

**ALTOWAN, OR, INCIDENTS
OF LIFE AND ADVENTURE IN
THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS,
IN TWO VOLUMES, VOL. II**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649391578

Altowan, or, Incidents of life and adventure in the Rocky Mountains, in two volumes, Vol. II by
An Amateur Traveler & J. Watson Webb

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

AN AMATEUR TRAVELER & J. WATSON WEBB

**ALTOWAN, OR, INCIDENTS
OF LIFE AND ADVENTURE IN
THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS,
IN TWO VOLUMES, VOL. II**

A L T O W A N ;

OR,

INCIDENTS OF LIFE AND ADVENTURE

IN

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

BY

AN AMATEUR TRAVELER.

EDITED BY

J. W A T S O N W E B B.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. II.

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,

82 CLIFF STREET, NEW YORK.

1846.

Checked
May 1913

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1846, by
HARPER & BROTHERS,
In the Clerk's Office of the Southern District of New-York.



A L T O W A N.

CHAPTER I.

FIVE days had passed without any remarkable incident; and we find Altowan at the approach of evening, looking on the games of archery, or throwing with the hand the arrows as a javelin, which occupied a crowd of youths with whom he was a paramount favorite. He was like them, stripped to the girdle round his loins, and entered into their sports with that interest which youth alone can take in the reckless pastimes of the young, feigning to compete with one in the race, with another in games of skill, wrestling with those of maturer growth, but in all bringing his strength and his spirits to a match with theirs. They were something beyond the limits of the camp, and on the river bank. A few boys, too young to mingle in such athletic exercises, were hovering round them, occasionally attempting to seize a stray arrow, or for a mo-

ment trying to keep abreast in a race, with other little arts to attract attention, or try to claim a participation in their pursuits. One of these, whose eye the habit of savage watchfulness had taught to recur continually to the distant horizon, grew intent on some dim object which appeared emerging from the pines at the foot of a small valley, that ushered its tributary stream into the light a little below that by which Altowan and Idalie had arrived. In an instant the looks of all were fixed in the same direction. It was a horseman descending at a rapid pace the steep, in a direction toward the camp. A dark pennon waved from his lance; and something in his appearance, though yet afar off, told that he was fresh from the field of strife. A bend of the stream where it approaches the bluff some little distance higher, promised the best opportunity of arresting his progress, to obtain the news; and the giddy throng, riding at all the gradations of speed, made the valley echo with their shrill yells as they bounded toward the narrow pass. It was not difficult to stay the jaded steed, though the rider showed that he would willingly have disregarded the clamor, waving a scalp as a trophy and an answer to their demands; but the horse, to whom the heel and the whip were

in vain applied, yielded to the fatigue which the clustering inquirers gave him an excuse to show, and could not be urged out of a walk; and when the eye of the returning warrior, discovered in the throng the form of Altowan, waiting rather aloof from the rest, his taciturnity changed, and he appeared anxious to proclaim that the party had attacked some detached whites, accompanied by some Crows, and had defeated them, and taken several horses and scalps.

The tide, before opposing, now turned on the village to proclaim the triumph; and as they almost left Altowan alone with the horseman, the latter was enabled to inform him farther, that the Blackfoot leader was killed, and that Pinatsi had taken his place, and was bringing in a white chief as prisoner. Altowan referred him to the other chiefs, telling him to inform them. With some surprise at his indifference, the avant courier now pushed on toward the camp, and left him at his leisure to follow. That the partisan should have been killed, was not to him a matter of grief; he was a brave whose increasing popularity must displace some one already above him in the scale, and this last success would have confirmed his rise. That a white chief should be brought in, was a matter that might

touch him nearer, and embarrass all his proceedings; but what determined as well as cheered the line of conduct he must adopt to accomplish his designs, was the influence he might gain by Pinatsi's advancement. He proceeded leisurely, ruminating on these events, to where he had disembarrassed himself of his robe to take a part in those sports which had served to dissipate his cares and divert the attention of those who watched his movements with a jealous scrutiny.

Among those youths whom he loved to join in their juvenile feats, and who was more particularly prominent in his activity and daring than his companions, was a son of the old chief who had some days before harangued the village, yet only fourteen years of age. *Louis*—for so he had been called, after a Hudson Bay trapper on the Sexscatchowan—had more acuteness and knowledge of the world than many of the most experienced of the Indian council. He had learned to read passably well from Altowan; and thus joined superior knowledge to the savage qualities of cunning and self-command. The boy, who loved Altowan, would often make him aware of cabals and secret enmities—of the perpetrators of crime, as well as meditated treachery;

and he loved to see the prompt and fearless redress which he invariably rendered to the weak and the wronged. Having with his garment, reassumed that dignity of demeanor that distinguishes the Indian on his native soil, he proceeded calmly toward his lodge, where several of his adherents were already assembled to talk over the news and hear the opinion of one, to whom his enemies could not deny the attributes of superior wisdom, and of that power with which these savages believe some are invested to control events and determine destinies. A verified prediction founded on probable calculations, or an example of any of the phenomena of nature judiciously applied, stamps alike the prophet and the magician. It was during a desultory conversation on the probable result of a more general attack, that the uproar of the approaching horses, diverted the attention of each from all other matters to the care of his steed, and separated the conclave. Altowan had mounted one of his band and started to perambulate the camp; he had not proceeded far, however, before Louis bounded up behind him in one of those sportive moods that he sometimes wore to cover some news that he wished to convey without suspicion to his instructor and friend. "Put your