

## THE SIOUX WAR

For several years past a camp of Sioux on the Yellowstone River have been known as the northern, or hostile, or non-treaty Sioux, or more commonly as Sitting Bull's band. They are in no sense a recognized band or branch of the great Sioux Nation, but consist of representatives from all the bands, who have rallied around one as their leader who claims never to have been party to any treaty with the United States, and who styles himself chief of the followers whom his personal power and avowed hostility to civilization and the United States Government have attracted around him. This camp at last became a rallying-point for malcontents from the various agencies; an paradise for those who, tired of Government beef and restless under agency restraint, were venturesome enough to resort again to their old life by the chase; a field of glory for the young braves whose reputation for prowess was yet to be made; and an asylum for outlaws among the Indians themselves, who, fleeing thither, might escape retribution for crime.

Having their headquarters in the center of the buffalo country, surrounded by abundance of game, independent of the aid of the Government, scorning its authority, defying its power, and deriding its Army, these desperadoes have skillfully and successfully evaded the frontier-garrisons and roamed at will over the plains of Western Dakota, and portions of Montana and Wyoming, not only plundering, robbing and frequently taking the lives of settlers, but extending their hostilities to every tribe of Indians in their vicinity friendly to the United States.

That the Crows, the Shoshones, Bannacks, Arickarees, Mandans, Utes, and the Blackfeet Nation have braved all threats and resisted all inducements offered by these adventurers, and, in spite of repeated losses by depredation, have steadfastly adhered to their friendship to the Government, has sufficiently proved their loyalty; but their pathway to civilization has been seriously obstructed. An Indian cannot be taught to work with hoe in one hand and gun in the other; and repeated examples of unpunished marauding beget restlessness and want of confidence in the Government and increased reluctance to adopt the white man's ways.

The number of this so called band was estimated last winter to be not over 3,000. From this number not more than six or eight hundred warriors could have been mustered. Recognizing not only the irreparable damage to settlements caused by these desperadoes, but also their disastrous influence in retarding civilization among the friendly tribes, and the demoralizing effect of their proximity in promoting an uneasy feeling among the reservation Sioux, and in affording a refuge for criminals, the Department, in December last, decided to make a final attempt to induce these Indians to come into their agencies, and issued an order requiring them to go upon their reservations by the 31st of January last, or be regarded as hostile and turned over to the military.

To this order, communicated by couriers from the several agencies, no regard was paid. The General and Lieutenant-General of the Army were of opinion that a movement against the "hostiles" undertaken in the winter would be entirely practicable, for which none but the regular troops stationed in that part of the country would be needed; and on the 1st of February these Indians were accordingly turned over to the War Department for appropriate action by the Army.

The increase in the number of Sitting Bull's retainers by accessions from the agency Sioux, already alluded to, and the terrible slaughter of our forces under General Custer, the details of which are familiar to the public, have extended throughout the year what was expected to be a campaign of but few weeks' duration. It is hoped that the coming winter-campaign, for which extensive preparations are now in progress, will result in the unconditional surrender and entire submission of these Sioux, and that this will be known hereafter as the last Indian War.