

South fork of the Platte, a distance of three hundred and forty-six miles. Not only were there no Indians in sight, but no traces of them were to be seen on the route, except in one instance, there was seen a bright light, at a distance across the Platte, below its forks, and a noise was heard, which was attributed to Indians. About one hundred and thirty miles beyond Fort Childs, we met about forty Sioux Indians, who had paraded themselves across the road, with two large United States flags unfurled. In personal appearance they were superior to any we had seen, being well formed and good looking, especially the females. They solicited tribute of all passers by, as well as traded horses, larietts, or halters and trinkets. The Indians along the upper Platte lead wandering lives, moving from place to place, as inclination may lead them. According to Mr. Parker, their lodges are composed of eight or ten poles, about eighteen feet long, set up in a circular form; the small ends are fastened together, making an apex, and the large ends are spread out, so as to enclose an area of about twenty feet in diameter. The whole is covered with their coarse skins, which are elk or buffalo, taken when they are not good for robes. A fire is made in the centre, a hole being left in the top of the lodge for the smoke to pass out.

Mr. Parker says these Indians appear friendly, not only to white men, but also towards each other. He saw no quarrelling among them. Their minds are above the ordinary stamp, and the forms of their persons are fine. Many of them are "nature's grenadiers." The women, also, are well formed, their voices are soft and expressive, and their movements graceful. I was, he says, agreeably surprised to see tall young chiefs, well-dressed, in their mode, leading by the arm their ladies. In decency and politeness, as well as in many other particulars, they differ from those Indians on our frontiers, who have had more intercourse with bad white men, and who have had access to whiskey.