

INTRODUCTION.

IT is not the desire of the author of this work to publish the incidents which drenched a peaceful and prosperous settlement in blood, and subjected the survivors to untold suffering and privations at the hands of savages, in order to gratify a morbid craving for notoriety. During all my perils and wanderings amid the snow and ice of that trackless prairie, the hope that nerved me to struggle on, was, that if rescued, I might within the sacred precincts of the paternal hearth, seek seclusion, where loving hands would help me to bear the burden of my sorrow, and try to make me forget at times, if they could not completely efface from my memory, the frightful scenes enacted around that prairie hamlet, which bereft me of my loved one, leaving my heart and fireside desolate for ever.* Prostrated by fatigue and exposure, distracted by the constant dread of outrage and death, I had well-nigh abandoned all hope of ever escaping from the Indians with my life, but, as the darkness of the night is just before the dawn, so my fears which had increased until I was in despair, God in His inscrutable way speedily calmed, for while I was brooding over and preparing for my impending fate, a sudden commotion attracted my attention and in less time than it takes to write it, I was free. From that moment I received every kindness and attention, and as I approached the confines of civilization, I became aware of how diligently I had been sought after, and that for weeks I had been the object of the tenderest solicitude, not only of my friends and relations, but of the whole continent.