 337; Palliser, *Solitary Rambles* (London, 1853), pp. 111–114; and Boller, *Among the Indians*, pp. 78–80.— Ed.

346 are usually shot with arrows, the hunters riding within ten or twelve paces of them. If it is very cold, and the buffaloes keep at a distance in the prairie (which happened in the winter of 1833–34), they hunt but little, and would rather suffer hunger, or live only on maize and beans, than use any exertion; and when, towards spring, many drowned buffaloes float down the river with the ice, the Indians swim or leap with great dexterity over the flakes of ice, draw the animals to land, and eat the half putrid flesh, without manifesting any signs of disgust. It is remarkable how instantly their famished dogs know and take advantage of the hunting excursions of their masters. When the horses return laden with the spoils of the chase, the children in the village utter a cry of joy, of which the dogs seem perfectly to understand the import, for they simultaneously set up a loud howl, run towards the prairie, the scene of the chase, and partake, with their relations, the wolves, of what the hunters have left behind. When a hunter has killed an animal, he generally eats the liver, the kidneys, and the marrow of the large thigh bones, raw. If an Indian has procured some game he usually shares it with others. The entrails and skin always belong to the person who shot the animal. If an eminent man, who has performed some exploit, comes up when the animal has been just killed, and demands the tongue, or some other good part, it cannot be refused him. Dogs are not employed in hunting by the Mandans and Manitaris. They shoot deer and elks in the forests, antelopes and bighorns in the prairies, the Black Hills, and the neighbouring mountains. 347 They make parks, as they are called, to catch antelopes, but not buffaloes. Brackenridge says, that the Indians drive the antelopes into the water and kill them with clubs;³¹¹ but this can only have happened in isolated places when some accident gave them the opportunity. The Manitaris make these cabri parks more frequently than the Mandans. They choose a valley, between two hills, which ends in a steep declivity. On the summit of the hills,

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two converging lines, one or two miles in length, are marked out with brushwood. Below the declivity they erect a kind of fence, fifteen or twenty paces in length, composed of poles, covered and filled up with hay and brushwood. A number of horsemen then drive the cabris between the ends of the lines marked out by the brushwood, which are very distant from each other, and ride rapidly towards them. The terrified animals hasten down the hollow, and at length leap into the enclosure, where they are killed with clubs, or taken alive.³¹² There are not many bears in this country; and the Indians are not fond of hunting them, because it is often dangerous, and the flesh, when roasted, is not very good. Brackenridge is mistaken when he says, that these Indians always shout before they enter the forest, in order to frighten the bears.³¹³ If they did so they would, at the same time, frighten all other kinds of animals, and we see at once, from this statement, that that traveller was no sportsman.

311 H. M. Brackenridge, *Views of Louisiana*, p. 56.— Ed.

312 For this method of taking antelope compare *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* i, pp. 313, 314; and H. M. Chittenden and A. T. Richardson, *Life, Letters, and Travels of Father De Smet*, iv, pp. 1396, 1397. Frequently Indians pursued the antelope on swift horses, driving them in zig-zags until they were exhausted. See *Original Journals*, ii, pp. 345, 346.— Ed.

313 Op. cit., in note 311, p. 56.— Ed.

[386] The wolf and the fox are sometimes shot with a gun, as well as the white hare, in the winter time, or they are caught in traps. They set for the wolves very strong traps. The prairie wolf is not easily caught, being very cautious. Foxes are caught in small traps, which are covered with brushwood and buffaloes' skulls, to conceal them. Many such traps are seen everywhere in the prairies, which are surrounded with small stakes, that the animals may not enter them sideways. Beavers are now caught, in great numbers, in iron traps, which they procure from the Whites. Small animals, such as the ermine, are caught

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with horse-hair springes, set before their burrows. The manner in which birds of prey are caught is said to be very remarkable. The birdcatcher lies down at full length in a narrow pit made on purpose, and exactly large enough to hold him. As soon as he has lain down, the pit is covered with brushwood and hay, pieces of meat are laid upon it, and a crow, or some such bird, fastened to it. The eagle, or other bird of prey, is said to descend, and to sit down, in order to eat, on which the birdcatcher seizes it by the legs. I would not believe this had not men worthy of credit given me their word for it. In this manner they catch the eagle, called, by the English, the war-eagle, and the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), the Quiliou, or *oiseau de medicine* , of the Canadians, which I was not so fortunate as to meet with, and which they highly value, as I have already stated.³¹⁴

Next to the chase, war is the chief employment of the Indians, and military glory the highest object of their ambition. It is well known that Indian bravery is very different from that of the Whites; for wilfully to expose themselves to the enemy's fire would, in, their eyes, not be bravery, but folly. Cunning and stratagem give them the advantage over the enemy; their strength lies in concealing their march, and

³¹⁴ See Matthews, *Hidatsa Indians*, p. 58. This is the eagle sometimes known as *Aquila canadensis*, although it has a wide range of habitat. It is the royal or calumet eagle of Lewis and Clark — one of the two North American eagles, the other being the bald-headed (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*).— Ed.

³⁴⁹ surprises at daybreak. He who kills many enemies without sustaining any loss is the best warrior.

When a young man desires to establish his reputation in the field, he fasts for four or seven days, as long as his strength permits him, goes alone to the hills, complains and cries to the lord of life, calls incessantly to the higher powers for their aid, and only goes home, sometimes, in the evening, to sleep. A dream suggests his medicine to him. If the lord of life makes him dream of a piece of cherry-tree wood, or of an animal, it is a good omen. The young men who take the field with him have then confidence in his medicine.

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If he can perform an exploit his reputation is established. But whatever exploits he may perform, he acquires no respect if he does not make valuable presents; and they say of him, "He has indeed performed many exploits, but yet he is as much to be pitied as those whom he has killed." A man may have performed many exploits, and yet not be allowed to wear tufts of hair on his clothes, unless he carries a medicine pipe, and has been the leader of a war party. When a young man, who has never performed an exploit, is the first to kill an enemy on a warlike expedition, he paints a spiral line round his arm, of whatever colour he pleases, and he may then wear a whole wolf's tail at the ankle or heel of one foot. If he has first killed and touched the [387] enemy he paints a line running obliquely round the arms and another crossing it in the opposite direction, with three transverse stripes. On killing the second enemy he paints his left leg (that is, the leggin) of a reddish-brown. If he kills the second enemy before another is killed by his comrades, he may wear two entire wolves' tails at his heels. On his third exploit he paints two longitudinal stripes on his arms, and three transverse stripes. This is the exploit that is esteemed the highest; after the third exploit no more marks are made. If he kills an enemy after others of the party have done the same, he may wear on his heel one wolf's tail, the tip of which is cut off. In every numerous war party there are four leaders (partisans, *karokkanakah*), sometimes, seven, but only four are reckoned as the real partisans; the others are called bad partisans (*karokkanakah-chakohosch*, literally, *partisans galeux*).³¹⁵ All partisans carry on their backs a medicine pipe in a case, which other warriors dare not have. To become a chief (*Numakschi*) a man must have been a partisan, and then kill an enemy when he is not a partisan. If he follows another partisan for the second time, he must have first discovered the enemy, have killed one, and then possessed the hide of a white buffalo cow complete, with the horns, to pretend to the title of chief (*Numakschi*). Dipauch, who related these particulars, had himself done all these, and was an eminent man among his people, but had never assumed that title. He had given five horses for his white buffalo hide. All the warriors wear small war pipes round their necks, which are often very elegantly ornamented with porcupine quills.³¹⁶

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315 See a good description of war-parties led by partisans in our volume xv, pp. 78–85.— Ed.

316 See Plate 54, figure 9, and Plate 81, figure 14, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

As soon as they advance to attack the enemy every one sounds his pipe, and all together utter the war whoop, a shrill cry, which they render tremulous by repeatedly and suddenly striking the mouth with the hand. Those who fast and dream, in order to perform an exploit, are entitled to wear a wolf's skin. A warrior has a right to wear as many eagles' feathers as he has performed exploits. All Indians, on their military expeditions, erect, in the evening, a sort of fort, in which they are, in some measure, secure against a sudden attack. In Major Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains, it is stated, that they often make *caches* (hiding-places) 351 in these forts; but we did not observe any such on the Missouri.³¹⁷ The Indians, on their expeditions, always set a watch by night as soon as they are near the enemy, and often send out scouts to considerable distances. At such a post the Indians are very vigilant and active; after an engagement they do not bury the dead, but, if they have not time to carry them away, leave them on the spot where they fell. The scalps, called, by the Canadians, *les chevelures*, are often preserved for a long time stretched upon small hoops, and the hair is afterwards used as an ornament to the dress of the men. The skin of the scalp is generally painted red. The Mandans, Manitaries, and Crows, never torture their prisoners like the Pawnees and the eastern nations. When a prisoner has arrived at the village, and eaten maize, he is considered as one of their own nation, and no person ever thinks of molesting him. Often, however, the women hasten out to meet [388] the prisoners ere they reach the village, and kill them; this is especially an act of revenge for their husbands or sons who may have fallen in the battle.

When a young man desires to become a leader, or partisan, he first gains, by gifts, the favour of the other young men, and then dedicates a medicine pipe, which is a plain, unornamented tube. This ceremony is accomplished by a four days' fast, and supplications

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for assistance to the lord of life, the first man, &c. &c., and other supernatural beings. He then addresses the young men, and calls upon them to give him their support in his undertakings. If a sufficient number testify their readiness to accompany him in a warlike expedition, and such an expedition is determined upon, they dance and feast in the medicine lodge for several successive nights, from whence, too, they generally march off by night.

