

Hills, leaving the camp in the hands of the troops, who proceeded to destroy it and its contents by fire. The Indians molested the troops during this operation by firing from rocks, bushes and gullies, but the village was utterly destroyed, when Reynolds drew off and proceeded to make junction with Cook at the place appointed, when the expedition returned to Fort Fetterman, / ⁴²⁴ reaching that place March 26th. The weather was extremely cold; March 11th 23 degrees below zero Fahrenheit, March 12th 26 below, and on the nights preceding and following the attack on Crazy Horse's village it was so cold that the men were not allowed to sleep for fear of the consequences. During the expedition Colonel Reynolds lost four men killed, five men and one officer wounded, and does not report the number of Indians killed. In the village destroyed they found a large quantity of articles of food and clothing which came from the agencies.

With the opening of spring the Indians proceeded to carry out their plan to make a combined resistance against the oppressions of the white men. Their proposition was to assemble a vast army of warriors back toward the Big Horn Mountains, and when all the conditions were propitious to sweep down upon the Black Hills and drive out the invader. Stealthily, the fighting men slipped away from the agencies until only a few of the headmen, old men, and women and children remained. Spotted Tail and Red Cloud remained at their agencies. Still the government authorities had no adequate conception of the extent of the movement, but contented themselves with the belief that they would be called upon to contend with 500 to 800 hostile warriors, the latter figure being the largest suggested by any authority. General Sheridan resolved to proceed against them with great care and system. He ordered three distinct columns to be prepared to move to a common center. One from Fort Fetterman, under General Crook, to pass up from the south; one under General Gibbons to come down from Fort Ellis in Montana from the northwest, and one under Terry to come from Fort Abraham Lincoln from the northeast. Crook started from Fort Fetterman on the 29th of May with forty-seven officers and 1,000 men present for duty. The expedition marched by the Montana road to