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Before entering upon the main question, however, I will premise that the proceedings of that convention disappointed me; for the simple reason, that I saw the advantage which might have been gained by it, in a great measure, rashly, heedlessly, or carelessly thrown away. There was, at that precise time, a rare chance, a fair opportunity, for the pear was ripe, to unite all the **Sioux** bands of the prairie under the authority of one supreme chief, who would have the power to control these roving bands, supported, as he would have been, by the United States and the official agents of the Indian department, and backed by the Indian soldiers, named and provided for by the stipulations and agreements of the convention. Instead of one head chief, however, the convention created nine, thereby destroying all hopes or even chances of harmony.

Harney's mistake?

Notwithstanding these objections, and others equally important, in my view of the matter, I gave my hearty concurrence and assistance, as far as in my power, to carry into effect the stipulations and agreements provided for in the convention, trusting that, in due time, additions and modifications might be introduced into the original plan of General Harney.

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In reference to the system of appointing Indian soldiers, acting as a tribal police, under the authority of chiefs, who are designated by the official agents of the government, and supported by an annual appropriation, I look upon it as the wisest measure, and one of the best calculated to bring these wild tribes into order, and pay some obedience to constituted authority, that could possibly be devised.

There is no law among these tribes, except the law of brute force. The chiefs cannot enforce obedience, and, consequently, their influence over the young braves is only nominal, or merely such as they can command from age, experience or wealth.