317 See our volume xv, p. 92. These hiding places are described as prepared by the squaws in case of an unexpected attack, warriors only retreating thereto if hard-pressed.—Ed.

352 The women never accompany these expeditions. On setting out the men are badly clothed, and not painted. They do not depart in a body, but, for the most part, singly, or in small detached parties. At a certain distance from the village they halt upon an isolated hill, open their medicine bags, and, after the men have sat down in a circle, the partisan produces his medicine pipe, which all present smoke; the person who smokes last, then spreads his medicines on the ground, or hangs them up, and from them foretells the fate of the expedition. The Indians manifest much gravity and decorum on solemn occasions like these.

When the warriors return from their expedition, the scalps are carried on in advance, on high poles: if they have performed any exploits, they paint their faces black; very frequently the whole body is thus disfigured. The women and children go out to meet them, and they enter the village performing the scalp dance. This dance is then repeated four successive nights in the medicine lodge, and is subsequently danced in the open space, in the centre of the village. If the campaign took place in the spring, it is danced, at intervals, till the fall of the leaf in autumn; if in the autumn, it is danced till spring, but should any of the nation be killed in the interim all festivities immediately cease. In the scalp dance the Indians paint themselves in various ways, form a semicircle, advance, and retreat amid the din

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of singing, the beating of the drum and schischikué. The wives of those men who have obtained the scalps carry them on long rods.³¹⁸

³¹⁸ Brackenridge (1811) witnessed the return of an Arikara war-party and the subsequent scalp-dance, which he vividly describes in volume vi of our series, pp. 142–145.— Ed.

All the distinguished deeds performed by a war party are placed to the account of the partisan. All the scalps that are taken belong to him, and also the horses that they have captured. He who has killed an enemy is a brave man, ³⁵³ and reckons one exploit; but the partisan rises the highest on that account, even though he had not seen any of the enemies who have been slain. When he returns home, the old men and women meet, and sing the scalp song, on which he must make them all presents of value. He gives away all the captured horses, and valuable articles, and is afterwards a poor man, but his reputation is great. Successful partisans afterwards become chiefs, and are highly respected by their nation. The Indian youths go to war when they are only fourteen or fifteen years of age. Sometimes they make excursions on horseback in the winter.

[389] The Mandans and Manitaries make excursions as far as the Rocky Mountains, against their enemies, the Black-feet, and against the Chippeways, to the country of Pembina.³¹⁹ Their other enemies are the Sioux, the Arikaras,

³¹⁹ Pembina is said to mean the fruit of the high-bush cranberry. The river of that name, an affluent of Red River from the west, disembogues near the British-American boundary line, its mouth being the site of several early trading-posts and settlements. Between 1790 and 1796 Peter Grant, a Nor' Wester, built a trading-post opposite the mouth of the river, near the site of the present St. Vincent, Minnesota. Charles Chaboillez, another trader for the same company, wintered (1797–98) at the mouth of Pembina River on the southwest side. Four years later Alexander Henry built a post in the northwest angle, the site of the modern town of Pembina, North Dakota, where he made his headquarters until 1808, and whence (1806) he visited the Mandan villages. In 1812 Lord Selkirk had a post built at this site, which from one of his titles was named Fort Daer. This being on the verge

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of the timber-land, and hence convenient to buffalo herds, was the wintering place of his Red River colonists. The North West Company had a rival post in the near vicinity. After the troubles of the Red River colonists with the North West employés (1814–16), a company of troops, guided by John Tanner, was sent (1817) by Selkirk to avenge his settlers. These captured the North West fort at Pembina, and restored Fort Daer, which was maintained until 1823; when, on being found to be south of the international boundary, it was dismantled and removed some miles farther north. Meanwhile a small settlement of maétis had grown up on the site; Long (1823) found here about sixty log-cabins, and three hundred and fifty people. Communication was maintained both with Fort Garry, lower down on Red River, and with Fort Snelling, at St. Paul. About 1842 the agents of the American Fur Company established a cart-route to Pembina, where in 1870 the United States government erected a fort, but the place is no longer occupied by troops.— Ed. 354 the Assiniboins, and the Chayennes (spelt, by the English, Shiennes). They are at peace with the Crows.

The weapons of the Mandans and Manitaries are, first, the bow and arrow. The bows are made of elm or ash, there being no other suitable kinds of wood in their country. In form and size they resemble those of the other nations; the string is made of the sinews of animals twisted. They are frequently ornamented. A piece of red cloth, four or five inches long, is wound round each end of the bow, and adorned with glass beads, dyed porcupine quills, and strips of white ermine. A tuft of horsehair, dyed yellow, is usually fastened to one end of the bow. Pehriska-Ruhpa has such a weapon in his hand.³²⁰ The quiver, to which the bow-case is fastened, is made of panther or buffalo skin; in the first case, with the hair outwards, the long tail hanging down, and, as among the Blackfeet, lined with red cloth, and embroidered in various figures with white beads. Their handsome quivers are made of otter skin, which are much esteemed. A very beautifully ornamented one, belonging to the Crows, is represented.³²¹ Narrow strips of skin hang down at both ends of the quiver. The arrows of the Mandans and Manitaries are neatly made; the best wood

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is said to be that of the service berry (*Amelanchier sanguinea*). The arrows of all the Missouri nations are much alike,³²²

320 See his portrait in Plate 56, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

321 See Plate 81, figure 16, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

322 Though all their arrows appear, at first sight, to be perfectly alike, there is a great difference in the manner in which they are made. Of all the tribes of the Missouri the Mandans are said to make the neatest and most solid arrows. The iron heads are thick and solid, the feathers glued on, and the part just below the head, and the lower end, are wound round with very even, extremely thin sinews of animals. They all have, in their whole length, a spiral line, either carved or painted red, which is to represent the lightning. The Manitaries make the iron heads thinner, and not so well. They do not glue on the feathers, but only tie them on at both ends, like the Brazilians. The Assiniboins frequently have very thin and indifferent heads to their arrows, made of iron-plate. Mr. Say (Major Long's Expedition) says, that the arrow-wood (*viburnum*) is used for their arrows by the Indians on the Lower Missouri and the neighbouring prairies. I conjecture that this shrub is the alistier (*Cratægus torminalis*) of the Upper Missouri, which is sometimes used for bows, but very seldom for arrows.— Maximilian.

Stone club, with handle

A knotted wooden club

Arikara bird-cage gourds

357 with long, triangular, very sharp, iron heads, which they themselves make out of old iron: it is but slightly glued to the shaft of the arrow, which is rather short, and generally remains in the body of the wounded animal. They know nothing of poisoning their arrows. The arrow-heads were formerly made of sharp stones: when Charbonneau first came to the Missouri, some made of flint were in use, and in the villages they are still met with,

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and in all those parts of the United States where the expelled or extirpated aborigines formerly dwelt. We were told that, in the prairie, near the Manitari villages, there is a sand hill, where the wind has uncovered a great number of such stone arrow-heads. Almost all the Mandans and Manitaries now have guns, which they ornament with bits of red cloth, on the brass rings of the ramrod, and at the butt-end [390] with brass nails. Besides the ramrod belonging to the gun, the Indians always carry another long ramrod in their hands, which they generally use. The pouch is made of leather, or cloth, often beautifully ornamented with beads, or porcupine quills, and is hung on the back by a piece of skin, or a broad strip of cloth of some lively colour. Their clubs and tomahawks are of various kinds. Many have a thick egg-shaped stone fastened to a handle, covered with leather, or without leather.³²³ Others have small iron tomahawks,³²⁴ but not tomahawks with pipes fixed to them. The large club with the broad iron point³²⁵ is called manha-okatanha, or mauna-schicha. A simple, knotty, wooden club is called mauna-panischa.³²⁶

323 See p. 355 for illustration of stone club, with handle.— Ed.

324 See portrait of Mato-Topé, Plate 47, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

325 *Ibid.*, Plate 81, figure 4.— Ed.

326 See p. 355 for illustration of a knotted wooden club.— Ed.

358

Many Mandans likewise carry lances, and I was told that they had a remarkably handsome one, of which, however, I did not obtain a sight. These Indians have shields, which do not differ from those of the tribes already mentioned. They all wear, in their girdle, behind, their large knife, which is indispensable to them in hunting and in war. Some use, for the handle of the knife, the lower jaw of a bear, with the hair and teeth remaining.³²⁷ The bow and arrows are, even now, much esteemed by all the nations living on the Missouri, while those that have been entirely driven from that river (the Osages) greatly prefer the gun; the former, therefore, are capital archers, which cannot be affirmed of the Osages.

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The Mandans and Manitaries are said to fight well in their manner, and there have been frequent instances of individual bravery. One of their most distinguished warriors, at this time, is Mato-Topé, of whom we shall often have to speak in the sequel. He has killed more than five chiefs of other nations. The father of Mato-Topé, whose name was Suck-Schih (the handsome child), behaved exactly [391] in the same manner as the Manitari chief, Kokoahkis, mentioned by Say.³²⁸ He went, one evening, wrapped up in his robe, into a hut of the hostile Arikkaras, as the young men of the village often do, ate with his face covered, so that he was taken for a young Arikkara; then laid himself down by the side of a woman, and afterwards cut off a lock of her hair, with which he retired. He might have killed the woman, as Kokoahkis did, but refrained from doing so.

