

## The Last of the Sioux.

**I**F the reader is content to be carried back a quarter of a century, and to transfer himself in spirit to that dreary stretch of prairie land lying between Kansas City and the Rocky Mountains, I shall promise him an account of the greatest example of Indian courage and unselfishness that has ever attracted my attention,

One bright spring day an Indian might be seen riding leisurely along a coulee in the aforesaid region. On a nearer approach he appears to one versed in Indian apparel and physiognomy, to belong to the Sioux,—a tribe once powerful in the west but now thought to be entirely extinct. Although his appearance is not such as to encourage confidences, nevertheless let us enter into conversation with him. We find that he does indeed belong to the Sioux and is the last surviving member of his tribe, but in spite of presents and persuasion he declines to impart more information. Our conversational attacks blocked, let us now retire to a safe distance and watch his further movements.

After travelling direct west for a considerable distance, the Indian abruptly turned north and continued his journey on a line at right angles to his former direction. This new course gave us a hint of his destination. He was bound for Canada where perhaps he intended to make his home among the friendly Assinaboines. When he had travelled about fifty miles in this new direction it became evident to him from the smoke and other unmistakeable signs that he was nearing a railroad. And presently he came in sight of a piece of track forming a part of one of the U. S. transcontinentals.

On the right as he came in sight of the railroad, was a station and a few scattered houses, the whole forming a small and rather scattered village. On his left the smoke of an incoming train was dimly discernible in the distance, while midway between the train and the village, and so almost directly in front of the Indian, a little girl was playing between the rails.

The village and the oncoming train received but a contemptuous glance of mingled fear and hatred from the Indian as objects demonstrative of the white man's supremacy in the land of his forefathers. But bitter as was this memory he could

not regard with indifference this delicate little child in front of him. Not even though she belonged to the race which had been the ruin of the Indian. The thought of his own children long since dead, doubtless explained the look of tenderness which flitted over his countenance; but this expression was so brief as to be scarcely noticeable, and was succeeded by that stoical, expressionless look so common to the North American Indian.

This peaceful scene was however doomed to be short lived. The train, though then at a safe distance, had crept up until it was now scarcely two hundred yards away.

The Indian awoke from his reverie with a start. Even he, unaccustomed to the railway train recognized the danger to the child menaced as she was by this great iron monster bearing down upon her. But will he save her! Incredible as it seems two impulses are fighting within his breast. The sacred memory of his own children is fighting his dark and passionate hatred of the white race, and this hatred demands the sacrifice of the child.

After an instant's hesitation the Indian leaps forward, his better nature has conquered. As he races towards the track he shouts to the child but she, instead of stepping to one side, stands speechless with fright between the rails. He reaches the track just as the train is upon her. The engineer has tried in vain to stop it. If the Indian saves the child it is at the risk of his own life. Nothing daunted he leaps for the track landing on all fours upon it, and just as the engine reaches him stretches out his arm and pushes the child from the track.

The long train has passed and the Indian lies a mangled corpse upon the track. He has revenged his wrongs and those of his people by teaching the white man that he has oppressed and driven out a people his equal if not his superior in moral and physical courage.

O. C. T.



Pope once taunted a young officer with his ignorance. The poet was small and crooked: "Could you so much as tell me what a point of interrogation is?" With a wave of his hand toward the poet, the youth answered: "O, its a little crooked thing that asks questions."