

2

sake of wantonly destroying the lives of animals as did the white man, and how could they amuse themselves? Of what use to live? And how could they hope to raise young men without war? And of what use were men if not warriors? But the Indian Department had become a great branch of the political machine, large amounts of money were appropriated, growing larger annually, and it must be spent. There were many beneficiaries interested — manufacturers of Indian goods, merchants, freighters, officials and hangers-on in large numbers. Whether it led to tragedy or ended in a farce, here was a well laid plan for the largest assemblage of Indians ever gathered at one council or on one treaty ground. The Pawnees and some others were invited but none of them came, presumably because they were afraid to risk it. But the Snakes came. Their headquarters was about Fort Bridger. The Sioux and Cheyennes had promised to make peace with them, and to take no advantage of them while the treaty was going on.

About noon one bright day, a long line of dust was seen from our camp, looking west, towards Laramie Peak. Soon a long line of Indians came moving slowly down in battle array, arms ready for use and every man apparently expectant, the women and children and baggage bringing up the rear well guarded. It turned out that Major Bridger, the interpreter, had reported to headquarters the approach of the Snakes, and he had been directed to lead them down near to our camp. All the ^{see} head men of the Sioux and Cheyennes had given assurance that they should not be molested, so down they came, moving very slowly and cautiously, the chief alone a short distance in advance. They were dressed in their best, riding fine war horses, and made a grandly savage appearance. In the absence of Major Chilton down at the post, seeing all this caution on the part of the Snakes, Lieutenant Hastings had "boots and saddles" sounded so as to be ready whatever happened. Just below us was a large Sioux camp, and the people were showing great interest and some excitement at the approach of their hereditary enemies, and a few squaws howled in anguish for lost friends who had died in