327 See p. 105 for illustration of a Grosventre dagger.— Ed.

328 Concerning Mato-Topé see our volume xxii, p. 345, note 318. For this incident see our volume xv, p. 97. Kakoakis was Le Borgne, for whom see our volume v, p. 162, note 98.— Ed.

Wounds appear to be healed with remarkable ease. In cases of arrow wounds, they like to force the arrow quite 359 through, that the iron head may not remain in the wound. Men and women are often scalped, in battle, who afterwards come to themselves, and are cured. Such a large wound on the head is rubbed with fat; the medicine man fumigates it, singing at the same time. Disorders are not uncommon among the Indians. The Mandans and Manitaries often suffer from diseases in the eyes; many are one-eyed, or have a tunicle over one eye. In inflammation of the eye they have a custom of scratching the inner eye with the leaf of a kind of grass, resembling a saw, which causes them to bleed very much, and this may often occasion the loss of the eye. Rheumatism, coughs, and the like, are frequent, because they go half naked in the severest cold, and plunge into ice water. Much benefit is often derived from their steam-baths, in a well closed hut, where a thick steam is produced by pouring water on hot stones. They then immediately go into the cold, roll themselves in the snow, or plunge into a river covered with drifting ice, but do not

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return to a warm hut, as the Russians do. Many Indians are said to have died on the spot by trying this remedy. Some suffer from gout; but all who survive these violent remedies are stronger and more hardy. Another remedy is trampling on the whole body, especially the stomach, as is practised also among the Brazilians. This operation is performed with such violence, as often to occasion hard swellings in the intestines, or ulcers, especially in the liver. The steam-bath is used as a remedy in all kinds of disorders. Vaccination, the application of which met with no difficulties among several nations on the great lakes, especially the Chippeways, is not yet practised among the Mandans and Manitaris. Spitting of blood is said to be frequent, but not pulmonary consumption. Gonorrhœa is very common; they affirm that all venereal disorders come to them from the Crows beyond the Rocky Mountains. For such disorders they often seat themselves 360 over a heated pot, but very frequently burn themselves. They cut open buboes, lengthwise, with a knife, and then run for a couple of miles as fast as they can. The jaundice is said not to occur among them. It appears that they are not acquainted with emetics, but, if they feel anything wrong in the stomach, they thrust a feather down the throat, and thus produce vomiting. Their purgatives are obtained from the vegetable kingdom. The poison-vine often produces swellings, especially in children. As rattlesnakes are rare in the vicinity of the villages, it is, of course, seldom that any one is bitten by them; these Indians are said, however, to have very good remedies against the bite. Frozen limbs are rubbed with snow. [392] When blindness arises from the dazzling brightness of the snow, which it very frequently does in March, they bathe the eyes with a solution of gun-powder and water. They often have recourse to bleeding, which they perform with a sharp flint, or a knife. They often apply to the Whites for medicine, and willingly follow their prescriptions. These Indians have also various remedies for their horses; thus, when a horse has the strangury, they give it a piece of a wasp's nest.

When a Mandan or Manitari dies, they do not let the corpse remain long in the village; but convey it to the distance of 200 paces, and lay it on a narrow stage, about six feet long,

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resting on four stakes about ten feet high, the body being first laced up in buffalo robes and a blanket.³²⁹ The

³²⁹ These burial scaffolds were noted by most travellers on the Missouri, and Catlin gives a drawing of a Mandan cemetery, in *North American Indians*, i, pp. 89–92. Bradbury, in our volume v, p. 160, describes a scaffold in detail. According to James's Long's *Expedition*, our volume xv, pp. 66, 67, the Omaha buried their dead. The burial customs of all the Dakotan tribes would appear to have been fluctuating, inclining to aerial sepulture. Of late years, on the Fort Berthold reservation, this method is declining; and during the smallpox epidemic of 1838 the Mandan buried their dead; see Audubon's *Journals*, ii, pp. 14, 15. On the entire subject consult H. C. Yarrow, *Introduction to Study of Mortuary Customs among the North American Indians* (Washington, 1880); and “Further Contributions to the study of Mortuary Customs among the North American Indians,” in United States Bureau of Ethnology *Report*, 1879–80, pp. 87–203.— Ed.

³⁶¹ face, painted red, is turned towards the east. A number of such stages are seen about their villages, and, although they themselves say that this custom is injurious to the health of the villages, they do not renounce it. On many of these stages there are small boxes, containing the bodies of children wrapped in cloth or skins. Ravens are usually seen sitting on these stages, and the Indians dislike that bird, because it feeds on the flesh of their relations. If you ask a Mandan why they do not deposit their dead in the ground, he answers —“The lord of life has, indeed, told us that we came from the ground, and should return to it again; yet we have lately begun to lay the bodies of the dead on stages, because we love them, and would weep at the sight of them.” They believe that every person has several spirits dwelling in him; one of these spirits is black, another brown, and another light-coloured, the latter of which alone returns to the lord of life. They think that after death they go to the south, to several villages which are often visited by the gods; that the brave and most eminent go to the village of the good, but the wicked into a different one; that they there live in the same manner as they do here, carry on occupations, eat the same food, have wives, and enjoy the pleasures of the chase and

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war. Those who are kind-hearted are supposed to make many presents and do good, find everything in abundance, and their existence there is dependent on their course of life while in the world.³³⁰ Some of the inhabitants of the Mandan villages

330 The belief in the plurality of souls appears to have been widespread among Dakotan tribes. Matthews (*Hidatsa*, p. 50) says that the Minitaree believe in four for each person, and that he has heard this faith disputed with the Assiniboin, who believe in but one. The Teton Sioux think one spirit is of the body and dies with it; the second remaining with or near the body—hence the offering of food to the deceased; the third goes to the spirit home in the south; and the fourth abides with the lock of hair cut from the head of the corpse—if this is thrown into an enemy's camp, the ghost harasses the hostiles in time of war. See Dorsey, "Siouan Cults," p. 484. The belief in a home of spirits is indefinite and ill-defined—most Dakotan people think of an ancestral home to which spirits return, but the distinction between abodes for the good and the wicked appears imported, not indigenous.—See *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, v, p. 347.— Ed.

362 are said not to believe all these particulars, and suppose that after death they will live in the sun or in a certain star.

They mourn for the dead a whole year; cut off their hair, cover their body and head with white or grey clay, and often, with a knife or sharp flint, make incisions in their arms and legs in parallel lines, in their whole length, so that they are covered with blood. For some days after death the relations make a loud lament and bewailing. Often a relative, or some other friend, covers the dead, as they express it: he brings one or two woollen cloths, of a red, blue, white, or green colour, and, as soon as the body is laid on the stage, mounts upon the scaffolding, and conceals the body beneath the covering. A friend who will do this is, in token of respect, presented, by the family of the deceased, with a horse. If it is known beforehand that a person intends doing this honour to the dead, a horse is at once tied near the stage, and the friend, having performed [393] this last office, unties the animal and leads it away. If a Mandan or Manitari falls in battle, and the news of his death reaches the family, who are unable to recover the body, a buffalo skin is rolled up

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and carried to the village. All those who desire to lament the deceased assemble, and many articles of value are distributed among them. The mourners cut off their hair, wound themselves with knives, and make loud lamentations. Joints of the fingers are not cut off here, as among the Blackfeet, as a token of mourning, but as signs of penance and offering to the lord of life and the first man.³³¹

331 Compare the accounts of mourning in James's *Long's Expedition*, our volume xv, pp. 66–68, and Boller, *Among the Indians*, p. 70. Mutilation was practiced by many tribes as a sign of mourning; see Yarrow, “Further Contributions to the Study of Mortuary Customs.”—Ed.

The English and French find the pronunciation of the

Map of neighborhood of Fort Clark

a. Scaffolds for the dead, and poles with offerings. Plates 14 and 25 (see accompanying atlas, our volume xxv).

b. The Mandan village—Mih-tutta-hang-kusch.

c. The open space in the centre of the village.

d. The ark of the first man e. The stream in which the dishes are washed.

e.

365 Mandan language extremely difficult; while to a German, or a Dutchman, it is considerably easier, because it contains very many gutturals, like *ach, och, uch*, in German. The nasal sounds, on the contrary, are few, but they frequently speak in a very indistinct way, having the mouth scarcely opened. The vowels are often softened, and much depends on the way in which the accent falls. The vowels a and u are often only half pronounced, but occur very frequently. I collected many words, as specimens of the language, and wrote down phrases, and made an attempt to compile a grammar of the

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Mandan language, but the completion of it was, unfortunately, hindered by unfavourable circumstances.³³² Several old persons assured me that they perfectly remembered that, in their youth, many resemblances between the Mandan and Manitari languages did not then exist, which have since gradually crept in; the two languages being then quite different, which, indeed, they are still, in the main. As nations and allies, however, they have reciprocally adopted many words and expressions, and hence there is a better understanding among them now than heretofore, and their intercourse is greatly facilitated. Time will, undoubtedly, produce a still closer approximation.³³³ It is a remarkable fact, and proves how easily the separation of single tribes, and even villages, of one and the same nation, leads to changes in the language, and transitions into other dialects. An example of this kind was presented in the two Mandan villages, where many diversities of language had already taken place. I collected several specimens of this kind, and, to me, it was highly interesting. The Mandans are more apt in learning foreign languages than many other nations. Thus, the majority of them speak the Manitari

332 See Indian Vocabularies, in our volume xxiv.— Ed.

333 Compare on this point Matthews, *Hidatsa*, pp. 18, 84, who claims that on the Fort Berthold reservation there appears no tendency to coalescence, and that Mandan, Minitaree, and Arikara are still linguistically distinct.— Ed.

