

G. P. Beaubias, A. C. Lawrence and William H. Ashby, to treat with the Dakotas with a view to secure to the citizens of the United States the right to mine in the country known as the Black Hills, and such other rights as could be secured and as might be thought desirable for the government, having in view the rights of the Indians and the obligations of the United States under the existing treaty stipulations. They were instructed to assemble the Indians in a grand council for the purpose of negotiating such a treaty. The committee met at Omaha on the 26th of August and organized and proceeded directly to Fort Laramie and thence to Red Cloud agency on the 4th of September, runners having been previously sent to the various tribes requesting them to ⁴¹⁷ assemble there about the 1st of September. They found an acrimonious dispute on between Red Cloud and Spotted Tail as to whether the council was to be held at Red Cloud agency or at Chadron Creek, twenty-five miles distant. It was not until the 17th of September that a final compromise was reached and the council was held on the White River, eight miles from Red Cloud. The commission, too, was divided as to the best methods of procedure. Under the treaty of Laramie of 1868 it will be remembered that it was stipulated that in the future no relinquishment should be valid unless three-fourths of the adult male Indians interested in the cession joined in the instrument of sale. The majority of the commission were convinced in advance that it would be impossible to secure three-fourths of the Indians to an agreement to absolutely relinquish title to the Black Hills for any sum which the government would be willing to pay. They therefore deemed it advisable to only attempt to secure the right to mine in the Hills, without asking for a relinquishment of title. The minority believed that an absolute relinquishment should be obtained at some price. They disputed over these matters until the 20th of September, before they arrived at an agreement that they should proceed to attempt to secure the right to mine only. The tribes represented in the council were the Brules, Oglalas, Minneconjous, Uncpapas, Blackfeet, Two Kettles, Sans Arcs, Lower Brules,