

act 1

The white population in the Black hills had rapidly increased, and it had become desirable to open communication between eastern and western Dakota. To accomplish this, it was proposed to cut out the heart of the Sioux reservation, and in 1882, only six years after the Black hills had been seized, the Sioux were called on to surrender more territory. A commission was sent out to treat with them, but the price offered—only about 8 cents per acre—was so absurdly small, and the methods used so palpably unjust, that friends of the Indians interposed and succeeded in defeating the measure in Congress. Another agreement was prepared, but experience had made the Indians suspicious, and it was not until a third commission went out, under the chairmanship of General Crook, known to the Indians as a brave soldier and an honorable man, that the Sioux consented to treat. (Welsh, 1.) The result, after much effort on the part of the commission and determined opposition by the conservatives, was another agreement, in 1889, by which the Sioux surrendered one-half (about 11,000,000 acres) of their remaining territory, and the great reservation was cut up into five smaller ones, the northern and southern reservations being separated by a strip 60 miles wide.

general #7
act 2

act 1

Then came a swift accumulation of miseries. Dakota is an arid country with thin soil and short seasons. Although well adapted to grazing it is not suited to agriculture, as is sufficiently proven by the fact that the white settlers in that and the adjoining state of Nebraska have several times been obliged to call for state or federal assistance on account of failure of crops. To wild Indians hardly in from the warpath the problem was much more serious. As General Miles points out in his official report, thousands of white settlers after years of successive failures had given up the struggle and left the country, but the Indians, confined to reservations, were unable to emigrate, and were also as a rule unable to find employment, as the whites might, by which they could earn a subsistence. The buffalo was gone. They must depend on their cattle, their crops, and the government rations issued in return for the lands they had surrendered. If these failed, they must starve. The highest official authorities concur in the statement that all of these did fail, and that the Indians were driven to outbreak by starvation. (See appendix to this chapter.)

general #8

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In 1888 their cattle had been diminished by disease. In 1889 their crops were a failure, owing largely to the fact that the Indians had been called into the agency in the middle of the farming season and kept there to treat with the commission, going back afterward to find their fields trampled and torn up by stock during their absence. Then followed epidemics of measles, grippe, and whooping cough, in rapid succession and with terribly fatal results. Anyone who understands the Indian character needs not the testimony of witnesses to know the mental effect thus produced. Sullenness and gloom, amounting almost to despair, settled down on the Sioux, especially among the wilder

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