366 language, whereas but few of the latter understand the Mandan language. Most of the American nations, at least, those on the Missouri, are said to have no maledictory words or terms of abuse; the Mandans have nothing of the kind but the expression—“bad people.” The article is wanting in the Mandan language, and there is no distinction of gender, except in addressing a man or a woman. For my observations on the Mandan language, I am chiefly indebted to the kindness and patience of Mr. Kipp, who had lived eleven years among that people, had married an Indian wife, and had attained a perfect knowledge of the language. The Mandan names always have a signification, and are often equivalent to whole sentences: all surrounding objects are made use of in giving [394] names. I subjoin

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a few singular specimens: “The bear which is a spirit;” “The bull which is a spirit;” “I hear somebody coming;” “There are seven of them married to old women,” &c.

In conclusion I would say that some have affirmed that they have found, in North America, Indians who spoke the Gaelic language; this has been said of the Mandans; but it has long been ascertained that this notion is unfounded, as well as the assertion that the Mandans had a fairer complexion than the other Indians.³³⁴

³³⁴ A tradition of white-bearded Indians living far to the westward was rife among the French traders and explorers in the early eighteenth century, and when he visited the Mandan in 1738 La Verendrye sought “that nation of whites so much spoken of.” The variation in color of complexion, hair, and eyes among the Mandan (see note 215, *ante*) led to various theories of their origin. Among these that of Welsh derivation gained much currency. The alleged American adventure in the twelfth century of Prince Madoc from Wales, and the consequent blending of his followers with the aborigines was a current theory among English ethnographers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Catlin enthusiastically adopted it to account for Mandan peculiarities; see his *North American Indians*, i, pp. 205–207; ii, pp. 259–261. For a bibliography of this theory, which Maximilian's scientific sense rejected, see Justin Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History of America* (Boston, 1889), i, pp. 109–111; see also B. F. Bowen, *Welsh in North America* (Philadelphia, 1876), especially chapter xi.— Ed.

CHAPTER XXVI OBSERVATIONS ON THE TRIBE OF THE MANITARIES, OR GROS VENTRES

The name, Manitaries, by which this tribe is now generally known, was given by the Mandans, and signifies, “those who came over the water.” The French give them the singular designation of Gros Ventres, which is no more appropriate to them than to any other of the Indian tribes: the Anglo-Americans also frequently use this name.³³⁵ This people was formerly a part of the nation of the Crows, from which it is said they separated,

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in consequence of a dispute about a buffalo that had been killed, and removed to the Missouri.³³⁶ They are near neighbours, and have been for many years allies of the Mandans. They have long resided in three villages on the Knife River, two on the left bank, and the third, which is much the largest, on the right bank.³³⁷ Much confusion and misunderstanding have been occasioned by the variety of names given to these villages by the inhabitants, as well as

³³⁵ Consult Matthews, *Hidatsa*, pp. 33, 34, on the origin of these names. The Minitaree tradition relates that when they reached the east bank of the Missouri, the latter inquired who they were. Not understanding, the newly-arrived tribe supposed they were asked what was wished, to which they replied “minitari”— to cross the water. Thereupon the Mandan gave the new-comers this name. See also *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, v, p. 348.— Ed.

³³⁶ For the Crow and Minitaree legend of the separation of the two branches of the tribe, see Matthews, *Hidatsa*, pp. 39, 40. The Minitaree name for the Crows signified “They who refused the paunch” (*i.e.*, of the buffalo). According to Lewis and Clark (*Original Journals*, v, p. 297), “they quarreled about a buffalow, and two bands left the village and went into the plains, (those two bands are now known by the title Pouch [Paunch] and Crow Indians.)” See also *Original Journals*, vi, pp. 103, 104, where the Paunch Indians are made a separate band. This was probably the division of the Crows known as Aelekaweah. See Smithsonian Institution *Report*, 1885, part ii, p. 113.— Ed.

³³⁷ For the site of these villages see our volume xxii, p. 300, note 326.— Ed.

³⁶⁸ by other tribes. At present the Manitaries live constantly in their villages, and do not roam about as they formerly did, when, like the Pawnees and other nations, they went in pursuit of the herds of buffaloes as soon as their fields were sown, returned in the autumn for the harvest, after which they again went into the prairie. In these wanderings they made use of leather tents, some of which are still standing by the side of their permanent dwellings. The more considerable part of the nation, the Crows, are still exclusively a

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people of hunters, who cultivate no kind of useful plants: even tobacco is now seldom planted, because they prefer that which they obtain from the traders. They still, however, preserve their own species of this plant for the purpose I have before mentioned.

The Manitaries do not much differ in their personal appearance from the Mandans; but it strikes a stranger that they are, in general, taller. Most of them are well-formed and stout; many are very tall, broad-shouldered, and muscular; the latter may, indeed, be said of the greater proportion of the men. Their noses are more or less arched, and sometimes quite straight. I also met with several whose countenances perfectly resembled those of the Botocudos.³³⁸ The women [396] are much like the Mandans; many are tall and stout, but most of them are short and corpulent. There are some pretty faces among them, which, according to the Indian standard of beauty, may be called handsome. As they have long lived in close connexion with the Mandans, the two nations have adopted the same costume, though there is, at the same time, a greater attention to neatness and adornment among the Manitaries than their neighbours. Their necklaces of bears' claws, for which they often give a high price, are very large and well finished: they often contain forty claws, are attached to each shoulder, and form

³³⁸ For the Botocudo see our volume xxii, p. 219, note 132.— Ed.

³⁶⁹ a semicircle across the breast. Their lock of hair on the temples is often long and curiously entwined with ornaments, and fringed at the point with small red feathers, or strips of ermine. They wear their hair in long flat braids, hanging down upon the back like the Mandans; sometimes it is plastered over with clay, and not unfrequently lengthened by gluing false locks to it. The flat ornament in the shape of the rule hanging from the back, which I have mentioned in speaking of the Mandans, is often very tastefully ornamented with porcupine quills, set in neat patterns. They seldom wear leather shirts, like the Crows and Blackfeet, but, generally speaking, have nothing under the buffalo robe: frequently their arms and whole body are variously painted. Their leggins do not differ from those of the Mandans. The breechcloth generally consists of a piece of white woollen cloth with dark blue stripes. Their leather shoes are ornamented in various ways, sometimes with

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a long stripe, or a rosette of dyed porcupine quills. The girdle is of leather, into which the knife and sheath are stuck at the back. They often wear narrow bright steel bracelets at the wrists, which they purchase from the Company. Much taste and extravagance are lavished on the buffalo robe, the main article of their attire. The style in which they are painted is similar to that of the Mandans, and very high prices are paid for these robes. Many of the men are tattooed, especially on one side of the body only, for instance, the right half of the breast, and the right arm, sometimes down to the wrist; nay, the old chief, Addih-Hiddish, had the whole of his right hand tattooed in stripes.³³⁹ They paint their body in the same manner as the Mandans.

The Manitari villages are similarly arranged as those of the Mandans, except that they have no ark placed in the

³³⁹ See his portrait, which Maximilian calls “a striking resemblance,” in Plate 57, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

³⁷⁰ central space, and the figure of Ochkih-Hadda is not there. In the principal village, however, is the figure of a woman placed on a long pole, doubtless representing the grandmother, who presented them with the pots, of which I shall speak more hereafter. A bundle of brushwood is hung on this pole, to which are attached the leathern dress and leggins of a woman. The head is made of wormwood, and has a cap with feathers. The interior of their huts is arranged as among the Mandans: like them the Manitaries go, in winter, into the forests on both banks of the Missouri, where they find fuel, and, at the same time, protection against the inclement weather. Their winter villages are in the thickest of the forest, and the huts are built near to each other, promiscuously, and without any attempt at order or regularity.³⁴⁰ [397] They have about 250 or 300 horses in their three villages, and a considerable number of dogs.

When a Manitari invites his friends to a feast which is especially devoted to the table, each guest brings a dish, which is filled, and which he is expected to empty; if he is unable to do this, he passes it on to his neighbour, and, as a sort of reward, gives him some tobacco. If

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his neighbour accepts it, he undertakes thereby the often not pleasant task of emptying the dish. At a war feast each guest is obliged to eat whatever is placed before him.³⁴¹ When a child is to be named they proceed as follows: the father first sets out on a buffalo hunt, and returns with a good deal of game. He loads himself with ten or twelve large pieces of meat, at the top of which he places the child. Stooping and panting under the burden, he proceeds to the hut of the medicine

340 See Plate 59, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

341 La Verendrye (*Canadian Archives*, 1889, p. 21), speaking of these feasts, says: “They are for the most part great eaters; are eager for feasts. They brought me every day more than twenty dishes of wheat, beans, and pumpkins, all cooked. Mr. de la Marque, who did not hate feasts, went to them continually with my children.”— Ed.

371 man who is to give the name, and to whom he delivers the meat as a present or fee.

Like the Mandans, the Manitaries have their bands, or unions, which are distinguished by their songs, dances, and badges. Of these bands there are eleven among the men and three among the women.

