

prior to the opening of the council at La Butte Des Morts, that the security of their people lay in the surrender of the murderers. The first intimation that this primary object would be accomplished, was given the day after our arrival at the Portage, in a very mysterious way. I was sitting at the door of my tent, when an Indian, of common appearance, with nothing over him but a blanket, came up to the bluff, and walking to the tent, seated himself upon his haunches beside it. This was almost the middle of the day. I inquired, through the interpreter, what was the object of his visit. After musing awhile, he said: "Do not strike; when the sun is there to-morrow,"—looking up and pointing to about three o'clock in the afternoon—"they will come in." Who will come in? I asked. "Red Bird and We-kau," he answered. The moment he gave the answer, he rose, wrapped his blanket about him, and with hurried step returned by the way he had come. At about three o'clock of the same day, another Indian came and took his position in nearly the same place, and in the same way, when to like questions, he gave like answers; and at sundown a third came, confirming what the other two had said, with the addition that he had, to secure that object, given to the families of the murderers nearly all of his property. There appeared to me to be two objects in view by this Indian mode of managing the art diplomatique. One was to prevent an attack, which our near neighborhood to the point where the Indian force was concentrated, led them to apprehend; the other to say all cause for attack was, as they viewed it, removed by the treble assurance given, that the murderers will, at the time specified, be brought in. There could be nothing more to the purpose.

There was something heroic in this voluntary surrender. The giving away of property to the families of the guilty parties, had nothing to do with their determination to devote themselves for the good of their people, but only to reconcile those who were about to be bereaved to the dreadful expedient. The heroism of the purpose is seen in the fact, that the murders committed at Prairie du Chien were not wanton, but