

SITTING BULL was a composer of songs, many of which are still well known, and sung upon appropriate occasions. One, especially, is remembered by the Standing Rock Sioux, which was sung to hearten their resistance to the demands of the Commission of 1889. The Sioux were then encamped in a great circle on the flats southwest of the Agency and the Fort (Yates). Every evening during the treaty councils, Sitting Bull would ride around the camp circle, singing his song in order to hearten the discouraged, intimidate the wavering, and also, no doubt, to encourage himself. For, as he had informed Mrs. Weldon, (in a letter of July she records it) he feared some of the chiefs would sign the treaty selling their birth-right, in order to make themselves popular with the Agent and his minions. And so, on those summer evenings, the people, seated about ~~the~~ brisk little cooking fires, drinking soup and chewing their temporarily increased ration of Agency beef, heard his resonant voice, his virile chant across the quiet prairie:

Oyate kinhan caze mayatapi

The nation named me
Ca blihe iciya waon kje
So I shall live courageously

heheya keya telo Tatenka Iyotake he heya keyapi lo

It is reported Sitting Bull said this.

The music of this song will be found on page 460, Bulletin 61, Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, D.C.

Though Sitting Bull's song did not prevent the venal chiefs from selling their lands that year, the wisdom of his stand has finally, at this late day, been recognized by the Government. The new Commissioner of Indian Affairs proposes to buy back Indian lands, so as to make the Indian self-supporting--as Sitting Bull wished the Indian to be.