

*The boy talks fight, sick as he is,
Sg.B. also expresses his desire to fight & die -*

MOONEY]

REDUCTION OF SIOUX RATIONS

827

long attack against -

portion. "The people said their children were all dying from the face of the earth, and they might as well be killed at once." Then came another entire failure of crops in 1890, and an unexpected reduction of rations, and the Indians were brought face to face with starvation. They had been expressly and repeatedly told by the commission that their rations would not be affected by their signing the treaty, but immediately on the consummation of the agreement Congress cut down their beef rations by 2,000,000 pounds at Rosebud, 1,000,000 at Pine Ridge, and in less proportion at other agencies. Earnest protest against this reduction was made by the commission which had negotiated the treaty, by Commissioner Morgan, and by General Miles, but still Congress failed to remedy the matter until the Sioux had actually been driven to rebellion. As Commissioner Morgan states, "It was not until January, 1891, *after the troubles*, that an appropriation of \$100,000 was made by Congress for additional beef for the Sioux." The protest of the commission, a full year before the outbreak, as quoted by Commissioner Morgan (see page 829), is strong and positive on this point.

*acute outbreak
was a good
move -*

8

Commissioner Morgan, while claiming that the Sioux had before been receiving more rations than they were justly entitled to according to their census number, and denying that the reduction was such as to cause even extreme suffering, yet states that the reduction was especially unwise at this juncture, as it was in direct violation of the promises made to the Indians, and would be used as an argument by those opposed to the treaty to show that the government cared nothing for the Indians after it had obtained their lands. It is quite possible that the former number of rations was greater than the actual number of persons, as it is always a difficult matter to count roving Indians, and the difficulties were greater when the old census was made. The census is taken at long intervals and the tendency is nearly always toward a decrease. Furthermore, it has usually been the policy with agents to hold their Indians quiet by keeping them as well fed as possible. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the issue is based on the weight of the cattle as delivered at the agency in the fall, and that months of exposure to a Dakota winter will reduce this weight by several hundred pounds to the animal. The official investigation by Captain Hurst at Cheyenne River agency shows conclusively that the essential food items of meat, flour, and coffee were far below the amount stipulated by the treaty. (See page 837.)

act 1

In regard to the effect of this food deficiency Bishop Hare says: "The people were often hungry and, the physicians in many cases said, died, when taken sick, not so much from disease as for want of food." General Miles says: "The fact that they had not received sufficient food is admitted by the agents and the officers of the government who have had opportunities of knowing," and in another place he states that in spite of crop failures and other difficulties, after the sale of the reser-

act 1