

Walker - Campaigns of Gen'l Custer and S. B.

statement that has ever been obtained from Sitting Bull by any white person in regard to his age, and there can be no doubt as to his sincerity in all he stated to Mrs. Harmon, as he appeared very much interested, and at times made friendly gestures that evinced great earnestness and friendship.

It is almost impossible to get the exact age of any Indian that has been roaming with the hostile bands, as they become more or less confused, and oftentimes entirely lost in keeping the count, which is usually done as follows:

When a child is born, the mother takes a stick of no great size and cuts a notch on one side of it, and from that time thereafter it is the intention to cut a notch at the end of every moon (a moon is a month), and knowing that twelve months make a year, and when twelve notches are cut in this stick they then select a tree or another stick, and cut a notch in it which denotes one year. We can now readily see that if they get confused in making the notches, they are, of course, more than likely to lose the exact age, and then they have to depend upon the memory of the older ones in the family or lodges to help them guess and remember.

Only four days after the interview with Mrs. Harmon, when interviewed by an officer at "Standing Rock," he gave his age 44, and said he was born near old Fort George, on Willow Creek, below the mouth of Cheyenne River. Next / ⁹³ to himself, he considers "Four Horns," who is his father, the greatest living chief. Many years ago his father was known as the famous chief, "Jumping Bull." He says he never committed any depredations in the white man's country, and that he did not surrender, but only came in to stay a few days, and now wants the government to let him go; that he never made a treaty nor sold any land, nor made war on the white man's government. He says he has been on the war-path since he was fourteen years old; and previous to that time, and since he was old enough,