Besides these bands, they have two distinct dances:— 1st. The dance of the old men, which is executed only by those who are far advanced in years, and no longer take the field. 2nd. The scalp dance; this is danced by the women, who carry the scalps upon poles.³⁴² In their hands they likewise bear guns, hatchets, clubs, &c. Some among the men beat the drum and rattle the schischikué; the warriors, meanwhile, sitting in a row, and beating time with their feet.

342 See Plate 60, in the accompanying atlas, our volume xxv.— Ed.

Their games, too, are like those of the Mandans, for if there were any with which they were not originally acquainted they have since adopted them. These people likewise set a high value on the hide of a white buffalo cow, for which they often give fifteen horses, guns,

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cloth, blankets, robes, and other articles of considerable value.³⁴³ The owner having proclaimed, from the top of his hut, to the whole assembled

343 The Mandans affirm, that the Manitaries adopted from them their veneration for the white buffalo cow, and attribute the origin of this custom to the following circumstance: — When the Manitaries, after crossing the river, first met with them, the Mandan chief exclaimed, “I am chief, and my name is the Buffalo Robe with the Beautiful Hair!” to which the Manitari chief replied, “That is likewise my name,” for they both wore white robes. The numerous Indians now proceeded in a body to hunt the buffalo. When the Manitari asked, “Will the Mandans follow their chief?” the Mandan replied, “As a sign that I speak the truth, all my people shall go over the summit of yonder hill.” Hereupon he spread out his robe on the top of the hill, the whole nation passed over it, and each man took away a tuft of the hair. Two very old men came last, and, when they approached the two chiefs, one of them said, “All who have preceded us have taken some of the hair of the robe, but we will take the robe itself.” So saying, he threw it over his shoulders, and since that time the white buffalo skin is highly valued among the Manitaries.— Maximilian.

372 village, that he has obtained such a robe, keeps it for about four years. The members of the family sometimes wear it on state occasions, and narrow strips are cut off and used as ornaments, especially as head bands. When this time is elapsed the hide is offered to one of the divinities, a medicine man being hired to perform the necessary ceremonies. During [398] the four years, valuable articles of all kinds, such as those before-mentioned, have been collected and are kept in readiness. A hut is built, to be used as a sudatory (as will be related below). A large quantity of food is distributed among the spectators; a bundle of brushwood is fastened to the top of a long pole, and the beautiful white hide is wrapped round it. It is then set up in some spot chosen by the owner, and there left to rot. The medicine man who performs the ceremonies receives, for his trouble, the valuables which have been mentioned — sometimes 150 robes, and other things, part of which he distributes among the persons present. Sometimes they ride, with the white hide, into the prairie, spread on the ground a blue or red blanket, and lay the hide upon it. If it is intended

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to offer a horse at the same time, they bind his feet together, put a muzzle on his mouth, and leave all together in this situation. If another Indian were to steal the horse, they would say he is a fool for robbing the lord of life. Other mysteries (medicines) and superstitions of the Manitaries are so interwoven with their early traditions and legends, that it is necessary to premise something on the subject.

Formerly there existed water only, and no earth: a large bird, with a red eye, dived. The man who does not die, or the lord of life (Ehsicka-Wahaddish, literally the first man),³⁴⁴ who lives in the Rocky Mountains, had made all,

³⁴⁴ Compare Matthews, *Hidatsa*, pp. 47, 48, where the object of greatest reverence is said to be the "First Made," or "Old Man Immortal." See also Henry's account of the Minitaree creation myth in *Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, pp. 351, 352.— Ed.

³⁷³ and sent the great bird to fetch up earth. Another being, worthy of veneration, is the old woman whom they call grandmother, and who roams about all over the earth. She, too, has some share in the creation, though an inferior one, for she created the sand-rat and the toad. She gave the Manitaries a couple of pots, which they still preserve as a sacred treasure, and employ as medicines, or charms, on certain occasions. She directed the ancestors of these Indians to preserve the pots, and to remember the great waters, from which all animals came cheerful, or, as my old narrator expressed it, dancing. The red-shouldered oriole (*Psaracolius phoeniceus*) came, at that time, out of the water, as well as all the other birds which still sing on the banks of the rivers. The Manitaries, therefore, look on all these birds as medicine for their plantations of maize, and attend to their song. At the time when these birds sing, they were directed by the old woman to fill these pots with water, to be merry, to dance and bathe, in order to put them in mind of the great flood. When their fields are threatened with a great drought they are to celebrate a medicine feast with the old grandmother's pots, in order to beg for rain: this is, properly, the destination of the pots. The medicine men are still paid, on such occasions, to sing for four days together in the huts, while the pots remain filled with water.

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The sun, or, as they call it, "the sun of the day," is likewise considered as a great medicine. They do not know what it really is, but that it serves to sustain and to warm the earth. When they are about to undertake some enterprise, they make offerings to it, as well as to the moon, which they call "the sun of the night." The morning star, Venus, they consider the child of the moon, and account it likewise a special medicine. They affirm that it was originally a 374 [399] Manitari, and is the grandson of the old woman who never dies. The "great bear" is said to be an ermine, the several stars of that constellation indicating, in their opinion, the burrow, the head, the feet, and the tail of that animal. They likewise call the "milky way" the ashy way; and, like the Mandans, believe that thunder is occasioned by the flapping of the wings of the large bird, which causes rain, and that the lightning is the glance of his eye, in search of prey. The rainbow is called by the Manitari "the cap of the water," or "the cap of the rain." Once, say they, an Indian caught, in the autumn, a red bird, which mocked him; this gave offence to the man, who bound the feet of his prisoner together with a fish line, and then let him fly. The bird of prey saw a hare and pounced upon it, but the hare crept into the skull of a buffalo which was lying in the prairie, and as the line, hanging from the claws of the bird, formed a semicircle, they imagine that the rainbow is still thus caused.

The old chief, Addih-Haddish, gave me the following account of the situation of men after death:— There are two villages, one large and the other smaller, whither the Manitari go when they die. The wicked, or cowardly, go to the small village; the good, or brave, to the larger one.³⁴⁵ A party of Manitari once went to war, and one of their number, a chief, was killed by the enemy; he was buried and his grave covered with large trunks of trees. After his death he went to the large village, from whence a great many men came to meet him and to escort him into it. He was alarmed when he saw them coming towards him, and turned back, wounded as he was. A white man had given him, in that country, a paper, by means of which he was enabled to return to his own village on earth, and live there many years; but my informant was quite unable to tell me the

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345 Compare with this account of the future state that given in James's *Long's Expedition*, our volume xv, p. 65.— Ed.

375 contents of this paper. After this, when he played at what they call billiards, he rubbed his hands with the talisman, and nobody could ever win a game from him; he was always called by his fellows “the dead man.”

When the Manitaries were created by the first man they formed one nation with the Crows. A medicine woman among them had three sons, each of whom built a village. The eldest went, with his people, down the Missouri, and it is not known what became of them. The second went to the mountains, and founded the village now inhabited by the Crows. The third established the tribe now called Manitaries by the Mandans, which tribe subsequently erected the three villages now existing. At that time their total number was only 1000 men.

The Manitaries are as superstitious, and have as much faith in their medicines, or charms, as the Mandans. Among these medicines are included every kind of wolf and fox, especially the former; and, therefore, when they go to war, they always wear the stripe off the back of a wolf's skin, with the tail hanging down over their shoulders. They make a slit in the skin, through which they put their head, so that the skin of the wolf's head hangs down upon their breast. Buffaloes' heads are likewise medicine. In one of their villages they preserve the neck bones of a buffalo, as the Crows also are said to do; and this is done with a view to prevent the buffalo herds [400] from removing to too great a distance from them. At times they perform the following ceremony with these bones: they take a potsherd with live coals, throw sweet-smelling grass upon it, and fumigate the bones with the smoke. They have medicine stones and medicine trees, like the Mandans, and offer to the heavenly powers at such places red cloth, red paint, and other things. Like the Mandans, too, they also offer articles of value, wail, moan, do penance to conciliate their favour, and to ask their aid 376 to obtain certain wishes and objects. Say relates that the wolf chief of the Manitaries sat for five days together on an isolated rock, without taking any food.346 This was done on the Prairie Hill, to which the Mandans also resort in similar

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cases. They hold out till their strength fails them, and creep by night into a neighbouring cave, where they sleep and dream. Among the original traditions of this people is that of the two children, which Say relates. A party going to war saw two children sitting on two isolated hills, who vanished when they endeavoured to approach them. These two hills, which are near together, are called the Children's Hills; they are not on Knife River, as Say says, but on Heart River. The women go to one of these hills to do penance and lament when they desire to have children.³⁴⁷

346 See our volume xv, p. 63. The Wolf chief is noted in Bradbury's *Travels*, our volume v, p. 163, note 99.— Ed.

347 Related in our volume xv, pp. 59, 60. Heart River, as the original Mandan home and probably the site of the Minitaree's settling among them, acquired something of a sacred character in the eyes of both tribes; see *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, i, p. 201. The present sacred seat is near Knife River, being a cavern rather than a hill, and known as the "House of the Infants." Matthews, *Hidatsa*, p. 51.— Ed.

