

2--Hunting Sitting Bull

is all very well, but how are you going to avoid it?" This question I will answer by asking another. How do you ever avoid war? It can be avoided sometimes by the exercise of a spirit of concession and justice, a spirit directly opposite to that which has universally characterized the treatment of the red man of this continent by the American people. You cannot point to one single treaty made with the Indians which has not at some time or other been violated by the whites, and you can point to innumerable instances where the Indian has been most outrageously swindled by the agents of the government; and the great wonder is, not that we have had so many wars but that we have had so few. The Indian, although a savage, is still a man, with probably quite as much instinctive sense of right and wrong as a white man, and quite as sensible as the latter when wrongs are perpetrated against him. He argues in this way: The white man has come into my country and taken away everything which formerly belonged to me. He even drives off and recklessly destroys the game which the Great Spirit has given me to subsist on. He owes me something for this, but generally refuses to pay. Now and the, as we find his settlements closing in around us, we succeed in getting him to promise us a certain yearly amount of food and clothing, that our wives and children may not starve or freeze to death, but when his agents come to turn these over to us we find the quantity growing less and less every year, and the agents growing rich upon what was intended to feed and clothe us. We try to reach the ear of our "Great Father" to tell him of our troubles, and how his agents defraud us, but he is so far away that our words do not reach him. We cannot see our wives and children