

#144

SS3

1870

Dakota Superintendency,
September 30, 1870.

Sir: I have the honor to present for your consideration my second annual report of the condition and progress of the Indian tribes embraced within the limits of this superintendency. In so doing I desire to congratulate you upon the fact that the calamity of an outbreak on the part of hostile tribes, which at one time seemed imminent, has been happily averted; and, with the advancement toward civilization which has been made, I feel confident that with the faithful carrying out of the present wise and judicious policy no apprehension of difficulty in future with the Indians in this Territory need be apprehended. This policy, as I understand it, is founded primarily upon the fact that we must either "feed the Indians or fight them." They can no longer, as they were able to do a half century ago, upon catching sight of the smoke rising from the white settler's cabin, press further back into the wilderness to find there better hunting grounds than those which they abandoned. Even now they can scarcely get beyond the hearing of the steam-whistle. Their game is being rapidly exterminated; and as the encircling bands of civilization grow rapidly smaller the pressure is the more keenly felt, and becomes still more galling with each unsuccessful effort that is made by the red man to free himself from a bondage which he regards as far worse and more ignominious than death, in that the one is to him the most degrading of all things, while the other will take him direct to the "happy hunting grounds," where game will always be within reach of his arrow and the white man can no longer molest or harass him. While, therefore, a war with them at this late day must be one of either subjugation or extermination in order to reach the end desired, it would have to be waged against men who would fight with the desperation and cunning of madmen, upon their own ground, and actuated by a spirit of revenge for what they would regard as a wrong of the deepest dye. Such a war could not be waged by a nation claiming to be founded upon the principles of Christianity, unless driven to it as a last resort. Happily, however, the policy which the cause of humanity dictates in this case is, also, a far less expensive one than that of hostility, and appeals to the