

summer of 1872 the situation was becoming tense, and on August 14th, near Pryor's Fork in southern Montana, a column consisting of four troops of the Second cavalry and four troops of the Seventh cavalry, commanded by Major E. M. Baker, of the Second cavalry, were attacked by several hundred Sioux and Cheyennes. There were under the direction of Black Moon. One soldier was killed and one citizen and three soldiers were wounded. Two Indians / ⁴⁰² were killed and ten wounded, most of them mortally. Again on the 26th of that month a war party of about 125 of the Dakotas attacked a detachment of one sergeant and six privates of the Sixth infantry and two Ree scouts, twelve miles from Bismarck, and the two Rees were killed. On the 2d of October, 300 Uncpapas attacked Fort Abraham Lincoln opposite Bismarck, and wounded one and killed three Ree scouts, but withdrew without damaging the post. At this time the Indian commissioner was of the opinion that there were 1,000 hostile Sioux warriors under Black Moon and Sitting Bull, but this is one of the few occasions in which the force of the enemy was underrated by the authorities. It is certain that there were three or four times as many of the hostiles as the Indian department supposed.

The affairs of 1872 concluded with a fight on October 3d and 4th near White River in which a number of Indians attacked detachments of the Twenty-second and Twenty-seventh infantry under Lieutenants Crosby and Adair, and one civilian, a hunter accompanying the party, was killed. Again on October 14th a large body of Uncpapas attacked Fort A. Lincoln. One company of the Sixteenth infantry and eighteen scouts went out from the garrison to drive off the attacking party, and lost two enlisted men killed, but in return got three of the indians. The difficulties already encountered along the line of the Northern Pacific induced Indian Commissioner Smith in March, 1873, to appoint a commission consisting of Rev. John P. Williamson and Dr. J. W. Daniels to go out to the hostile camps and investi-
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gate the condition of the Indians along / the line of the Northern Pacific
railroad with reference to their probably opposition to its construction. They learned at once that owing to the scarcity of food in the Yellowstone country