The Indian, resenting the distruction of the buffalo and his short rations, was not slow to take advantage of this. With his silent arrow he could kill a steer in the timber or a small depression and get away with the meat before the cowboys knew anything was wrong. Occasionally when caught butchering such an animal the Indian would be compelled to fight and sometimes the white man was left on the ground beside his steer. Even when the grass was leased to white cattlemen it was impossible to keep the Indians from helping themselves to the beef since they greatly outnumbered the cowboys. They would follow these cowboys in pairs, two Indians to each white man, while their friends, knowing they would be warned in time, killed stragglers from the herd and carried the meat to their encampment. The temptation to steal cattle became very great after the establishment of the government slaughterhouses which kept the Indian from getting the offal which contained the minerals necessary for his diet. All men who live exclusively on meat follow the custom of animals and eat the whole animal if they live. Thus the government's efforts for sanitation brought about a great deal of disease and death.

The Indian love of visiting and the fact that the visitor always received presents from his host lead to a constant moving back and forth from one reservation to another, to the great annoyance of the agents. Whole bands would come and stay until everything edible had disappeared, and carry away, besides the ponies, wagons and even the tents of their generous hosts, most of whom valued prestige more than property.

Passes were therefore issued to keep Indians from wandering too much and the manufacture of passes by irresponsible white men gave agents many a head ache. In this the police were very helpful since they seemed to know where every Indian on the reservation was or was supposed to be.