

2nd Series

#4004

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Moorehead - 193-197:

In 1883 a Congressional Commission composed of Honorable H. L. Dawes, John A. Logan, Angus Cameron, John T. Morgan and George G. Vest, visited Standing Rock agency to investigate conditions. There had been great discontent because of the failure of the Government to fulfill the stipulations set forth in the treaty of 1868. Most of the Indians, while mindful of their rights, exhibited no ill will toward the Government, although they were insistent that the cattle and goods promised them be forthcoming and were rather against the further division of the reservation. After the conference had been in session a day or two, the Chairman said to the interpreter, "Ask Sitting Bull if he has anything to say to the Committee."

The Committee, having the services of excellent interpreters, we may assume that what followed is a literal translation of Sitting Bull's words. As they are very interesting, and the mind responsible for the utterance of these words was the mind of an Indian who lived in the past, I reproduce the conversation in full.

SITTING BULL: "Of course I will speak to you if you desire me to do so. I suppose it is only such men as you desire to speak who must say anything."

THE CHAIRMAN: "We supposed the Indians would select men to speak for them, but any man who desires to speak, or any man the Indians here desire shall talk for them we will be glad to hear if he has anything to say."

SITTING BULL: "Do you not know who I am, that you speak as you do?"

THE CHAIRMAN: "I know that you are Sitting Bull, and if you have anything to say we will be glad to hear you."

SITTING BULL: "Do you recognize me; do you know who I am?"

THE CHAIRMAN: "I know you are Sitting Bull."

SITTING BULL: "You say you know I am Sitting Bull, but do you know what position I hold?"

THE CHAIRMAN: "I do not know any difference between you and the other Indians at this agency."

SITTING BULL: "I am here by the will of the Great Spirit, and by his will I am a chief. My heart is red and sweet, and I know it is sweet, because whatever passes near me puts out its tongue to me; and yet you men have come here to talk with us, and