

Moorehead - pp.185-93, cont'd.

them. Jack Red Cloud, his son, smuggled him out of camp, and his daughter led him eighteen miles through a severe blizzard, back to Pine Ridge. I mention this incident to show the faithfulness of the man.

Red Cloud was nearly blind and aged rapidly after 1890. Eighty-seven years is a long time for an Indian to live. Continual exposure, uncertain food supply, and frail habitation, break down the constitution, and one rarely sees an Indian more than sixty years of age. During the last years of his life Red Cloud enjoyed the comforts of a two-story frame-house. It was given him by the Government as a special mark of honor. During the presence of the troops he kept a little American flag and a white peace flag constantly floating above it. He bemoaned the fate of his race, and from his conversation one could easily discern that he had done his duty, had defended the claims of the Dakotas in adversity as in prosperity. Over twenty years ago I had several conversations with him through the interpreter. He dwelt upon the happy "buffalo days", and the free life of the Plains sixty years ago. We stepped outside the house and he told me to look about over the valley, for his eyes were dim; but he knew its character. I cannot give the exact words of his speech, but it was somewhat as follows: "You see this barren waste. We have a little land along the creek which affords good grazing, but we must use some of it for corn and wheat. There are other creeks which have bottoms like this, but most of the land is poor and worthless. Think of it! I, who used to own rich soil in a well-watered country so extensive that I could not ride through it in a week on my fastest pony, am put down here! Why, I have to go five miles for wood for my fire. Washington took our lands and promised to feed and support us. Now I, who used to control 5000 warriors, must tell Washington when I am hungry. I must beg for that which I own. If I beg hard, they put me in the guard-house. We have trouble. Our girls are getting bad. Coughing sickness every winter (consumption) carries away our best people. My heart is heavy, I am old, I cannot do much more. Young man, I wish there was some one to help my poor people when I am gone."

It is a singular anomaly that the character of an Indian should not be gauged by the same standards employed in measuring the virtues and worth of a white man. To