bows, as shown by the bullet-marks and the arrows. The red marks are for blood-stains on the ice."

Cloud Shield's count depicts one Arikara and one Dakota, to indicate the tribal identity of the contending parties, each with a bow in hand, and numerous lines, or aërial paths, to represent missiles flying across the river between them. His device is interpreted: "They [the Dakotas] fought the Pawnees across the ice on the North Platte. The man on the left is a Pawnee."

After the battle of '36-7, the Arikaras left their village at Cedar Bluffs (twenty miles above the Forks of the Platte), and also one on the Arickaree Fork of the Republican, and withdrew toward their earlier habitat, permanently abandoning the North Platte country.

Rufus Sage, en route to the mountains in 1841, passed the site of this North Platte battle, and received an account of the event from a white man who had witnessed it; but his informant failed apparently to mention one feature of it that had impressed the Sioux memory— namely— that it was a battle across and on the ice; and either his informant or Sage himself—whatever be the truth in the conflicting statements of himself and Battiste Good— miscalculates its date, attributing it to 1835, and greatly overestimates the distance of their removal eastward from their village twenty miles above the forks of the Platte. They retreated to a position not far west of the Loup Pawnees and only about 200 miles east of their former upper Platte village; and not being congenial to the Loups, they soon removed northerly thence some 400 miles, to the Mandans, who, with the Minnitarees in 1837, were likewise in distress, and therefore gladly received them to their neighborhood, that the three nations might make common cause against their common enemy, the Sioux.

Says Sage, in "Scenes in the Rocky Mountains," in connection with his camp of October 18, 1841, at the mouth of Ash Creek:

"Near camp had been the scene of a fierce and bloody battle between the Pawnees and Sioux, in the winter of 1835. The affray commenced early in the morning, and continued till near night. A trader who was present with the Sioux on the occasion, describes it as having been remarkably close. Every inch of ground was disputed—now the Pawnees advancing upon the retreating Sioux; and now the Sioux, while the Pawnees gave way; but, returning to charge with redoubled fury, the former once more recoiled. The arrows flew in full showers,—the bullets whistled the death-song of many a warrior,—the yells of combating savages filled the air, and drowned the lesser din of arms.

"At length arrows and balls were exhausted on both sides,—but still

the battle raged fiercer than before.

"War-club, tomahawk and butcher-knife were bandied with terrific force, as the hostile parties engaged hand to hand, and the clash of resounding blows, commingling with the clamor of unearthly voices which rent the very heavens, seemed more to prefigure the contest of fiends than aught else.

"Finally the Pawnees abandoned the field to their victorious enemies, leaving sixty of their warriors upon the ensanguined battle-ground. But the Sioux had paid dearly for their advantage; —forty-five of their bravest men lay mingled with the slain. The defeated party were pursued only a short distance, and then permitted to return without further molestation to their village, at the Forks of the Platte.

"This disaster so completely disheartened the Pawnees, they immediately abandoned their station and moved down the river some four [two] hundred miles, —nor have they again ventured so high up, unless in strong war parties. (Elsewhere he notes, that the village thus abandoned was at the upper side of Cedar Bluff, about 8 miles above present Birdwood Creek.)

"About the same time, the village [of Arikaras] on [Arickaree Fork of] Republican fork of Kansas was also abandoned, and its inhabitants, for a while, united with the Loups.

"The evidences of this cruel death-harvest were yet scattered over the prairie, whose bones and sculls looked sad, indeed. One of the latter was noticed, near camp, with a huge wasp's nest occupying the vaccuum once filled by the subtle organs of intellect. Strange tenant, truly, of a human scull, —but, perhaps, not an unfit antitype of the fierce passions that whilom claimed it as their dwelling place."

The winter of 1839-40 was, for special reasons, a notable one in the Rocky Mountains, marking an epoch in the mountain trade. It was a somewhat severe winter, Green River being thickly frozen over, even in the swift-flowing reaches of its canyon, and it brought—but not by its severity—consternation to the trappers; for in that winter at last the long-time steadily decreasing supply of beaver, coupled with a recent decline in the demand and price for beaver fur—a decline due to the invention of the silk hat in 1837—brought to an end that halcyon period when fortunes could be amassed rapidly by captains of the beaver trade, and those palmy days when, for free trapper and engagè alike, "beaver" spelled prosperity.

