

1880.

Commissioners Report 1880.

The honorable

The Minister of the Interior
Ottawa.

Fort Walsh, Cypress Hills, N^W 4th T¹. 29th December, 1880.

Sir.*

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Special Visit to Wood Mt.

On the 18th of November last I left this place for Wood Mt., accompanied by Inspector Cotton, the Acting Adjutant of the force, and Surgeon Kennedy. We reached there on the 23rd November.

While there I had several interviews with "Sitting Bull" and other Chiefs of the American refugee Sioux.

The reasons that necessitated my visit to Wood Mt., and the result of the interviews I have alluded to, I have already reported to you. It is needless therefore, that I should here enter into any recapitulation, further than saying that I trust that at no very distant date "Sitting Bull" and his followers will have quietly surrendered to the United States authorities, thus relieving us from what in the past has been a source of great and perpetual anxiety.

Many of the refugee Sioux have already ~~xxx~~ surrendered yhemselfes to the Americans authorities.

The principal chief so surrendering was "Spotted Eagle," who, with sixty-five lodges, gave himself up at Fort Keogh, ~~United States~~, during the month of October last. "Spotted Eagle" is a chief of much ~~importance~~ influence with the Sioux; the number of his followers was considerable. The fact of his having surrendered will not be without its good results, inasmuch as it is likely to be the means of incuding the remaining camp under "Sitting Bull," still on this side of the line, to follow his example.

From Supt. Crozier's report you will notice that a Sioux Indian named "Low Dog" left Wood Mt., accompanied by his followers, on the eleventh instant, with the full intention of surrendering.

I am perfectly satisfied that this, to us, most satisfactory state of affairs was brought about from the contents of your messages, which I transmitted to the Sioux at my late interviews with them.

On my return trip from Wood Mt. I experienced very severe and stormy weather, which set in almost immediately after my departure from that place. The thermometer during the six days I was enroute must have averaged something like 30 degrees below zero. The distance from Fort Walsh to Wood Mt. is 190 miles; of this, 130 miles passes through a barren and bleak plain, where not the slightest particle of wood is to be found.

The officers and men composing the party suffered much from exposure, all being more or less frost bitten. At times it became necessary to dig the horses and conveyances out of snow drifts in the coulees.

This we succeeded in doing until a point within 17 miles of Fort Walsh was reached. Here it was as much as we could do to get ~~the~~ the horses themselves out of the snow. When it was accomplished, each officer and man took the harness off a horse and rode bareback into Fort Walsh, which was reached long after dark. On arrival here we ascertained that the mercury in the thermometer was frozen. Everything we were forced to abandon when the horses were taken out of the harness was brought in the next day.

I have alluded to my return from Wood Mt. in order that some ~~idea~~ slight idea may be formed as to hardships.