

men to make feasts of dogs' flesh, and dances, in small parties, in the midst of the most profound peace. They fall sometimes on one nation, and sometimes on another, and surprise some of their hunters, whom they scalp and bring home as prisoners. Their senators wink at this, or rather encourage it, as it tends to keep up the martial spirit of their people, inures them to watchfulness and hardship, and gives them an early taste for blood.

The qualities in an Indian war are vigilance and attention; to give and to avoid a surprise; and patience and strength, to endure the intolerable fatigues and hardships which always attend it. The nations of America are at an immense distance from each other, with a vast desert frontier, and hid in the bosom of hideous, and almost boundless forests. These must be traversed before they meet an enemy, who is often at such a distance as might be supposed to prevent either quarrel or danger. But, notwithstanding the secrecy of the destination of the party that first moves, the enemy has frequent notice of it, is prepared for the attack, and ready to take advantage in the same manner of the least want of vigilance in the aggressors. Their whole art of war consists in this: they never fight in the open field, but upon some very extraordinary occasions; not from cowardice, for they are brave; but they despise this method, as unworthy an able warrior, and as an affair in which fortune governs more than prudence. The principal things which help them to find out their enemies, are the smoke of their fires, which they smell at a distance almost incredible; and their tracks, in the discovery and distinguishing of which, they are possessed of a sagacity equally astonishing; for they will tell in the footsteps, which to us would seem most confused, the number of men that have passed, and the length of time since they have passed; they even go so far as to distinguish the several nations by the different marks of their feet, and to perceive footsteps, where we could distinguish nothing less. A mind diligently intent upon one thing, and exercised by long experience, will go lengths at first view scarcely credible.

But as they who are attacked have the same knowledge, and know how to draw the same advantages from it, their great address is to baffle each other in these points. On the expedition they light no fire to warm themselves,

or prepare their victuals, but subsist merely on the miserable pittance of some of their meal mixed with water; they lie close on the ground all day, and march only in the night. As they march in their usual order in files, he who closes the rear diligently covers his own tracks, and those of all who preceded him, with leaves. If any stream occurs in their route, they march in it for a considerable way to foil their pursuers. When they halt to rest and refresh themselves, scouts are sent out on every side to reconnoitre the country, and beat up every place where they suspect an enemy may lie perdu. In this manner they often enter a village whilst the strength of the nation is employed in hunting, and massacre all the helpless old men, women, and children, or make prisoners as many as they can manage, or have strength enough to be useful to their nation.

They often cut off small parties of men in their huntings; but when they discover an army of their enemies, their way is to throw themselves flat on their faces amongst the withered leaves, the colour of which their bodies are painted to resemble exactly. They generally let a part pass unmolested; and then, rising a little, they take aim, for they are excellent marksmen, and setting up a most tremendous shout, which they call the war-cry, they pour a storm of musket-bullets upon the enemy; for they have long since laid aside the use of arrows: the party attacked returns the same cry. Every man in haste covers himself with a tree, and returns the fire of the adverse party, as soon as they raise themselves from the ground to give the second fire.

After fighting some time in this manner, the party which thinks it has the advantage rushes out of its cover, with small axes in their hands, which they dart with great address and dexterity; they redouble their cries, intimidating their enemies with menaces, and encouraging each other with a boastful display of their own brave actions. Thus being come hand to hand, the contest is soon decided; and the conquerors satiate their savage fury with the most shocking insults and barbarities to the dead, biting their flesh, tearing the scalp from their heads, and wallowing in their blood like wild beasts.

The fate of their prisoners is the most severe of all. During the greatest part of their journey homewards they suffer no injury, but when they arrive at the territories of the conquering