

outdone in courage, and also to be revenged on the Custers.

Like a bayed lion, Custer sprang forward to meet them, sabre in hand--a few bright gleams of light shot from the sabre's blade, down went the foremost; another twinkling circle, and another brave went tottering back. A momentary hesitation pervaded the moving mass of men, a hundred guns were brought to bear upon Custer, but so close were they intermingled that they could not shoot. Another brave strode forward, with uplifted tomahawk, thinking to count "Coup," but the weapon was parried from his hand by the dextrous swordsman just as the steel entered his savage breast. Rain-in-the-Face, seeing the fate of three braves, raised his pistol and fired.

This ended the career of the greatest cavalry leader America ever saw. From the Canadian Indians we have this: "Rain-in-the-Face dropped his gun and sprang forward to claim his scalp, but the arms of the braves surrounding the corpse were extended to prevent the rash act, accompanied by a loud protest. Rain-in-the-Face sullenly relinquished his intention, and took his revenge by mutilating the body of poor Tom Custer."

The Indians consider the striking of an enemy with a hand weapon the highest mark of courage--this among the Indians of the Northwest counts "Coup," a stroke, and scores one in promotion of an Indian as a great warrior; that is why Custer was approached so near that he could use his sabre. They were all anxious to kill him with a hand weapon,--he having defended himself so courageously, and struck down three of their bravest warriors, they feared to take his scalp, having a superstition that /p.391/ the Great Spirit will wreak vengeance on the head of one who so dishonors himself.

Then the wounded Indians came streaming back into camp, saying: "We have killed them all; put up your lodges where they are."