Coming as it did, when the supply of beaver was greatly depleted, the invention which was the death blow to the beaver hat, helped also, incidentally, to wind up the affairs of Sinclair, Craig, and Thompson's trading post, Fort Davy Crockett, a resort of free trappers in Brown's Hole on Green River. Wretched were the best of free trappers' winter accommodations in the western Rocky Mountains; but at this Fort de Misère, as it was dubbed by the French section of its motley fraternity, Kit Carson and many others of that craft made rendezvous during that winter, awaking ere spring to the fact that the attractive profits of their special vocation were a thing of the past—or in mountain men's parlance, "gone beaver."

Many at that time abandoned their mountain haunts and the trapper's pursuits. Some emigrated to the fertile valleys of Oregon and California. Some went to posts in the buffalo country; and it was at this time—1840—that Kit Carson left the mountains and became hunter,

or meat purveyor, for Bent's Fort on the Arkansas. A few, especially some of the old Ashley men, adapting themselves to the changed conditions, remained in that western part of the mountains which they had exploited since the middle twenties. Jim Bridger, a leading one of these, with Fraeb and Vasquez as partners, embarked in trade in the Green River Valley, and in 1841 built Fort Bridger on Black's Fork, and, with Vasquez, (for Fraeb was killed by Indians from the Platte almost at the very inception of the enterprise, while forted with his brigade during a trapping expedition on the upper waters of Little Snake River,) continued in the mountain trade by making the best of such robe and fur trade as he could command with the Shoshones and other tribes and with white hunters and trappers, but bringing his energies more and more into relation with the then incipient tide of emigration from the States to Oregon and California; although till 1843, when first he undertook to stock the establishment with goods especially selected for the emigrant trade, Fort Bridger's traffic with the emigrants consisted chiefly in the fur trade and as later in exchanging cattle, on the basis of one recruited ox — left footsore and weak by some former emigrant — for two worn ones, in wagon repair work and general blacksmithing, and in selling horses and such provisions as the post could spare.

Elsewhere, as at Fort Bridger, those who continued in the mountains after the thirties, found themselves dependent less and less upon the beaver for their profits, notwithstanding that some, like the veteran Bill Williams, the trapper par excellence of the mountains, continued for a few years to give their attention to that former craft of all crafts of the mountain men, the trapping of beaver.

Within that period of depression of the beaver trade were built, not only the trans-montane Fort Bridger, as above related, and the earlier Fort Crockett, and apparently the little known Fort Uncompahgre; but also the cis-montane posts, Fort Vasquez, Fort St. Vrain (known also as Fort George), Lupton's Fort (known better to the trappers and American and New Mexican traders as Fort Lancaster), and Locke and Randolph's Post, on the South Platte; as also Fort Pueblo on the Arkansas and Hardscrabble on the Rito del Peñasco Amarillo. At Pueblo and Hardscrabble, and in a smaller way at Fort Lancaster, some attention was given to agriculture; but the last named post depended upon trade with the buffalo-hunting tribes for its profits; and at Forts Vasquez and Lancaster, at least, the most potent equivalents offered for the robes, tongues, and tallow brought in, were whiskey and gunpowder. Such other supplies as the Indians and white hunters needed were also trafficked in; and besides buffalo robes, such beaver and miscellaneous furs as were offered were bartered for.

Concerning the winter of 1840-41 in the Rocky Mountain region, the writer has found few advices of special interest, save in accounts which attribute a certain Santa Fe trade misfortune to the early part of that winter, or more properly to late in the fall of 1840; when occurred far southward, the snowstorm that created "the Bone Yard," a celebrated landmark of the forties and fifties, on the Santa Fe Trail.

