

wrapped in one of the blankets that Margaret had placed about his thin shoulders.

"Yes — Le Bœuf," continued Thayer. "His arm was still in a sling, but he and his crowd — there were six of them in all — had done their best to overtake us before we got to the railroad. He was more afraid of me than I was of him. When I walked in among them he jumped to his feet and came straight toward me. I was alone — with Mr. Dinsmore within reach but out of sight — and, Hite, they never saw your son — just as I promised you ——"

"'I hear you men are looking for me,' I said. 'What can I do for you?' They all stood around, their eyes on Le Bœuf, as if they wanted him to speak. A more surprised and frightened lot of men I never saw.

"'Well, we did n't burn de house,' Le Bœuf began. 'We 'fraid you come and 'rest us. We haf no money to fight reech man like you — we want work for you again. We know who burn de house — it not us.'

"'That 's all right, Le Bœuf,' I said. 'I