Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of "Rekindling Camp Fires" with my compliments. The opinion which I have expressed on pp. 296-301 is, I think, a fair estimate of Sitting Bull's character. I have not argued out the points to prove all my statements, but the information was secured directly from Indians, most of whom did not speak English.

"Sitting Bull-Custer" is a drama written in poetry and its value as history is slight. It contains a few pages in prose, about a page of which is devoted to Sitting Bull. Beede characterizes Sitting Bull as a mystic. True, he was a mystic, but a practical one; a seer in the sense of being unusually far-sighted. You will notice in "Rekindling Camp Fires" that I have given Beede credit for his opinion.

In regard to getting material from Indian agents, I am sorry to say that few of them know anything about the early history of the Indians and then only from the readily available published sources. Most of them are moved about every three or four years from one agency to another, wherever the emoluments seem to be better. I have never known an agent to be either an ethnologist or an historian. His time is taken up with business matters, leasing and handling various phases of farming.

On the other hand, it would be impossible to find out anything by writing to the Indians, because those who knew Sitting Bull personally cannot speak or write English. I think the best way for you to get material would be to study the published sources and then come here and interview the Indians. Otherwise you could add little to what has already been written.

To find out much about Sitting Bull, one must seek the Indian. Sitting Bull never lived among civilized people except for very short periods, and even then not on intimate terms with any white man whose opinion would be worth recording.

It would be necessary to have an interpreter when dealing with the Indians. I know of a half-breed woman who has always lived among the Indians and is a good interpreter. She writes and speaks English intelligently and knows practically all of the old-time Indians.

But I did not intend to write such a dissertation. Please feel at liberty to ask me any questions and to write just what you think; and I shall try to be as frank in return.

Sincerely yours,

Lewis F. Crawford
Superintendent

LFC:HC