

among our present day politicians-- a great vote getter with the people-- had he been a white man with a congressional ambition. He might, then, in truth, have been renowned as a political economist; but in his savage economy he utterly and persistently refused to celebrate ration day at an agency, or exchange his wild freedom for the bondage of civilization.

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* He was forced, at last, to bow to the inevitable; but even the enemies of Sitting Bull must concede that the uncompromising savage was far advanced toward the twilight of life before he accepted the white man's protection or bounty. It was simply a case where he had nothing else to do. The land he had loved and fought to retain had been wrested from his hands; his people had been gradually driven into agency exile or killed in battle; the game had sought shelter from the encroaching Caucasian in a land where other powerful tribes lived and flourished; and the matter resolved itself into a question of suicide by starvation or humble submission to the will of government. The women and children were ragged and hungry, and the spirit of the chief was broken. Diplomatic, even to the end, he laid away the weapons of the warrior, submissively folded his arms across his crime-hardened breast and accepted the agency--and death.

Many of the high-minded and most of the vicious among the Indian nations of the northwest found their leader in Sitting Bull, who, though often unpopular with his fellow chiefs, was always potent for evil with the wild and restless spirits who believed that war with the whites was, or ought to be, the chief object of their existence," writes Finerty in 1879, a twelvemonth previous to Sitting Bull's surrender. "This was about the true status of the Indian agitator in those days. He had strong personal magnetism. His judgment was said to be superior to his courage, and his cunning superior to both. He had not, like Crazy Horse, the reputation of being recklessly brave, but neither was he reputed a dastard. Sitting Bull was simply prudent, and would not throw away his life so long as he had any chance of doing injury to the Americans.

"I don't care," observes this same writer during the year above mentioned, "what any one says about Sitting Bull not having been a warrior. If he had not the sword, he had, at least, the magic sway of a Mohammed over the rude war tribes that engirdled him. Everybody talks of Sitting Bull, and whether he be a figure-head or an idea, or an incomprehensible mystery, his old-time influence was undoubted. His very name was potent. He was the Frederick Dhu of his wild and warlike race, and, when he fell, the Sioux confederation fell with him, even as dropped the pine of Clan Alpine when its hero sank before the sword of the Knight of Snowdon."

Captain Bourke speaks of Sitting Bull as a "medicine man and a great talker, and rarely let pass an opportunity for saying something." But Sitting Bull as a warrior, as well. He not only pointed out the way, but led the way. He may not have fought with the apparent fearlessness of Crazy Horse, but his hand-to-hand encounter with a foe in his youth on the Porcupine settled for once and always the question of his personal bravery. Like Caesar, he would rather tell his people what was to be feared than what he feared. He was boastful, but he had some reason for his egotism, for did not all the other chiefs and warriors count their coups during religious worship; and why not he?

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It took generalship to hold and lead a large village * away from the enticements the government held out to the hostiles. Ammunition had to be secured, and Sitting Bull's camp was always well supplied. He needed no intercessor between himself and the latest improved breech-loaders.