

effects of the plunging arrow fire, and all was made / ³⁷⁶ ready. Everybody had plenty of ammunition. Some of the men who were not good shots were told off to load rifles, of which there were so many that each man had two or three beside him; one man making use of no fewer than eight. Four civilians succeeded in joining the party in the corral, a welcome addition, indeed, bringing the total number up to thirty-two officers and men. Among this quartet of civilians was an old frontiersman, who had spent most of his life in the Indian country and who had been in innumerable fights. He was a renowned deadshot. To him the eight guns were allotted. Powell, rifle in hand, stationed himself at one end of the corral, Jenness, similarly armed, was posted at the other; each officer watching one of the openings covered by the complete wagons. While all these preparations were being rapidly made without confusion or alarm, the surrounding country was filling with a countless multitude of Indians. It was impossible at the time to estimate the number of them, although it was ascertained later that more than 8,000 warriors were present and engaged. Red Cloud himself was in command, and with him were the great chiefs of the great tribes of the Sioux, who were all represented; Uncpapas, Minneconjous, Oglalas, Brules and Sans Arcs, besides hundreds of Cheyennes. So confident of success were they that contrary to their ordinary practice they had brought with them their women and children to assist in carrying back the plunder. These, massed out of range on the farthest hills, constituted an audience for the terrible drama about to be played in the amphitheatre beneath them. * * * There were no heroics, no speeches made, Powell quietly remarked that they had to fight for their lives now, which was patent to all, and he directed that no man should for any reason whatever open fire until he gave the order. Some little time was spent by the Indians in making preparation, and then a force of about 500 Indians, magnificently mounted on the best war ponies, and armed with rifles, carbines or muskets, detached itself from the main body and started toward the little corral lying like a black