

against which he had clashed often, and to find the old prejudice was so strong a factor in the disorganizing of an outpost was enraging.

"And do you realize what that man did when he took that trail north?" he demanded impressively. "He knew that he carried his life in his hand as surely as he carried that body. And he went up there to play it against big odds for the sake of a lot of people who had a contemptible contempt for him."

"And cursed us soundly while he did it," added one of the men, in an aside; but the Major overheard it.

"Yes, that's like him, too," he agreed. "But, if any of you can show me so great a courage and conscientiousness in a more refined citizen, I'm waiting to see it."

Then there was the quick fall of hoofs outside the shack, hurried questions and brief answers. One of the scouts from the north ridge rushed in and reported to Major Dreyer.

"A gang o' hostiles are in sight—not many; they've got our horses. Think they carry a flag o' truce, but couldn't spot it for sure. They're not a fighten' gang, any way, fur they're comen' slow and carryen' something."

"A flag of truce? That means peace. Thank God!" said Tillie, fervently.

"And Genesee," added the Major.

As for Rachel, her heart seemed in her throat. She tried to speak, to rush out and learn their message, but she could not move. An awful presentiment bound her. "Carrying something!"