The Santa Fe Caravan Trail of the thirties and early forties, crossed the Cimarron River in present Oklahoma, about midway between the southeast corner of Colorado and the east line of New Mexico, at a point near which was established, much later, (1865) the stone-built, briefly-garrisoned military post, Camp Nichols, to protect from hostile Indians the travel both on the Old Santa Fe Trail itself and on the "Aubrey Cut-off." On the north side of the river, a few miles below the crossing, was "the Bone Yard" of far-western annals, where the German trader, Albert Speyer, lost a small fortune in mules, by a terrible blizzard.

Dr. F. A. Wislizenus, who accompanied Mr. Speyer westward over the Santa Fe Trail in 1846, recorded in his journal of the day that brought them to the crossing: "On the road to-day we saw the skulls and bones of about 100 mules, which Mr. Speyer had lost several years ago, when he travelled over these plains late in the fall, and a snowstorm overtook him at night. The poor animals (so he told me) crowded all around a little fire which he had kindled, but the cold was so intense that most of them died the same night, and others in a state of starvation, commenced eating the ears of the dead ones."

"Late in the fall," must have meant in November; for in "Wild Life in the Far West," Capt. James Hobbs tells us that the news of Speyers' catastrophe reached Santa Fe in December.

Captain Hobbs, who was in Santa Fe at the time, and went to Speyer's relief, has an interesting account of the event, with some details not given by other writers; but it cannot be relied on as to the number of animals that perished. Hobbs does not vouch for the number lost, and his "over four hundred" was only the report that came in, probably exaggerated as it went about; for Speyer himself evi-

dently told Wislizenus that the number of mules lost was about a hundred; while W. W. H. Davis, a good authority, who passed the place in 1853 and heard it called "Mule Head," because the bleached bones were "piled up by the side of the road," described the loss as "a hundred and twenty mules" that "perished in one night." Wm. H. Richardson, in a Mexican War journal of 1846, places the loss at "91." Richardson, however, wrongly attributes the event to "last winter"—i.e., to the winter of 1845-6, and was evidently not very well informed.

Hobbs' account of the matter is as follows:

"In a short time, we were ready for another hunt. Kit Carson, Peg-leg Smith, and myself, with a number of our Shawnee Indian trappers, started for New Mexico, going over what was called Taos mountain. We stopped in Santa Fe some two or three weeks, meeting there Colonel Owens, Nicholas Gentry, and other traders from Independence, Mo. Soon after (in December, 1840), a report came that Albert Speyers's train was snowed in on Cimarron creek, about two hundred and fifty miles from Santa Fe, and that over four hundred of his mules were frozen to death. He had seventy-five wagons and ten mules to the wagon. All the American mules died, and the Mexican mules sustained life by eating off the manes and tails from the dead carcasses. The snow was two feet deep, and the teamsters could make no fire, except by tearing up their wagon-boxes and side-boards, as the buffalo chips were all covered up, and the nearest timber was about ten miles off, at Cottonwood Grove. The storm had come on suddenly, and the cold was so intense that the animals had frozen, and their bones remain there to this day, which gave that place the name of Bone Yard.

"Colonel Owens came to me, when the report of this disaster reached Santa Fe, and knowing I had been among the Comanches, he begged me to take charge of a relief train and start off immediately. As the route lay through a part of the Comanche country, and I spoke their language, he offered me a good price to go, and I consented. We had ten Mexicans to drive the loose oxen and mules, and teamsters to drive the wagons. A Mexican in the employ of Mr. Speyers, who had come in with the news, returned with us as guide. We were twenty days in reaching the perishing train, and found them in an awful situation

They had driven what mules remained alive to the cottonwood grove, ten miles away, and, loading part of them with wood, had taken it back to camp. They had also cut down immense quantities of the cottonwood trees for shelter, and the mules lived on the buds and bark. If the storm, which lasted several days, had not come on so fiercely and suddenly the first night, they might have saved the whole train, by starting at once for this grove.

"My trip for their relief was through a wild country, and, as we encountered deep snows, our progress was necessarily slow. We had four hundred mules and sixty yoke of Mexican cattle; but it was hard work to move the heavy train of Mr. Speyers back to Santa Fe, for the starving mules, barely saved alive from the hunger and cold, could not pull much. The oxen were yoked in Mexican fashion, the yoke being lashed to the horns with rawhide, and the different yokes in the same team connected with rawhide ropes. They were driven by a man on each side, with a long stick or pole, having a sharp nail or spur on the end, which was used instead of a whip.

