

balance of power at Pine Ridge against the government, as he later on discovered to his cost. When still later he endeavored to maintain order and suppress the ghost dance, the attempt resulted in a most dismal failure.

~~The Democratic agent was succeeded in October last by the recently removed Republican agent, a gentleman totally ignorant of Indians and their peculiarities; a gentleman with not a qualification in his make-up calculated to fit him for the position of agent at one of the largest and most difficult agencies in the service to manage; a man selected solely as a reward for political services. He might possibly have been an average success as an Indian agent at a small, well-regulated agency. He endeavored to strengthen up matters, but the chiefs and leaders who could have assisted him in so doing had been alienated by the former agent. They virtually said among themselves, "We, after incurring the enmity of the bad element among our people by sustaining the government, have been ignored and ill-treated by that government, hence this is not our affair." Being ignorant of the situation, he had no one to depend on. In his first clash with the mob element he discovered that the Pine Ridge police, formerly the finest in the service, were lacking in discipline and courage, and, not being well supplied with those necessary qualities himself, he took the bluff of a mob for a declaration of war, abandoned his agency, returned with troops—and you see the result.~~

As for the ghost dance, too much attention has been paid to it. It was only the symptom or surface indication of deep-rooted, long-existing difficulty; as well treat the eruption of smallpox as the disease and ignore the constitutional disease.

As regards disarming the Sioux, however desirable it may appear, I consider it neither advisable nor practicable. I fear that it will result as the theoretical enforcement of prohibition in Kansas, Iowa, and Dakota; you will succeed in disarming the friendly Indians, because you can, and you will not so succeed with the mob element, because you can not. If I were again to be an Indian agent and had my choice, I would take charge of 10,000 armed Sioux in preference to a like number of disarmed ones, and, furthermore, agree to handle that number, or the whole Sioux nation, without a white soldier.

Respectfully, etc,

V. T. MCGILLYCUDDY.

P. S.—I neglected to state that up to date there has been neither a Sioux outbreak nor war. ~~No citizen in Nebraska or Dakota has been killed, molested, or can show the scratch of a pin, and no property has been destroyed on the reservation.~~

STATEMENT OF GENERAL MILES

[From the Report of the Secretary of War for 1891, Vol. I, pp. 133, 134, and 149. He enumerates specific causes of complaint at each of the principal Sioux agencies, all of which causes may be summarized as hunger and unfulfilled promises.]

Cause of Indian dissatisfaction.—The causes that led to the serious disturbance of the peace in the northwest last autumn and winter were so remarkable that an explanation of them is necessary in order to comprehend the seriousness of the situation. The Indians assuming the most threatening attitude of hostility were the Cheyennes and Sioux. Their condition may be stated as follows: For several years following their subjugation in 1877, 1878, and 1879 the most dangerous element of the Cheyennes and the Sioux were under military control. Many of them were disarmed and dismounted; their war ponies were sold and the proceeds returned to them in domestic stock, farming utensils, wagons, etc. Many of the Cheyennes, under the charge of military officers, were located on land in accordance with the laws of Congress, but after they were turned over to civil agents and the vast herds of buffalo and large game had been destroyed their supplies were insufficient, and they were forced to kill cattle belonging to white people to sustain life.

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. The majority of the Sioux were under the charge of civil agents, frequently changed and often

act 3

Epilog

act-1