

related his grounds of alarm, which he did in his most exquisite French style—saying the Indians had, in violation of all courtesy and respect to Col. Dodge, abandoned the comfortable quarters which he had assigned them in the cabins, and had gone out far into the bush, and taken up quarters there; that the White Crow, who was their speaker, had spoken slightly and disrespectfully of Col. Dodge, declaring that he was no great shakes of a fighter; that if Black Hawk came across him, he would make mince-meat of him and his handful of men, as he had done of the “soft-shelled” Maj. Stillman and his men at Kishwaukee; that the whites couldn’t fight; that they were a soft-shelled breed; that they could not stand before the frightful yell of the Red Man—nor could they stand the tomahawk or the spear; that when the spear was applied to them they would squawk like ducks; that they would run upon the first approach of danger, and stick their heads in the brush, like turkeys or quails—exemplifying this whole procedure in the most insulting and fantastic Indian mimicry, and applying it to the defeat of Maj. Stillman, and winding up by saying that he was friendly towards him, Capt. Gratiot, and that he had better quit Col. Dodge, and go home and stay there. And Capt. Gratiot furthermore stated that the Indians were all sulky and moody, and stealthy in their conversation and movements; that they had been busy in grinding and whetting their knives, tomahawks and spears—a further evidence of their intention to make an attack upon us was that two athletic young Indian warriors were seen, just at the approach of darkness, slipping off stealthily in the direction of the Four Lakes, where the main body of the Winnebagoes were encamped. “Taking all these things into consideration,” continued Capt. Gratiot, “together with my knowledge of Indian character, I think, Col. Dodge, we have real cause of fearful apprehension—at least I am greatly alarmed, and think we should prepare for the worst.”

During this whole recital of Capt. Gratiot, Col. Dodge said not a word, but no one at all skilled in human physiognomy could have mistaken the raging storm within the Colonel’s breast. At Capt. Gratiot’s conclusion, he jumped hastily to his