

force through a country where we were at any moment liable to depredation, not a single animal had been stolen from us, and our only loss had been one old mule bitten to death by a rattlesnake. Three weeks after we reached the frontier the Pawnees and the Comanches began a regular series of hostilities on the Arkansas trail, killing men and driving off horses. They attacked, without exception, every party, large or small, that passed during the next six months.

Diamond Spring, Rock Creek, Elder Grove, and other camping places besides, were passed all in quick succession. At Rock Creek we found a train of government provision wagons, under the charge of an emaciated old man in his seventy-first year. Some restless American devil had driven him into the wilderness at a time when he should have been seated at his fireside with his grandchildren on his knees. I am convinced that he never returned; he was complaining that night of a disease, the wasting effects of which upon a younger and stronger man, I myself had proved from severe experience. Long ere this no doubt the wolves have howled their moonlight carnival over the old man's attenuated remains.

Not long after we came to a small trail leading to Fort Leavenworth, distant but one day's journey. Tête Rouge here took leave of us. He was anxious to go to the fort in order to receive payment for his valuable military services. So he and his horse James, after bidding an affectionate farewell, set out together, taking with them as much provision as they could conveniently carry, including a large quantity of brown sugar. On a cheerless rainy evening we came to our last encamping ground. Some pigs belonging to a Shawnee farmer were grunting and rooting at the edge of the grove.

"I wonder how fresh pork tastes," murmured one of the party, and more than one voice murmured in response. The fiat went forth, "That pig must die," and a rifle was leveled forthwith at the countenance of the plumpest porker. Just then a wagon train, with some twenty Missourians, came out from among the trees. The marksman suspended his aim, deeming it inexpedient under the circumstances to consummate the deed of blood.

In the morning we made our toilet as well as circumstances would permit, and that is saying but very little. In spite of the dreary rain of yesterday, there never was a brighter and gayer