

Just how much they appreciated that stew we didn't know until the following day, when their interpreter appeared to inform us that if we would repeat it they would stage a war dance for our special benefit; but not deeming it wise to encourage such an exhibition we declined with thanks.

This, in fact, was during the opening period of the so-called "Messiah Ghost Dance" craze, when the Indians had again become unsettled and restless. As the time went on, rumors that trouble was brewing became more and more intensive. At length it would appear that the Bad Lands was full of half crazy ghost dancing Indians likely to descend upon us at any moment and lift our scalps, many of the ranchers arming heavily in consequence. For ourselves, while naturally feeling uneasy, we were taking with a grain of salt much of what we heard, if only because we had been unable to locate even a trace of an Indian anywhere on our range. Then came the culmination in the killing of Sitting Bull, of which I will have more to say, succeeding which the excitement quickly died away. Excitement which from all we could learn, never would have arisen/²¹² had the Indians not been driven to it through starvation.

But even had they actually broken out, I have good reason for thinking that their just wrath would not have been visited upon us, at least. This was the way of it.

Riding to the top of a commanding butte one day, while horse hunting, I dismounted and proceeded to carefully scrutinize the surrounding country through my field glasses. Suddenly there came in a guttural voice from behind me:

"How?"

Surprised, I turned quickly to find myself faced by a large, well set up, pleasant-looking Indian, whom I could not recall having seen before, grinning and holding forth his hand.

Evidently he had arrived on the scene before me, lying hidden among the near-by rocks, doubtless to size me up before disclosing himself. Clearly every chance had been his had he wanted to take a shot at me. As far as I knew, as he