

A month previous to this time Gov. Thayer, of Wyoming, had the coolness to visit Washington to obtain an order for troops to be used in protecting the miners then in the Black Hills, as well as parties on their way there; and in a conference with the president and Gen. Sherman, the president said that the parties in the Black Hills, as well as those going, were acting unlawfully, and ought to be notified of the fact. Hence Gen. Crook's instructions. Gen. Crook did visit the hills, and after a manner advised the miners to go out, first allowing them time to mark off their "claims," so that they could, on their return, possess them again. It was well understood, however, that Gen. Crook's sympathies were with these lawless characters. A few left the hills in good faith; many that feigned to go, soon returned, and a number pursued their mining as though no notice had been given them. In his annual report, made only one month after the time fixed, according to Gov. Fletcher, for the miners to leave, Gen. Crook disclosed very fully his feelings. He said:

299

"I visited the mining region in July, and, after seeing / many of the miners in their camps, gave them sufficient time to secure their claims against future loss, in case they were eventually allowed to return. They agreed to vacate the country, an agreement I have reason to believe they have observed. In connection with this matter, and having, as I conceive, an important bearing upon it, I would mention the fact that, since I came to the department, there have been over four hundred horses stolen by Indians from settlers along the line of the railroad, which have been trailed on the Sioux reservation. To have followed them with sufficient force to have recaptured the stock, would undoubtedly have resulted in a general war with the Sioux nation; so this stock has never been recovered, but is still in the hands of these Indians, a fact well known not only to the parties who lost it, but to people generally throughout the country.

"Now, when I visited the Black Hills country, and conversed with the miners in regard to vacating, and reminded them that they were violating a treaty