

CHAPTER XVI.

RELIGIOUS FEELINGS. — AN INSTANCE OF THE OVERRULING OF PROVIDENCE. — SINGULAR WEATHER. — CAPTAIN BLACK BEAVER'S SPEECH. — VISIT TO THE WICHITA AGENCY. — STEREOSCOPIC VIEWS IN KIOWA CAMP. — MURDER OF A SURVEYOR. — TRADING FOR AMMUNITION. — SULPHUR SPRING.

My mind has been of late much impressed with a sense of divine goodness and mercy, far beyond the utterance of words, in which I was favored to see the futility and utter insignificance of words, as between the soul and its Maker and Redeemer, who sees the very secrets of the heart, and knows the intents and motives thereof.

As the husk is valueless, except as enclosing the precious kernel, so words of themselves are powerless, except as they contain the precious seed of life. As a groan may be more powerful in giving an idea of intense suffering than the best set form of words, so there is an exercise and travail of spirit too deep for words to express, or the carnal mind to comprehend.

Words can no more convey to the understanding of

him who is dead in sin the peace which the world knows not, — the beauty, the glory there is in holiness, or the soul-satisfying enjoyment of being filled with the love of God, which passeth understanding, — than the colors of the bow in the cloud can be conveyed to the conception of one born blind.

Even true prayer and communion between God and the soul of man may exist without words. We read that "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain." Of this last prayer no word is uttered, but after the people of Israel had been brought to confess, "The Lord he is the God," and the "Law" vindicated by the slaying of the prophets of Baal, "Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees," but spoke not except to bid his servant "seven times to look towards the sea." Here was an exercise of spirit before the Majesty on high, not manifested in words, but answered with power, not only in the sending of a great rain, but in the renewal of the strength of the prophet, so that he even outran the chariot of Ahab.

Though I have written very little in these pages relative to my spiritual exercises and conflicts, it has not been because I have been exempted from trials, temptations, and many discouraging besetments of the enemy, or that in all cases I have escaped without wounds.