

had arrived, the signal was given for the main body of the Indians to charge. They were led by the nephew of Red Cloud, a superb young chieftain, who was ambitious of succeeding in due course to the leadership now held by his uncle. Chanting their fierce war songs, they came on arranged in a great semi-circle, splendid, stalwart braves, the flower of the nation. * * * Most of them carried on their left arm painted targets or shields of buffalo hide, stout enough to turn a rifle bullet unless hit fairly. Under a fire of redoubled intensity from their skirmishers they broke into a charge. Again they advanced into the face of a terrible silence. Again at the appointed moment the order rang out. Again the fearful discharge swept them away in scores. Powell's own rifle brought down the dauntless young chief in the lead. Others sprang to the fore when he fell and gallantly led on their men. Undaunted they came on and on, in spite of the slaughter such as no Indian living had experienced or heard of. The Indians could account for the continuous fire only by supposing that the corral contained a greater number of defenders than its area would indicate it capable of receiving. So in the hope that the infernal fire would slack, they pressed home the attack until they were almost at the wagon beds. Back on the hills Red Cloud and the veteran chiefs, with the women and children, watched the progress of the battle with eager intensity and marked with painful apprehension the slaughter of their bold warriors. The situation was terribly critical. If they came on a few feet further the rifles would be useless and the little party would have to fight hand to hand without reloading. In that event the end would be certain, but just before the Indians reached the corral they broke and gave way. So close had they come that some of the troopers in their excitement actually rose to their knees and threw the augers with which the loop-holes had been made and other missiles in the faces of the Indians.

"What relief filled the minds of the defenders when they saw the great force which had come on so gallantly reeling back over the plain in a frantic desire to get to cover, can easily be imagined. Yet such was the courage, the desperation of these Indians, that in spite of repulse after repulse, and slaughter awful to