

Moorehead -185-93 cont'd.

Robinson treaties, in having secured his end in both instances, indicates a knowledge of diplomacy of no mean order.

His people were suddenly confronted with a high civilization which they could neither understand nor follow. For centuries they had been schooled in the simple life of the Plains (and it ranked below the culture of the bronze age of man in Europe), unmolested by any extensive or exterminating war, content with their lot. To be suddenly brought face to face with a question, the issue of which was not a matter of temporary supremacy, but involved the very existence of themselves as a nation - to have bravely met it, mustered every available young man and fought their superior forces for a period of nearly thirty years, and then to have ceased only when resistance was no longer possible - presents an heroic spectacle. All through this stormy period, Red Cloud figures as a brave warrior, dignified counselor, and staunch advocate of the welfare of his people.

After the treaty, he and his immediate followers, or those directly under his control, observed their part of the agreement, although the white people gave them every pretext for violation. A weaker man, one of less character, would have taken his warriors, as Sitting Bull did, and have fought until there was not a man left.

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Red Cloud possessed more human kindness than any of his red contemporaries. It has been affirmed that after the Fetterman fight, he assisted the young men in scalping and mutilating the bodies of the dead. There is no direct evidence as to this. Red Cloud himself says he never tortured a living person nor mutilated a dead body, and that those under his control were no more cruel than the Colorado citizens at the Sand Creek massacre, the soldiers in the battle of Washita, or the Seventh Cavalry at Wounded Knee. He cites the murder of Crazy Horse and several subchiefs after they had surrendered and were held as hostages in one of the forts. He also says that some Whites, many years ago, visited the camps of the Sioux under the guise of friendship, and presented the Indians with whiskey which contained strychnine. Nineteen who partook of it died in terrible agony. He claims that in all his fights and raids he never perpetrated cruelties like these; that he was either a staunch friend or a bitter enemy.