

Moon

Strange as it may seem, nearly every hostile Indian village "was divided against itself." That is to say, each village contained two parties, or factions. Grouard says this fact was very patent with the Uncapapas, where Sitting Bull and his immediate family following controlled on the one side, and No Neck and Gall on the other, the latter faction having a slight advantage; but Sitting Bull, being a first-class politician, could hold his own. The cause of these factions was hereditary, growing out of family differences generations back. Four Horns was the hereditary chief of the Uncapapas. His age in 1869 was seventy. His cousin, Black Kettle, was the same age. These two men had reigned since their youth, and were considered the head men of the tribe. Both had been warriors, very fierce. Black Kettle was the greater orator, and in the councils had more to say and carried greater weight than any other man in the tribe. When Grouard was led into the Uncapapa village a captive, the No Neck and Gall faction was the one that wanted to put him to death. The other side, with Sitting Bull at its back, of course opposed the scheme, and the fine Italian hand of the politician is again shown to advantage, for Grouard's life was spared. Three years later when Sitting Bull and Grouard quarreled over the arrest of the half-breeds (who had sold the Uncapapas whisky, and been the cause of so much sorrow and trouble among the red men), nothing would satisfy the revenge of the politician but the blood of the man whose life he had preserved when the boy's capture was effected. It was then made a family affair, and No Neck and Gall (who three years previous had loudly demanded his death) were now foremost among his champions and protectors. Here is one instance, at least, where factional strife and jealousy saved a life.

Nearly all tribal trouble, says Grouard, among the Indians is caused by the squaws. Even among the savages "there's a woman in the case," and these factional differences may smoulder for years before they lead to an open breach. But when the trouble comes, it is serious, and blood flows freely.

Grouard recalls an instance of this kind among the Minneconjoux. About a dozen lodges of Sitting Bull's camp were on a visit to the Minneconjou village at the mouth of Tongue river on the Yellowstone during the summer of 1872. A great feast was in progress--the Omaha dance was being celebrated. A young buck was beating the tom-tom and the best of feeling prevailed. The factions in the Minneconjou tribe had been created some years before, and a woman was at the bottom of it. When mirth was at its height one of the young braves* of the tribe was noticed to mount his pony, strapped to his buff, and circle the camp several times, finally ending his pilgrimage in front of the tom-tom player, where he stood, enveloped in a blanket, and holding a bow and arrow in his hand. Suddenly he threw the blanket aside and shot an arrow into the body of the brave beating the tom-tom.

The effect upon the camp was like magic. The dance immediately ceased, and pandemonium reigned. Each of the young braves--the one murdered and the murderer--were interested in the woman over whom the feud had originally been raised. Faction stood against faction, and murder was the order of the day. Grouard says the weaker side had finally to flee. They were pursued for a distance of forty miles, and eighty lifeless bodies were strewn along the length of that awful trail of vengeance.

Early in the fight Little Assiniboine had found Grouard among the warring factions, and the two, in company with Sitting Bull and others of the latter's village, moved down the river and awaited the result of the battle.

"We do not want to take sides in this matter," said Sitting Bull.

The trouble over, the Uncapapa chief, acting the part of peace-maker, took a dozen of his own ponies to the Minneconjou camp and presented them to the relatives of the tom-tom player who had been killed, and, by his persuasive eloquence, induced the warring factions to bury their differences and their dead. Grouard naively re-