

very sudden as well as strong impression had been produced by this talk ; and by observing and listening to them as they whispered together, while I pretended to speak to V——, I became convinced that they intended to desert us. The short but significant answers which I received to one or two careless questions which I put, convinced me of the truth of my suspicions. I therefore summoned a council of war, and communicated these unpleasant occurrences to V——, and to the two attendants. I told them, that in these circumstances, where our lives might depend upon the decision we should adopt, I considered we were all equal in rank, and each had as influential a voice as his neighbour ; that they must be prepared very soon to decide whether we should return to the Pawnee village with these rascally guides, or endeavour to reach Fort Leavenworth without them ; and I professed my own willingness to adopt either alternative which the majority might prefer. After a short consultation, they were unanimous in their decision against returning to the Pawnees. The recollection of the filth, the vermin, and other nuisances, to which they must return, besides the very doubtful nature of the reception we might meet with, now that we had expended all our trading articles, and the terms of open dislike on which we had parted from the two most powerful chiefs—all these were conclusive arguments against the expediency of revisiting the Pawnees ; while the other alternative presented, it