Mr. Say relates another tradition very correctly, of a boy who lived and grew in the belly of a buffalo. They also assert that the bones of the buffaloes in the prairie sometimes come to life again.³⁴⁸ Say likewise describes the corn dance, or rather the corn feast, for the consecration of the crops. They adopted it from the Mandans, and now celebrate it in the same manner.³⁴⁹ The great medicine feast

348 These myths are related in our volume xv, pp. 63, 64.— Ed.

349 The corn dance is described in our volume xv, pp. 127, 128. It is not analogous to the celebrated green-corn dance of the Creek Indians, for which see A. S. Gatschet, *Migration Legend of the Creek Indians* (Philadelphia, 1884), pp. 181, 182. The latter is, in essence, a thanksgiving for the first fruits, the former a ceremony to secure the fertilization of seed-corn. Catlin (*North American Indians* pp. 188–190), describes another Minitaree dance

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upon the harvest of the corn, which he thinks bears resemblance to that of the Creeks.—
Ed.

377 for attracting the herds of buffaloes will be described in the next chapter, as well as some of the incantations of the women. They likewise celebrate the Okippe (which they call Akupehri), but with several deviations. Thus, instead of the so-called ark, a kind of high pole, with a fork on the summit, is planted in the centre of the open circle. When the partisans of the war parties intend to go on some enterprise in May or June, the preparations are combined with the Okippe of several young men, who wish to obtain the rank of the brave, or men. A large medicine lodge is erected, open above, with a division in the middle, in which the candidates take their places. Two pits are usually dug in the middle for the partisans, who lie in them four days and four nights, with only a piece of leather about the waist. The first partisan usually chooses the second, who undergoes the ceremony with him. There are always young people enough ready to submit their bodies to torture, in order to display their courage and firm resolve. They fast four days and nights, which leaves them faint and weak. Many of them begin the tortures on the third day; but the fourth day is that properly set apart for them. To the forked pole of the medicine lodge is fastened a long piece of buffalo hide, with the head hanging down, and to this a strap is fastened. An old man is then chosen, who is to see to the torturing of the candidates, which is executed precisely in the same manner as among the Mandans. The sufferers often faint; they are then taken by the hands, lifted up, and encouraged, and they begin afresh. When they have dragged about the buffalo skull long enough, hanging to their flesh and skin, a large circle is formed, as among [401] the Mandans, in which they are made to run round till they drop down exhausted, when they are taken to the medicine lodge. The medicine man receives from one of the spectators the knife with which the operation is to be performed. He has called out to 378 “have compassion with him, and to give him a knife,” on which one of the persons standing round throws one at his feet. The partisan is bound to build the medicine lodge. During the ceremony the spectators eat and smoke; the candidates take nothing, and, like the partisans, are covered all over with white clay. The latter, when they dance during the ceremony, remain near their pits, and then move

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on the same spot, holding in their hands their medicines, a buffalo's tail, a feather, or the like. None but the candidates dance, and the only music is striking a dried buffalo's hide with willow rods. There have been instances of fathers subjecting their children, only six or seven years of age, to these tortures. We ourselves saw one suspended by the muscles of the back, after having been compelled to fast four days. No application whatever is subsequently made for the cure of the wounds, which leave large swollen weals, and are much more conspicuous among the Manitaries than the Mandans. Most of the Manitaries have three or four of these weals, in parallel semicircular lines, almost an inch thick, which cover the entire breast. Similar transverse and longitudinal lines, arising from the same cause, are seen upon the arms, nay, the whole length of the limb is often disfigured by them.³⁵⁰ The medicine stone has already been mentioned, when treating of the Mandans. Lewis and Clarke also speak of it, saying that "the Manitaries have a stone of a similar kind;" but this is not quite correct, for it is the self-same stone to which the two people have recourse, and make use of similar ceremonies with it.

³⁵⁰ See the description of this festival in our volume xv, pp. 61–63. Matthews (*Hidatsa*, pp. 45–47) thinks that Maximilian is here describing the Dahkipe (or Nahkipe), a ceremony analogous in its tortures to the Okippe of the Mandan, but in allegory radically different, that of the Minitaree being a preparation for bravery in war. Scarcely a Minitaree is to be seen without the wales made by some form of self-torture; see *Henry-Thompson Journals*, i, pp. 363–365.— Ed.

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Another very remarkable institution of the Manitaries is the sudatory. When a man intends to undertake anything, and to implore by medicine the aid of the higher powers, he builds a small sudatory of twigs, which is covered all over with buffalo hides. Before the entrance is a straight path, forty feet long and one broad, from which the turf is taken off and piled up in a heap at one end opposite the hut. Near this heap a fire is kindled, in which large stones are made red hot. Two rows of shoes, sometimes thirty or forty pair, are placed along the path. As soon as the stones are hot, they are borne into the hut, where a hearth

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has been dug, on which the hot stones are laid. The whole population sit as spectators on either side of the path, where are placed a number of dishes with provisions, such as boiled maize, beans, meat, &c. An old medicine man is appointed to conduct the ceremonies. He walks from the heap of turf over the shoes, taking care always to set his feet upon them, to the sudatory. The young man, for whom the ceremony is performed, stands with only his breechcloth at the entrance of the sudatory, where for some time he wails and laments. The medicine man comes out of the hut, with a knife or arrow head, and cuts off a joint of his finger, which he throws away, as an offering to the lord of life, or to some other object of superstition, in which the young man has placed his confidence. After this operation the magician takes a willow twig, goes to the dishes containing [402] the provisions, dips the twig in each, and throws a portion of the contents in the direction of the four cardinal points, for the lord of life, the fire, and the divers supernatural powers, of which he makes open proclamation. The provisions are then distributed among the men, women, and children who are present. The older men go into the sudatory, the women carefully cover it, and water is sprinkled with bunches of wormwood, from vessels standing ready without upon the hot stones, which 380 throws the persons present into a profuse perspiration; the men, meanwhile, all singing at once to the rattling of the schischikué. When they are satisfied they call to the women on the outside to remove the hides. After this, a buffalo head, with the snout foremost, is carried over the row of shoes to the heap of turfs, where it is placed in the same direction. The ceremony is now complete. The robes with which the hut was covered, often sixty or eighty in number, are given by the young man to the magician for his trouble, who distributes some of them among the spectators. The persons who have submitted to the operation put on their robes, and remain in the open air till their bodies are dry, this medicine being generally performed in the summer. In the winter they prepare such steam baths in their own huts, but at that season they are not medicine, and the men and women assemble together. The grand ceremony just described is instituted especially when they wish to ask success for a military expedition, or for some other important enterprise. They then purchase a red

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blanket or a piece of blue cloth, which they offer to the divinity, hanging it on a pole behind the sudatory, where it is left to be destroyed by the wind and weather.

The Manitaries likewise make offerings at times to the great serpent which lives in the Missouri, by placing in the river poles, to which robes or coloured blankets are attached.³⁵¹ This practice is founded on a story like that which is current among the Mandans, but with some differences. A war party was on its way to the Upper Missouri to meet the enemy: when they had proceeded a considerable distance two young men turned back, and found, at a certain

³⁵¹ Serpent worship had much vogue among many North American tribes. The Algonquian believed in a great serpent in the Great Lakes which raised storms, and destroyed canoes. Among Siouan tribes the snake was a holy or at least mysterious being. See Dorsey, "Siouan Cults," p. 366. Upon the whole subject of serpent worship consult Brinton, *Myths of the New World*, pp. 129–143.— Ed.

³⁸¹ spot, a large serpent coiled up. After looking at the animal for some time, one of them kindled a fire, in which they burnt the serpent. The man who had made the fire took up the remains, smelt them, and affirmed that the smell was so inviting, he could not refrain from eating a part, and, though his comrade dissuaded him, he ate a small portion of the roasted flesh. In the evening, when they were going to lie down to rest for the night, he took off his shoes, and, to his great astonishment, found that his feet were striped like the serpent which they had killed. He told his friend, and said, "This is delightful; when I go home, I will pull off my shoes, and everybody will look at my feet." On the following day his legs were striped up to the knees. He said, laughing, "This is admirable; I shall no longer have occasion to mark my exploits by stripes, for nature herself furnishes me with them." On the third day he was striped up to his hips. They slept on the evening of that day, and on the fourth day he was completely converted into a serpent. "Be not afraid of me," said he to his friend, "I have neither arms nor legs, and cannot move from the spot; carry me [403] to the river." His friend dragged him to the Missouri, being unable to carry him on account of his length and weight. The serpent immediately swam, dived

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below the surface, and called to his friend, who was mourning on the bank, "Weep not, my friend; be comforted and go home in peace; four things, however, I must beg of you to bring me; first, bring me a white wolf; secondly, a polecat; thirdly, another painted red; and fourthly, a black pipe." His friend went home, and after some time returned with the objects required, and lamented a whole day on the bank of the river. The serpent then appeared: "It is well that you have kept your word," said he; "you will go to war and kill as many enemies as you have brought objects to me. But first come here and lament, for I am 382 medicine for all futurity." The Indian went out the same day and killed an enemy; but the serpent had previously told him that its head would be at the old Mandan village, and its tail reach to the mouth of the Yellow Stone River; that with one ear it would be able to hear to the distance of the Maison du Chien, a hill in the prairie two days' journey from the north bank of the Missouri, and with the other to the Crête Côte, likewise two days' journey from the other bank. The friend went four times to war, and each time killed an enemy. The Manitaries, who firmly believe this story, still go to the river when the fancy strikes them, and set up an offering. They relate that a man once went to the river to see the serpent; he lamented for a long time, at length it appeared, on which he called it his father. But the serpent said, "You are not my son; I have only one son, whose name is —, he who has no arms; but you are the son of him who shall be chief of the village to which I have destined him. When you ride out to hunt the buffalo you will kill your enemies, and some of your people will likewise be killed."

