

91  
(It's not worth mention, in so great a matter as bringing-out a firmly-founded and thrilling Life of Sitting Bull,; but if I were to live a million years, I could never forget or lose the capacity for feeling at a moment's reflection the time here when in 1813-1814 I had my fight with the Bureau. Except for a score or so, the Sioux, with their firmness and unfoolable instinctive foresight were square behind me, though the Government was threatening me with imprisonment for 11 years for misrepresenting Indian Affairs. McLaughlin came, and when he saw & felt the backing, there was a quick "come-down". They would circulate reports, every time I was away, that I was arrested and imprisoned. Indians, somehow, knew the report was false. The work then started---with no intention on my part to start anything--- just hurled into it against my will, would have gone on nation-wide, had not the War come on and diverted it until the present time, when it is at the fore again. Those who were listening, unseen, say that when the detective met me, just before the "come-down", in a room in the Hotel McKenzie, Bismarck, and I listened to him silently for half an hour; that they did not want to imprison me, that I must retract the articles I had given-out &c., and that when I finally opened-up on him---they say that I swore at him in 69 various forms during my 15-minute talk, they all solemnly affirm this; though I did not remember using any profanity at all, and never swear, save that, like an Englishman, I do sometimes merely say "damn it."

(And when I was through the wall-eyed, bulge-bellied, fish-faced, curled-mustached scrub-dub of a detective pulled out his notebook and asked what I demanded, and assured that everything but one would be granted, and the one not then granted was granted a little later. I CAN REALIZE the TIMES and CONDITIONS of Sitting Bull. They seem natural to me.)

I have no doubt at all that the old Indian report that Sitting Bull was Fetterman affair, and many other affairs not noted in books.

92  
You should not omit the occasions in which Sitting Bull did actually show the acme of bravery in conflicts; though his idolized position glided into that of a prophet, as McLaughlin damming him with some praise admits, and so he was no more expected to actually enter into battles than was Moses.

X Next Sunday is set aside for looking up in my records adages and especially the many Sioux addresses to the Daydawn, for you.

93  
I believe you are the man, for the time, to bring-out a classic regarding Sitting Bull. It must have something of what Henry Adams calls "acceleration", will of course give sufficient inclusion of romance, sufficient to leave no bones bare; but not cast in the older epic style too rigidly. It will have a touch of the "character-and-social" in it, but---pardon the suggestion--- I would not cater to the modern femininity.

Sincerely A. M. A. Reed

NA - fine that SB shd be the man, rather than try to be the man all the more tragic & dramatic - & explains his feeling that God made him chief & leader - he just knew it - he had not made himself chief - hence the impossibility of his surrendering the personality, the basic ideas of his life - "the fact that I exist"