

uniforms of approaching soldiers, who a moment later debouched in the open."

The herders, woodsmen and guard that escaped from the camp in the morning had hurried off to the fort and apprised the officers there of Powell's danger. Major Smith, with 100 men, had been sent to his relief, and conducted Powell and his gallant men back to the fort. Powell estimated that he had killed sixty-seven and wounded 150 Indians, but the men under him estimated the Indian loss at anywhere from 300 to 500. An Indian afterwards told Colonel Richard I. Dodge that ³³¹ they lost in that engagement 1,137 warriors, but this is manifestly/an absurd and untruthful statement. Colonel Dodge manifestly did not place much reliance on the Indian's tale, but Dr. Bradé accepts it as a fact.

Though defeated, Red Cloud did not give up nor recede from his determination to drive the white invaders from his hunting preserves. Leaving a strong scouting party in the neighborhood of Fort Phil Kearney, he again scattered his warriors in widely settled camps from the Yellowstone to the Black Hills. On August 14th he led in person an attack on Fort Reno, and renewed it on the 16th. But little fighting was done, however. But he rendered the Montana trail utterly impracticable to travel, and in that way rendered the forts entirely useless for the purposes for which they were established. During September nothing occurred in the nature of an attack which might be called an engagement, but on the 20th of October active campaigning was again begun. On that day there was a sortie on Crazy Woman's Fork of the Powder; on November 4th another at Goose Creek, just northwest of Fort Phil Kearney; on the 18th another at Crazy Woman's Fork, nearby; another on December 2d at Crazy Woman, and on December 14th one under the very walls of Phil Kearney itself.

382

CHAPTER XXXV

The Peace Commission - Communication Established with Red Cloud - Withdrawal of the Forts and Soldiers and Abandonment of the Montana Road His Only Terms - His Demand Acceded - Forts Abandoned - Soldiers Withdrawn - Red Cloud's Victory Complete.