"We traveled slowly, enduring much suffering, and at times nearly freezing, till we reached Las Vegas, where we got more men and animals and were much relieved, making the balance of our journey into Santa Fe much easier. Our arrival produced great excitement, and our old friends were all glad to meet us and learn of our safety.

"Speyers, if living, must now (1872) be quite an old man. He has done a heavy business in Kansas City, purchased largely in real estate, and, the last I heard of him, he had acquired a large amount of property. He was of German descent, tall and spare, with keen eyes, and his language, though somewhat broken, was always polite. He had a good reputation as a fair trader, and, at the time he was snowed in at Cimarron creek, the merchants of Santa Fe manifested the liveliest sympathy for him and his men, and showed the respect in which they held him, by doing everything in their power for his relief. During my long acquaintance with him, I found him in all respects a gentleman."

Hobbs' date is consistant with the statement obtained by Wislizenus from Speyer himself, and as Carson is well known to have been hunter for Bent's Fort in the fall of 1840, and may have been at Santa Fe in December, there is no doubt that Hobbs' date is the true one; notwithstanding that, elsewhere in his book, he has Carson at the annual celebration of the Indians on the Arkansas River, below Bent's Fort, in June of both 1837 and 1839, which is incompatible with the known movements of Carson, who was a free trapper in and West of the mountains in those years, and did not return to Bent's Fort until the summer of 1840.

James Hobbs' above account of how he went to the rescue of Speyers, suggests as quite possible that he gave some account of the matter to Ruxton in '46 or '47, and that he is the "Jemmy" who, when questioned by another mountain character in Ruxton's story, replies: "No sirre-e; I went out when Spiers lost his animals on Cimmaron: a hundred and forty mules and oxen was froze that night, wagh!" This number would bring him into line with the other narrators.

Two of the hardest winters of the forties were so nearly consecutive—being separated by one ordinary winter only— that often in later times they have been confused with each other. These were the winters of 1842-3 and '44-5.

The winter of '42-3 was "excessively cold and protracted"; and, for white men and red men, it spread death, suffering, and pecuniary loss across the breadth of northern latitudes, although it is only with reference to parts of the West that it will here be considered.

At La Pointe Indian Agency, Wisconsin, the hard winter so destroyed the potatoes that not enough were left for the spring planting.

On the 1st of September, 1843, Farm Superintendent Thomas, at the Winnebago Subagency in Iowa, wrote of hauling provisions to some Indians on Red Cedar River, some fifty miles west, in the winter preceding; and he added, "This latter service, on account of the great depth of snow, and the severity of the weather, was extremely difficult and laborious."

From the Sauk and Fox Agency in Iowa, September 4th, 1843, Indian Agent John Beach reported, "The unusual length and severity of the ~~xxxxxx~~ last winter subjected the Sacs and Foxes to much distress, and great loss of horses— the ground having been covered to that depth with snow that they could procure no subsistence for them. This, with the losses and inconveniences incident to moving [to a new agency, farther west,] reduced them, during the early part of the summer, to a situation of great necessity, especially as the lateness of the season delayed them in moving, beyond expectation, and consequently obliged them to defer the commencement of their agricultural operations until spring had far advanced."

Battiste Good's winter count calls it a "Deep-snow winter." This refers to the western part of the Dakota country; and for that region, it is confirmed in ... by

The winter of 1841-2 ~~varied much with locality.~~ [is perhaps an error for 1842-3, but it] the experiences of Rufus Sage that winter, which show that in the White River country, northeast of Rawhide Butte, there was much ~~xxxxxx~~ cold and snow. But on returning from White River to Fort Laramie, Sage found that "Winter in the neighborhood of the Platte had been remarkably mild, and at no time during the season had the snow remained upon the ground to exceed a day. Vegetation, even thus early [mid-February] was beginning to put forth, and bring to view the beauty and loveliness of spring."