

like them, to live here, and to be buried in the same soil. We have been forced to hate the whites; let them treat us like brothers and the war will cease. Let them stay at home; we will never go to trouble them. To see them come into our country and build their cabins revolts us, and we are determined to resist or die. Thou, Messenger of Peace, thou hast given us a glimpse of a better future. Very well; so be it; let us hope. Let us throw a veil over the past and let it be forgotten.

p.102 "I have only a word more to say. In the presence of all my people, I express to you here my thanks for the good news that you have announced and for all your good counsel and advice. We accept your tobacco. Some of our warriors will go with you to Fort Rice to hear the words and the propositions of the Great Father's commissioners. If their words are acceptable, peace shall be made."

Sitting Bull, Two Bears and Running Antelope followed Black Moon. After the council has lasted some four hours it was decided to send a deputation to meet the commissioners. The Indians begged Father De Smet to leave his banner with them as a memento of the occasion, and he acceded to their request. He then withdrew to his lodge, whither he was followed by many Indians and particularly by mothers with their children.

The return journey was begun on the morning of the 21st, and on the 30th day of June they entered Fort Rice amid the enthusiastic greetings of all present. The council with the commissioners took place two days later, and a treaty of peace was signed by all the chiefs, and principal warriors. Then, on the 3d and 4th of July, a general distribution of presents was made and the council closed to the joy and satisfaction of both parties.

p.103 Father De Smet's work on this occasion was now done and he at once set out for home. His achievement was one of the most remarkable in the history of our Indian wars. He was sixty-eight years old and suffering with bodily infirmities which in a few years were to end fatally. He made a journey of 350 miles through a rough and unknown country to a large force of Indians who had sworn death to any white man who might fall within their power. There was no other man who could approach them. Yet by virtue of his great reputation among all the tribes, their absolute faith in his word and their belief that he had their interests at heart, and, we may add, his devout trust in the Lord whom he served, he did this remarkable thing, and brought about a peace in the most hateful and difficult situation that our government had been called upon to face in all its troubles with the Indians. The commissioners formally acknowledged that, but for Father De Smet, their work would have been a failure. "We are well aware," they wrote him, "that our thanks can be of little worth to you, and that you will find your true reward for your labors and for the dangers and privations which you have encountered in the consciousness that you have done much to promote peace on earth and good will to men."