

told me that they did not want to fight, but they commenced it."

Prolonged efforts were made by both the American and the Canadian authorities to induce Sitting Bull to return to the United States. Indeed, the American Government insisted in very emphatic terms that the Government of Canada should either compel the return of the refugees or oblige them to withdraw from the boundary so as no longer to be a menace. The Canadian authorities, however, refused to take either course so long as/p.186/ Sitting Bull and his companions refrained from lawlessness. At the same time steady moral pressure was applied and every effort made to restore the confidence and good faith of the American Government. This argument was powerfully seconded by hunger. It was the policy of the Canadian authorities to prevent actual starvation on the part of the refugees, but to promise them nothing in advance and to make no permanent arrangement with them for their maintenance. In consequence, many of Sitting Bull's followers kept returning south of the line from time to time. The following extract from a dispatch published in the Saskatchewan Herald of March 24, 1879, purports to be a copy of a message sent by Sitting Bull to some of his relatives at Standing Rock Agency. If it is authentic, it indicates that at this time the great chief himself was anxious to go back home, if favorable terms could be obtained:

"Once I was strong and brave and my people had hearts of iron, but now I will fight no more forever. My people are cold and hungry. My women are sick and my children are freezing. I will do as the Great Father wishes. I will give my guns and ponies into his hands. My arrows are broken and my war paint thrown to the winds."

Nevertheless, the Sioux chief did not yet return to his reservation, and for some years to come the hands of the North West Mounted Police were kept full in the effort to look after him and his followers.

Superintendent Walsh, speaking of the conduct of the Sioux and of their

Letter of Chief Joseph

not
authentic
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