

During his stay in Canada, Sitting Bull was astonished to receive a book. It had been sent to him at Fort Walsh, and its title was The Works of Sitting Bull!!

It was the second edition of this rare collector's item, and contained two parts. Part I, the original first edition, contained a plausible preface accounting for the editor's coming into possession of the manuscript through a French Canadian 'at one of the upper posts,' and a letter (in French) addressed to one Du Frene, requesting him to forward the enclosed Latin poem in Sapphic verse to his 'school fellow', Chief Joseph, with whom Sitting Bull declares he has often made the effort (me servir des paroles du poete) 'Entre les ombres d'Academe de chercher de verite.'

The English translation is worthy of the Latin verse; its principal sentiment is one of perfect willingness to treat with General Terry's Commission, then on its way to Canada. When the report of that Commission was made public, the determined author of this outrageous hoax added a second Part to his book, containing an alleged communication from the chief to himself, which 'would seem to have been written purposely to dispel the doubts of the incredulous; and certainly supports the position of those journals which have held from the first that the great Sioux chief had been initiated in the learning of the whites,-- one editor pointing to Montreal, and another to St. Louis, as the place in which he received his early training. It has even been hinted that he was for a time a pupil of St. Omer's, in France. The fact that a copy of the Life of Napoleon I, in the French language, has been seen in his tipi, has had a wide circulation by the press."

Following this, we have a long poem of 87 lines, each stanza of which is in a different language: Greek, French, Spanish, English, Italian, German, and Latin, and signed Taurus Qui Sedet, Sitting Bull. It is an address to President Hayes to come and share his tipi -- and his whiskey!

This amazing composition was "evidently written by a man who had had an excellent classical training..but was much better in his prosody than in his constructions..some of which are extremely awkward -- not careless, but rather senseless...