

finding several dead Indians, some of whom had been buried in a remarkable way. A deep hole was dug, across which two or three poles were placed to support the body of the dead brave, dressed in all his finery, and wrapped in his blanket. A large quantity of branches, weighted down with stones, prevented the earth from coming in contact with him, and protected him from the wolves and wolverines. We found the trail led across the lake, but that all the rest of the Indians' carts, with quantities of bacon, flour, clothes and furs, had been left on the near side. The lake here was 50 yards wide, at least 6 feet deep, and there was a slight current. How to cross was the difficulty, and we commenced to cut the few dead, soft-wood trees in the neighborhood, so as to make a raft. Whilst this was being done, Freer and I noticed what seemed to be white pieces of wood on the opposite shore, and concluded that the Indians had had a raft, and that these were the pieces of it, which had floated down the current. As it would mean a great saving of time, Freer and I stripped and swam after them. The opposite shore was densely wooded, and we expected to get fired at, but we collected all the pieces without accident. Whilst wading on the shore, my foot struck something in the sand, which turned out to be two Indian knives in sheaths, driven in point first. We now had enough wood for two rafts, which were soon tied together with raw hide lariats, here called shaganappy, the ordinary string of the prairie. We put our saddles and blankets on the rafts, and poled them across, whilst the horses were driven or ridden barebacked into the water. It took us the whole afternoon to complete the crossing, and then we proceeded to make a solid foot-bridge, by constructing enough rafts to reach across when tied together, and kept in place by poles driven into the bottom. At all this sort of work our men were splendid; they all could handle an axe, and required hardly any telling after the idea had been explained to them. We found, on crossing, a high, rocky wooded peninsula, connected to the land by the largest and worst muskeg we had yet seen. The trail struck across this, and just where it left the sound ground was a fat Indian woman sitting at the foot of a tree, with a noose round her neck, and dead. She had evidently despaired of crossing the muskeg, and had committed suicide rather than fall into our hands. Our bivouac in the pine woods that night was disagreeably varied by one of the scouts dropping his revolver into a fire, from which it was not rescued until all six cartridges were discharged in various directions. Fortunately there was nothing hit but a saddle.

The next morning we prospected the muskeg, which was covered with willow and alder bushes, so that one could not see 30 yards. My horse soon sank to his knees and hocks, and the debris of bacon, clothing, pans, furs, etc., in every direction showed how difficult the Indians had found it. It was impossible to ride through, so we dismounted and led our horses, and after about a mile of floundering, and having to drag the frightened beasts along, we