

I had served among the Plains Indians for many years before becoming agent in the exploring expeditions as an engineer, and in the army as a surgeon, and under the treaties as surgeon was required to give medical or surgical assistance to such Indians, hostile or friendly as might request it,

They call their native medicine men, "Pajuta Wicasa" medicine man, in time I became known among them as Wasicu Wakan, ie Wasicu from the two words Wa, snow. Sicu bad, their term for white man, i, e, the bad snow, and Wakan, mystery or miracle, in other words "The White Miracle Man" thus I secured their confidence, and had good opportunity to study their politics, psychology, etc, and acquired the ability to be able to put myself in their places, and secure their point of view.

I gave them my confidence, and I obtained theirs, and in all the long succeeding years that confidence was never betrayed, or trust ever broken. and I would set them up today as far more dependable than a like number of whites, with all of our vaunted civilization.

When in 1879 I took charge of them at the age of twenty nine, I had my hands full with those nine thousand scattered over 9,000 square miles of country.

Old Red Cloud age sixty five, resented the Great Father in Washinton sending that "boy" out to be his agent of a father" and resented my coming from the army. the old man was a reactionary in a high degree, and it was one eternal war between us for the next seven years, but I had the backing of the Man Afraid influence, and he was a progressive.

I well remember Spotted Tail the great Brule Chief, visiting us in the Fall of 1879, from his agency 100 miles east, we were old acquaintances he had heard of the innovations at Pine Ridge, of my organizing the Indian Police to offset Red Cloud and the soldier bands.

He sat around for a few days, had many talks with me, and my plans.

On leaving he remarked to old Red, "Brother Red Cloud, better look out, that boy the Great Father has sent you, will break you up before he gets through".

Examine their old religious belief.

When a man dies, he starts on the "journey of four sleeps" and if he has been a good man, and particularly a brave man, his spirit arrives at the "Happy Hunting Grounds" in four days, but if otherwise he comes to where the trail is forked, and he is puzzled to decide whether to turn to the right or left, when suddenly the bad spirit appears and coaxes him off on the wrong road, then after a time he comes to another fork, and that bad spirit in another guise leads him astray, and so on for days and months, and years, in cold and hunger, according to how bad or worthless he has been, but some day the good spirit pilots him in to the Happy Hunting Grounds, and he is released from his purgatory,

These Indians are far more reverential than the average whites, and of the thousands I have associated with, I have yet to find an atheist, All aboriginal people.

I was asked about the old frontier at a club the other day, and As I study our modern society, our lawlessness, etc, I was forced to remark, "Gentlemen we were pretty tough in the old frontier days, we had our bad men, our gun men, our holy terrors, etc, but we credit ourselves with having been short on perverts and degenerates, if a man was tough, he was tough in a manly way, and we ran mean men out of the country. and I had great respect for old Judge Lynch, he was short on law, and long on justice, there was no stay of proceedings, change of venue, or appeals.

A girl, a woman, a child, was safe any where on the frontier,

There is much to write about the Indian and the frontier, it would make a book.

Yours truly.

*H. M. G. Ely*