In cases of difficult parturition, which, however, seldom occur, they are accustomed to give the medicine man one, two, or even four horses. He comes to the hut of the lying-in woman, smokes with her husband, then takes a fox or wolf skin cap, and strokes the woman with it on the back, or some other part of the body, singing, and rattling the schischikué. Often he touches or rubs her with a tortoise shell, as the Botocudos in Brazil do, often merely with a feather.

Like the Mandans they sometimes keep owls in their huts, which they consider as soothsayers, and whose notes they pretend to understand. This is the large grey owl,

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without doubt the *Strix Virginiana*. The war eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) is likewise kept alive for the sake of the tail feathers, 383 which they so highly prize. Some individuals among them have strange superstitious ideas and practices; thus, a certain man smokes very slowly, no person is allowed to speak nor to move a single limb of his body, except to take hold of the pipe. Neither women, children, nor dogs, are suffered to remain in the hut while he is smoking, and some one is always stationed to keep the door. If, however, there are exactly seven persons present to smoke, all these precautionary measures are done away with, and they may smoke as quickly as they please. [404] When he clears his pipe and shakes the ashes into the fire, it blazes up, doubtless because he puts some gunpowder, or similar combustible, into the pipe. When any person has a painful or a diseased place, the same man puts his pipe upon it and smokes. On these occasions he does not swallow the smoke, as is the Indian custom, but affirms that he can extract the disorder by his smoking, which he pretends to seize with his hand, and to throw into the fire.

The division of the year into months is not very dissimilar from that of the Mandans, though I have never been able to obtain two accounts which precisely correspond. But little is to be said of the hunting and war of the Manitaries which has not been already related of the Mandans. They are reported as being very skilful in making the cabri parks, which, in the month of April, they can do in half a day, though they have not made any such for some time past. The skin of the cabri is used for shoes.

The Manitaries are at present friendly towards the Whites in the vicinity of the Missouri; but, if a white man happens to encounter one of their war parties in the prairie, he is generally plundered. In the north, on the Red River, they often act in a hostile manner to the Whites and Half-breeds residing there. Their enemies properly so called are the Blackfeet, the Assiniboins, the Sioux, the Pawnees, the Arikaras, 384 the Shiennes or Chayennes, the Crees, and the Arrapahos; their allies are the Mandans and the Crows.

All these Indians treat the bodies of their slain enemies in the most barbarous manner. Charbonneau remembers that the Manitaries, for several months, kept the body of an

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Assiniboin, who was killed in the winter, which they daily used as a mark to shoot at. Mutilation is very common among them. Want of feeling towards their prisoners is common to all uncivilized people; the nations of hunters especially do not regard the tortures of living creatures; and the Brazilian savage does not in this respect differ from the North American, and the Gaucho in the south of this continent, or, indeed, from man in a state of nature in every part of the habitable globe.

The Manitaries appear to have but a very slight acquaintance with medicine; they mostly have recourse to the drum, the schischikué, and the singing of the medicine men, for the cure of diseases. As a remedy for wounds they burn scented grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), hold their hands in the smoke, and then, at some distance, over the wound, after which they lay tallow upon it. The cure of some men who recovered after being scalped, and many large scars on the bodies of these Indians, are proofs of the natural vigour of their constitutions. The medicine men have a particular song, without words, which is employed as the last resource to recover a person at the point of death. The magician alone then sings, accompanied by his schischikué.

The Manitaries always lay their dead upon stages or scaffolds. As the lord of life is displeased when they quarrel and kill each other, those who do so are buried in the earth, that they [405] may be no longer seen. In this case a buffalo's head is laid upon the grave, in order that the buffalo herds may not keep away, for, if they were to smell the wicked, they might remove and never return. The good 385 are laid upon stages, that they may be seen by the lord of life.

The language of the Manitaries is very different from that of the Mandans, and is far more difficult to pronounce correctly. Like that, it has many gutturals, especially the ch, as in Dutch and German. The difficulty of the pronunciation lies chiefly in the accent. What may in German be expressed in a few words, requires several; a proof of the poverty of the language. Lewis and Clarke say —“the dialect of the Mandans differs widely from those of the Arikaras and Manitaries; but their long residence near each other has insensibly

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blended their manners, and occasioned some approximation in language, especially in objects of daily occurrence." This is correct, for I was assured by both nations that, when they first lived together, their languages were totally different, and respectively unintelligible to each other.

CHAPTER XXVII A FEW WORDS RESPECTING THE ARIKKARAS

The Arikkaras on the Missouri are a tribe which, many years ago, separated from the Pawnees, and settled on the Lower Missouri, where they inhabited two villages.³⁵² At the time of Lewis and Clarke's travels these Indians lived on friendly terms with the Whites; but, in consequence of subsequent misunderstandings, they became their most inveterate enemies, and killed all the traders who ventured into the vicinity of their territory. After they had defeated the keel-boats of General Ashley, and the unsuccessful expedition of Colonel Leavenworth, they became more insolent than ever; and, as they had no longer any prospect of trading on the Missouri, and other circumstances unfavourable to them took place, they removed, in the year 1832, and settled at a great distance in the prairie, where they are said to dwell, on the road to Santa Fé, above the sources of the river La Platte. Their villages on the Missouri have been entirely abandoned and desolate since that time.³⁵³

³⁵² For an account of the Arikara see Bradbury's *Travels*, in our volume v, p. 113, note 76.— Ed.

³⁵³ See *ante*, notes 175–178.— Ed.

The Arikkaras are tall, robust, well-made men; some of them are nearly six feet (Paris measure) in height. Their physiognomy does not materially differ from that of the neighbouring tribes, especially of the Mandans and Manitaris, and their women are said to be the handsomest on the Missouri, but also the most licentious.³⁵⁴ Their costume is likewise not very different from that of the Mandans;

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354 See Brackenridge's description of the Arikara, and the chastity of the young women, in our volume vi, pp. 120–132.— Ed.

387 their robes are mostly painted of a reddish-brown colour. They have renounced the costume, and the greater part of the customs of the Pawnees. At the time when they left the Missouri, they amounted to between 3000 and 4000 souls, of whom 500 were warriors, and possessed a great many horses and dogs; they can now bring 600 men into the field, and are still a warlike people. Ross Cox, in his journey to the Columbia, calls them a powerful tribe, which is, perhaps, rather too strong an expression. The most detailed accounts respecting this people, with which I am acquainted, are in Brackenridge's and Bradbury's travels;355 yet they are very meagre, though the former had opportunities of observing them for [407] some time, on friendly terms. Perhaps he had not an interpreter sufficiently acquainted with the language. I will state what I have learned from some Mandans, especially from Mato-Topé, who lived a long time among the Arikkaras.

355 Volumes v and vi of our series.— Ed.

Brackenridge gives an imperfect description of the construction of their huts, which does not much differ from that of the Mandans. This writer says that the villages of the Arikkaras were very dirty, and compares them with some old European towns. As it must, however, be supposed that Brackenridge had never seen European towns, where the police are more strict than in American towns, his comparison does not hold good. Both Brackenridge and Bradbury were very well received by these people, and some white men were living among them, who served as interpreters. When a stranger was once in their villages he was hospitably treated, and invited to many of their festivals. When he left, however, he had to be on his guard, especially against the war parties, who seldom spared a white man.

The agriculture of the Arikkaras was the same as that of 388 their neighbours. In the education of their children they are said to have been more strict, for, when the children

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behaved ill, they were severely corrected. Among the more northern nations also, a better system prevails than among the Mandans and Manitaris: it frequently happens, among the Chippeways, that, when a boy rudely passes before the older men, they take him by the arm and give him a good thrashing. If a young man is idle, and will not go hunting, his father has been known to drive him before him a mile, beating him all the way, and then telling him that, if he returns without any game, he shall be punished still more severely. Like most of the Indian tribes, the Arikkaras have their bands, or unions, and likewise distinct dances. They are as follows:—

1. The band of the bears. It consists of old men, who, in their dance, wear some parts of the bear's skin, a necklace of bears' claws, &c.
2. The mad wolves. They wear a wolf's skin on their back, with a slit, through which they put the head and arm.
3. The foxes wear fox skins on different parts of their body.
4. The mad dogs carry a schischikué in their hand when they dance.
5. The mad bulls. These are the most distinguished men, and wear, in their dance, the skin of a buffalo's head, with the horns.
6. The soldiers.

Besides these bands, the Arikkaras have, at least, seven different dances.

1. The hot dance, or the black arms.
2. The dance of the bird's egg. They wear, on the forehead, the skin of a screech-owl.
3. The dance of the youngest child. Both the young and the old bands may have this dance, and wear, at the back of the head, a piece of swan's skin, with a crow's feather.

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4. The dance of the prairie foxes. They wear a kind of apron of red or blue cloth; behind, [408] the skin of a prairie fox; short leggins, just above the knee; at the back of the head, two crows' tails crossed; and on their leggins, bells, which they make themselves out of tin kettles.

5. The white earth dance. They wear a cap made of ermines' tails, hanging down; at the back of their head, two war eagles' feathers crossed; at the small of the back, a piece of leather like a tail, ornamented with strips of ermine and bells; they carry a large bow-lance, decorated with the feathers of the war eagles. Their robe is trimmed with fox skin and strips of ermine.

