

Sitting Bull and his people would stand on the bank, waiting for a bull-boat. When it came, they would crowd into the shallow, tub-like coracle with the Bee paddler, who pushed off, and reaching forward, thrust down his paddle and pulled it directly towards him. In this way the tub was navigated, and at length reached the other shore. There Garreau would swap a blanket worth one dollar and a half for two robes each worth five dollars, and other goods in like proportion.

But if Garreau thought he could drive a better bargain with the Sioux in Sitting Bull's presence than with Sitting Bull himself, he suffered a cruel disappointment. Garreau had bargained for an accomplice, not a referee. But Sitting Bull did not understand it so: he was there to see fair play.

The robe season lasted from the middle of October to the end of February, but robes taken in November were the best, because the winter storms had not yet injured the pelage. And when a hunter offered Garreau a November robe, and Garreau tried to grade it with the ratty products of late February, Sitting Bull was on hand to uphold his compatriot in a square deal. He did not favor the Sioux, but he would not allow them to be cheated. He did not understand that the fur trade was, by definition, a skin game. It was galling to Garreau.

Sitting Bull studied the white men with unblinking gaze and close attention. He was always something of a student of life, with strong powers, of concentration. This experience was valuable. Garreau's tricks sometimes made difficulty for his "trade-chief" but Sitting Bull kept the peace.

Even as a lad he had been known as a peacemaker among his fellows, and was always giving some boy an arrow to smooth over trouble and secure good feeling. When his friends began to quarrel, he would say, "Come on, boys; let's go over to Mother's tipi. I think she is cooking something over there." Then his mother would make a feast for them, and keep them eating until the trouble blew over. Sitting Bull used to say that people never fight while they are eating. And again he said, "It is pleasanter