

capable of judging do not look for any general war as the result of this excitement. Here and there disorder may occur, especially if it finds a basis in some practical cause of complaint, but no concerted uprising is expected. The season itself is now against any such undertaking, as the snow will soon be on the ground. Gen. MILES, while not underrating the seriousness of the situation and the signs of disorder, expects to bridge over the interval until severe Winter weather by the precautions now taken. Bodies of troops have been sent to the Sioux agencies from various posts, and these, with the garrisons near by, should be able to keep order and guard against any serious hostilities.

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#### THE INDIAN MESSIAH DELUSION.

The strange excitement now prevailing among a dozen or more Indian tribes, notably among the Arapahoes of Wyoming, the Northern Cheyennes of Tongue River, and the Sioux of Pine Ridge and other agencies, is probably without a parallel in the history of the aborigines. The influence which has been exerted at times by the "Dreamers" is familiar, as also is the ordinary potency of their "Medicine Men." But the present widespread delusion is that a so-called Messiah of the red men is now somewhere in the mountains of Nevada preparing to bury all the white race under the earth and leave the red race on top. This idea, which seems to have originated about a year ago, and to have attracted the attention of army officers only last Spring, has been steadily spreading, until now it has taken possession of tribes hundreds of miles apart. It appeals to all classes—to the restless youth, to the religiously disposed, who mix it with the instructions of the missionaries, and to those who are filled with race hatred, like mischief-making SITTING BULL.

The picture which is drawn by the preachers of this new delusion appeals very strongly to the race feeling of the red men, and particularly to those who oppose civilized life. Never has unadulterated native Americanism been carried further. The aborigines only are to be left in the land. The buffalo will appear again, the plains will be stocked with horses, and the dead Indians will be restored to life. Under prospects not more vivid and promises not more grand the Arab Mahdi of the Sudan was able to rally his people to arduous campaigns and bloody battles. It is the opinion of army officers that the Indian Messiah, too, is not a figment of the imagination, but a living personage. According to some accounts he is a white man; according to others, a Pah-Ute Indian, living at Walker Lake, in Nevada. Some Indians speak of having visited him last Autumn and repeat what he said.

The result of this delusion among the red men is very much what it might be among whites, and, in fact, what historically it has been in such cases. They are taken up with talk about the future, perhaps neglect their crops, and, it is said, in some instances have torn down their houses and sold the logs. If the old pastoral days are to return, and if the earth is to be the common property of all, with no gold or silver coin, but plenty of game and fish to be had for the taking, labor seems useless, and even a house and lot mere incumbrances. The ghost dances are pursued with great assiduity, and, indeed, dancing is closely connected with this delusion. But, of course, the main fear of the settlers on the borders of the reservations is lest the excitement shall lead to the warpath and to endeavoring to advance unduly the progress of events by beginning that annihilation of the white race which is so confidently predicted. It is true that those who have seen the Indian Messiah say that he expressly commands not only industry and sobriety, but living at peace with the whites. But it is with this as with some other religious injunctions and tenets—the followers take what suits them and overlook or distort the rest. KICKING HORSE, having heard about visiting this Messiah in the woods, improves on the story, and makes his pilgrimage through a hole in the sky. Indeed, the Indian story now current may be a mass of embroiderings on the original teachings of this mysterious prophet, whoever he is. That it has been wrought in here and there, not only with scraps of the Christian faith, but with the practical grievances which each tribe has—complaints against agents, lack of food, and what not—seems clear.

Yet the officers of the army who are most