6. The dance of the spirits. A large cap of owls' feathers hangs down behind, and goes even round the body. They have a war pipe suspended round the neck, and in their hands the skin of their medicine animal.

7. The dance of the extended robe. If anything is given to them during this dance, they receive it with their guns pointed at the giver. They dress as if they were going to battle, and only the bravest warriors are admitted among them. If any one accepts a present, another, who has performed more exploits, pushes him away, enumerates his own deeds, till another comes and treats him in the same manner, and so on, till, at length, the bravest takes possession of the gift. They imitate in their dance the various attitudes of fighting, and, with one arm, hold their robe before them like a shield, as if to defend themselves. All the wounds they have received are marked on the body with red paint. These bands and dances are bought and sold in the same manner as among the Manitaries, Crows, and Mandans. The purchasers are obliged to offer and give up their wives to the discretion of the fathers, that is, the sellers.

Their games are nearly the same as among the other tribes. 390 The skin of a young white buffalo cow is likewise highly valued by them. They have the same distinctions as

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the Mandans for their military exploits, and the partisans observe the same ceremonies, only the Arikkara partisan has a head of maize at his breast, which they consider as a great medicine. If they are obliged to retreat they never throw aside their girdle, as the other nations do, however hot the weather may be. It is said that when many Arikkaras are together they do not fight very well, but when there are only a few they show much more bravery. No tribe has killed so many white men as the Arikkaras. The Pawnees formerly tortured their prisoners, till their chief, Petulescharu, as Say relates,³⁵⁶ abolished the custom,³⁵⁷ and the Arikkaras likewise renounced it when they separated from the Pawnees.

³⁵⁶ See our volume xv, pp. 150–157.— Ed.

³⁵⁷ From John Irving's *Indian Sketches* it appears that Petulescharu did not succeed in wholly abolishing this custom.— Maximilian.

Comment by Ed. John T. Irving, jr., accompanied United States Commissioner Henry L. Ellsworth, who was sent (1833) to arrange with the Pawnee for the well-being of the remnant of the Delaware tribe, that had been removed to the west of the Mississippi. His adventures, entitled *Indian Sketches taken during an Expedition to the Pawnee Tribes*, appeared in Philadelphia in 1835.— Ed.

Their religious ideas and traditions are in general the same as those of the Mandans. They give to the first man a name which is likewise the appellation of the wolf. They formerly revered the ark of the first man, but they have given up that custom. Like all the Indians on the Missouri, they have their medicine feasts and all manner of superstitious practices. The Okippe, properly speaking, is not known among them; they torture themselves, however, though [409] not so cruelly as their neighbours. All kinds of animals are considered by them as medicine, and they choose it as the other tribes do. They never fast so long as the Mandans and the Manitaris; at the most for one day. When they would do penance and kill buffaloes, they ³⁹¹ never load their horses with the flesh of the animals

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they may have killed, but often bring home a large quantity, on their head and back, from a great distance. He who bears the greatest burden sometimes gives the flesh to a poor old man, who then sings medicine songs for him, in order that he may have much success in hunting and in war, and by such actions he acquires great esteem. The lord of life told the Arikkaras that, if they gave to the poor in this manner, and laid burdens upon themselves, they would be successful in all their undertakings. It is said that they have given up all their former religious traditions except the last. This may, perhaps, be partly ascribed to the influence of the Whites—a conjecture which occurs to unprejudiced persons when they consider the simple mythology of the Mandans. The maize is one of the principal medicines of the Arikkaras, for which they show their reverence in various ways. One of their greatest medicine feasts is that of the bird case, which they have faithfully retained; they esteem this medicine as highly as Christians do the Bible. It is the general rule and law, according to which they govern themselves. This instrument is hung up in the medicine lodge of their villages, and accompanies them wherever they go. It consists of a four-cornered case, made of parchment, six or seven feet long, but narrow, strengthened at the top with a piece of wood. It opens at one end, and seven schischikues of gourds are fixed at the top, ornamented with a tuft of horse-hair dyed red. See the annexed³⁵⁸ woodcut, designed by Mato-Tope. Inside of the box there are stuffed birds of all such kinds as they can procure; that is to say, only such species as are here in summer. Besides these the box contains a large and very celebrated medicine pipe, which is smoked only on extraordinary occasions and great festivals. If an Arikkara has even killed his brother,

³⁵⁸ See p. 355 for illustration of Arikara bird-cage gourds.— Ed.

³⁹² and then smoked this pipe, all ill-will towards him must be forgotten. With this singular apparatus a ceremony is performed as soon as the seed is sown and the first gourds are ripe. The blossoms of the gourd are guarded, that no one may injure them; and, as soon as the first fruit is ripe, some distinguished warriors are chosen, who must come to the assembly. Articles of value are presented to them; the first fruit is cut and given them to eat. For this they must take down and open the bird case, on which occasion

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medicine songs are sung, and the large pipe is smoked. In the summer-time, [410] when the trees are green, they take an evergreen tree, such as a red cedar, peel the trunk, and paint it with blue, red, and white rings, and then plant it before the medicine lodge; the case is taken down, and the ceremony performed. This bird case is of special efficacy in promoting the growth of the maize and other plants; and he who carries this magic case to a great distance, and with considerable exertion, obtains the highest place in the favour of the lord of life. The strongest men among these Indians are said sometimes to carry a whole buffalo, without the head and the intestines, to present it as an offering to the bird case. This offering is considered very meritorious; and, when they have made it four times, it is believed that they will never be in want of buffaloes. At the beginning of the world, the Mandans, it is said, inhabited the village of Ruhptare, together with the Arikkaras. At that time the lord of life came to them in the form of a child, and directed them to celebrate the Okippe every year, like the Mandans, but not their ceremony with the bird case. Quarrels and affrays arose on this subject between the Mandans of Ruhptare and the Arikkaras, during which the lord of life remained among the former. He thought of going to the other party, which he was advised not to do, because they would kill him; to which he answered, "They cannot kill me." He then 393 went to a stream, took out of it a piece of salt, with which he rubbed his whole body, and threw a part of it among the Arikkaras, by which a great many of them were poisoned. The two parties afterwards separated; the Arikkaras retained their bird case, the Mandans the Okippe, as the lord of life had enjoined them. In consequence of this event the Arikkaras were angry with the lord of life, and called him "the prairie wolf."

This bird case is likewise a calendar for the Arikkaras, for they reckon the seven cold months by the seven schischikues, beginning to count by the middle one for the coldest month. On the left hand they reckon three months till the warm weather, which lasts five months, and which they pass over, to begin at the end of the schischikues with the other cold months, proceeding to the centre where the greatest degree of cold recurs. Leaving

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out the five months of warm weather, May, June, July, August, and September, those which are reckoned by the schischikues are—

1. The month in which the leaves fall; October.
2. The month of the nose of the little serpent; November.
3. The month of the nose of the great serpent; December.
4. The month of the seven cold nights; January.
5. The month which kills or carries off men; February.
6. The month in which the wild geese return; March.
7. The month in which vegetation begins; April.

The Arikkaras practise a number of strange tricks and juggleries. They are remarkably dexterous in sleight-of-hand performances, which they are said to have learned from a celebrated [412] juggler. They institute medicine feasts at which entire comedies are performed. One, for instance, disguised in a bear's skin, with the head and claws, imitates the motions and the voice of the animal so accurately that he cannot be distinguished from a real bear. He is shot; the wound is plainly to be seen, and blood flows; he drops down 394 and dies; the skin is stripped off, and at last the man appears safe and sound. On another occasion, a man's head is cut off with a sabre and carried out. The body remains bleeding, without the head, and this headless trunk dances merrily about. The head is then replaced, but with the face at the back. The man continues to dance, but the head is seen in its right position, and the man who was beheaded dances as if nothing had happened to him. The bleeding wound is rubbed with the hand, it disappears, and all is in order again. Men are shot; the blood flows; the wounds are rubbed, and they come to life again. The Arikkaras perform all these tricks with such consummate address, that the illusion is complete, so that most of the French Canadians believe in the reality of all these

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wonders. No Arikkara will break a marrow-bone in his hut; this must always be done in the open air; they believe that, if they neglect this precaution, their horses will break their legs in the prairie.

These people have at present a great many enemies. The Mandans, the Manitaris, the Crows, the Sioux, the Blackfeet, the Assiniboins, the Arrapahos, and the Pawnees.

The Arikkaras affirm that God said to them that they were made of earth, and must return to earth; on which account they bury their dead in the ground. Various things are sometimes cast into the graves of eminent men; the corpse is dressed in the best clothes, the face painted red, and sometimes a good horse is killed on the grave. If the deceased has left a son, he receives his father's medicine apparatus; if not, it is buried with him in the grave.

The language of the Arikkaras differs totally from those of the Mandans and Manitaris; there is more harshness in the sound; the guttural *ch* occurs frequently, and there are very many German terminations, such as *natsch*, *ratsch*, *ass*, *oss*, *ass*, &c. &c., which are much harsher than the 395 terminations of the Manitari language. Germans pronounce it easily and correctly. Many words again end with the syllable, *hahn*, *rahn*, *wahn*, pronounced as in German. Their manner of giving names to their children does not differ from that of the Mandans and other Indians of the Missouri, and the western plains at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. They are often harmonious, and are changed on special occasions, such, for instance, as having performed some feat of valour, when arrived at manhood.

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