

The Indians under my charge are the Mountain Crows and the River Crows, two separate tribal organizations speaking one language, and whose traditions, habits, and customs, modes of living, and disposition are identical. The Mountain Crows number 2,150 souls and the River Crows about 1,150, and together they are able to put into the field about 900 warriors. They are wild tribes without acknowledged leaders. Two qualifications are indispensable to chieftainship, viz, force of character and the ability to dispense hospitality around the wigwam fire; any one may therefore be a chief who can meet these requirements and secure a following. Hence the whole tribe are broken up into bands of from ten to thirty lodges. But little authority is exercised or possessed by any chief over his followers. They are mercurial and nomadic and very rarely remain long in any one camp. During the period that they were encamped at the agency last winter (four months), they changed camp three times.

When grass begins to grow in the spring they all sigh for the excitement of the chase, strike their tents, and, like a grand army, move out upon the broad prairies to engage in their summer hunt, which they keep up until mid-summer, when they return to the agency, dress their hides, make their lodges, and remain until fall, when robes are good, when they go out to kill the buffalo and secure the robes and dry meat, which constitute their stock in trade. So soon as this hunt is concluded, which usually runs to the middle of January they return to the agency, tan their robes, draw their annuities, and enjoy themselves singing and dancing, with a hilarity unknown to any other people on the continent.

Whatever may be said to the contrary, they are the devoted friends of the white race, and have been our allies in all the Indian wars of this section. They are comparatively easy to control, and were it not for the meddlesome interference of the designing white men with whom they come in to contact, the task would not be nearly so arduous. They look upon the white race as being superior, and naturally listen to them; hence the importance of excluding from the reservation the indolent, vicious, corrupt vagabonds who infest their camps to demoralize them and consume their rations.

THEIR GRIEVANCES,

As developed in council, several of which were held in the winter and spring, were the trespasses on their lands by hunters, trappers, prospectors, ranchmen, timberthieves, travelers, and drovers. They say that the Great Father (the President) agreed to keep white men off of it, and that the white men cut their timber, destroy the grass, and frighten the game away. I at once gave notice to all trespassers that these irregularities must cease, and am gratified to say that they have almost entirely disappeared. Some complaint was made against the order of December 23, 1878, issued from the honorable Commissioner's Office, forbidding the Indians going beyond the limits of the reservation, but not a single lodge has since been pitched beyond the Yellowstone.

THEIR PROPERTY,

Aside from robes and camp equipage, consists almost exclusively of horses and mules, of which they have about 12,000 head. Have urged them to convert a portion of this stock into cattle, and have shown them that in a few years they might become independent by growing cattle. In order to further stimulate them, I have asked the authority to issue to each one a few heifers with which to start a herd, provided that they should first locate themselves upon ranches. They know nothing of constructing houses, and I would recommend that a portion of the present